



DEVOTIONAL MESSAGE

The Tongue of the Wise ... By Billy

READ: PROVERBS 12: 14-28

- Today I would like us to take a journey through some proverbs which deal with the power of our words. (One verse at a time).
 - **“A man will be satisfied with good by the fruit of his words.” (12:14a).**
- Each word we speak is like a seed that is sown and wholesome words will bear good fruit. This standard is set by the Lord and we can only attain it in the same way as we can live out the sermon on the mount – not by our own might or power but by the Spirit of the Lord.
- During lockdown there is more time for reflection, more time to consider what we say before we utter a word. *“A man has joy in an apt answer and how delightful is a timely word.” (15:23).* We tend to say the right things at the wrong time and vice versa. This also applies to text as well as speech. Job’s comforters spoke a great deal of truth but this was of little comfort to Job in his agony.
- Our words can positively impact our listeners when they are spoken in season. We ourselves feel the joy of giving an appropriate answer. It is the joy of knowing that something that we shared with a hurting heart has turned their mourning into dancing.
- The source of such wisdom is the Holy Spirit Who lives within each believer and is like a fountain of life springing up constantly. (*John 4:14*) It is Him alone who can renew our minds with God’s empowering words of wisdom. (*Rom. 12:2*)
 - **“A wise man is he who listens to counsel” (12:15).**
- The contrast is clear. A fool does what’s right in his own eyes without listening to counsel. We live in an age when independence of spirit is prized...be yourself and don’t allow anyone to judge you (or even counsel you) Decisions about what is right and wrong are usually based on group thinking or ultimately what is considered best for the individual.
- The proverb warns that...*“there is a way that seems right to a man..” (14:12)* and...*“All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight but the Lord weighs the motives.” (16:2).* How am I going to learn if I don’t seek counsel? I know when I am out of my depth with technology but do I seek counsel for matters of the emotions? How am I going to build up a store of knowledge if I am afraid to be corrected? Much spiritual understanding is gained only through trial and error. Peter is a good example. The truly wise individual will seek counsel from godly people. (Mounce)

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WEEKLY EVENTS/NOTICES

Week 22

- The fool thinks he knows better than others. The wise person is humble enough to learn from the experience of others and has the ability to discern what is good counsel. (Sproul) Peter is a good example of someone who learned from his mistakes but Rehoboam is an example of someone who did not listen to wise counsel. (1 Kings 12:1-11) He listened to the advice of his own generation and rejected the counsel of the elders.
 - ***“A prudent man conceals dishonour”(12:16) . “A wise person stays calm when insulted” (NLT)***
- The contrast here is with the angry reaction of an injured ego which we all have experienced at one time or another. It is the contrast between walking in the flesh and walking in the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is self-control. *“A fool always loses his temper, but a wise man holds it back.” (29:11).*
- R C Sproul is right when he observes that self-control is characteristic of the wise. We foolishly react too strongly and too soon destroying relationships. We are not talking about placing a lid on a boiling pot, nor of living in a state of denial of being hurt. It is about living with a grander priority than that of our own ego and self-esteem. In today’s terminology we could advise...GET OVER IT!
 - ***“The tongue of the wise brings healing”(12:18).***
- Don’t speak rashly if you desire to bring healing and resolution. King David experienced what it was like to live among people whose tongues were like drawn swords. (Psa.57:3-5) The Christian often finds himself in such company as we are no friend of the world’s new norms.
- *“A wholesome tongue is a tree of life.” (15:4)*
- Why do we tear down the work of God with our cutting words? (Romans 14:20 – ‘food’ may be substituted with any other divisive issue).
 - ***“ A prudent man conceals knowledge.” (12:23) NLT is clearer. “the wise don’t make a show of their knowledge.”***
- Don’t be quick to write a book!!
- Pride is the deadly motive behind our show-off antics so let’s avoid the Bible knowledge competition. *“Wise people store up knowledge” (10:14)* They don’t give spur of the moment answers but they draw from their storehouse when the season is right.
- As we discovered with regard to personal hurt, concealing is a godly course to follow. True wisdom knows when it is right to keep silent and right to speak. (James 3:17-18). *“He who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter.” (11:13).* Love covers a multitude of sins. This is so powerfully demonstrated in the redeeming work of Jesus. ■