

beginning of wisdom: ..."

- 2) Lacking wisdom, we will never control our tongues.
(Proverbs 18:7) "*A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.*" **God's help** in choosing what is wise and right to say is the first step.

c. Finally, with God's help, we must rule our tongues.

- 1) This is our duty, but we need the **Lord's help**.
 - a) (Psalms 34:13) "*Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.*" (Proverbs 21:23) "*Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles.*" (Proverbs 29:11) "*A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.*"
 - b) (Ephesians 4:29) "*Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.*" (Colossians 4:6) "*Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.*"
- 2) We must think before we speak. (Proverbs 15:28) "*The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.*"

Conclusion: Did the words you spoke to your spouse, to your children, or to others this week **harm** them or **heal** them? If your words stabbed and left them bleeding emotionally, you have work to do. You must confess your sin to God, and then go to those you hurt, apologise and ask them to forgive you. Finally, you need to begin to work to control your tongue, as we have just outlined. Admit that your mouth problem is a heart problem, seek God's wisdom in choosing your words, and with His help, guard your tongue and think before you speak.

Breaking a sinful mouth habit will not be easy, but you **can** do it.

Each time you fail, humbly and biblically deal with it as we just learned. (James 4:8) "*Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. ...*"

If you have not yet trusted Christ to save you, that is where you must begin. Please let me help you.

Song: Have Thine Own Way - 388

Do Your Words Harm or Heal?

19 June 2022 AM – Proverbs 12:18 – Tongue – Scott Childs

Introduction: Years ago, Publius, a Greek sage, said, "*I have often regretted my speech, never my silence.*" I think all of us could say the same. **Read Proverbs 12:18.** Scripture frequently refers to the sword as an instrument of death. A sword had a deadly blade. Swords were used to destroy entire cities. In this verse, God equates a fool's words to the piercings of a sharp sword and a wise person's words to health. What was He saying? He is saying that our words can harm or heal.

Do your words leave people bleeding or healing, wounded or strengthened, provoked or perfected?

Transition: I want to show you from this verse **the problem of the tongue**, **the potential of the tongue**, and **God's plan for the tongue**.

1. The Problem – the tongue often harms

a. This is a major topic in the Bible

- 1) Solomon frequently contrasts the good and bad tongue.
 - a) The (Proverbs 10:19) "*In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.*"
 - b) (Proverbs 13:3) "*He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.*"
 - c) (Proverbs 15:1) "*A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.*"
 - d) (Proverbs 15:2) "*The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.*"
 - e) (Proverbs 29:11) "*A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.*" **Etc.!**
- 2) James tells us, (James 3:5) "*Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!*" (James 3:8) "*But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.*" Paul calls it the poison of asps (Romans 3:13).
- 3) Jesus warned, (Matthew 12:36) "*But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.*"

b. Foolish words pierce like a sword

- 1) In *Proverbs 12:18*, the OT warrior's sword could cut, stab, slash and kill the enemy. God is warning us that our words may inflict great harm, just like a sword. Such words are foolish words in contrast with words of the wise.
- 2) Foolish words may be harsh, lacking love, selfish, demanding, mean, unkind, angry, ungodly, or corrupt. **We have all felt the painful stab of such words!**
- 3) Foolish words cut, hurt, sting, belittle, degrade, humiliate, provoke, jab, anger, crush, embitter, or frighten.
- 4) Foolish words leave others emotionally bleeding, hateful, provoked, bitter, resentful, frightened, and scarred. **Such wounds are real and often last a lifetime.**
- 5) Foolish words turn others away from God rather than bringing them to Him. They can provoke our children to rebellion and anger. They fracture marriages. They destroy friendships. They offer no comfort, forgiveness or hope.
- 6) Each of us was born with a tongue capable of speaking foolish words. **None** of us is exempt.

2. The Potential – the tongue may heal

a. God assures us that words can be good.

- 1) (Proverbs 8:6) "*Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things.*"
- 2) (Proverbs 15:23) "*A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!*"
- 3) (Proverbs 17:27) "*He that hath knowledge spareth his words: and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.*"
- 4) (Proverbs 17:28) "*Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding.*"

b. The tongue of the wise is health.

- 1) Wise words are healing. (Proverbs 16:24) "*Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.*"
 - a) Just as medicine does not always taste good, wise

words will not always be enjoyable to hear, but they will be healing to the emotions and to the body.

- b) The Apostle Paul told the preacher Timothy, (2 Timothy 3:16-17) "*All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*" (2 Timothy 4:2) "*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*"
- 2) Wise words build-up, encourage, cheer, motivate, comfort, instruct, rebuke, lovingly correct, and forgive.
- 3) The Apostle James wrote, (James 3:10) "*Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.*" It displeases God when we use our mouths for both good and evil.

3. God's Plan – we can control our tongues.

a. First, we must identify the source of our problem.

- 1) Where do evil words originate? Jesus said, (Matthew 12:34) "*...for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.*" **Every mouth problem is a heart problem.**
- 2) We say things in anger because we have an irritated heart. If our tongues are harsh, cutting or degrading, we have a proud or self-righteous heart. When we speak in an unloving manner, our hearts lack empathy. Every time our tongue stabs someone like a sword, it is because our heart is not right with God. We are not bearing the fruit of a Spirit-filled life. (Galatians 5:22) "*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: ...*" We **must constantly yield to the Holy Spirit** to have victory.

b. Next, we need God's wisdom to do so.

- 1) **Wisdom is the God-given ability to make right choices.** Wisdom is an attribute of God. (Proverbs 2:6) "*For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding.*" To receive God's wisdom, we must fear Him. (Proverbs 9:10) "*The fear of the LORD is the*