

Scripture Text

Proverbs 12:18, 12:22, 15:1, 16:23, 18:21

Context

The book of Proverbs gives 21st century Christians wisdom for their lives. It is part of God's plan to redeem man by providing the "skill in the art of godly living". The book of Proverbs is thematic in scope and is widely regarded as the pinnacle of the Bible's wisdom literature. It assumes and builds upon the law and prophets, but goes beyond them in training the reader to live wisely in a practical 'how to' way.

Big Idea

Words are powerful and can be used for good or bad. Oftentimes they are used to destroy our relationship with God and others. However, as God's image bearers we should use our words to glorify God and build one another up. This is possible through Christ's transforming work in our lives since our words flow from our heart.

Sermon Outline

- Three Aspects of Speech that we should give careful attention to
 - Our Choice of Words
 - Our Tone
 - Our Truthfulness
- The Effect Words Have on Our Spiritual Life
- Our Heart Affects Our Speech

Ice-breaker Question

Share how words have either positively or negatively affected a relationship you treasure.

Observation and Meaning

Let's read Proverbs 12:18 & 25:11

- Why is it important to choose our words carefully?
- Share how the wrong words have harmed a relationship or how the right words were a blessing.

Let's read Proverbs 15:1

- Why does the tone we use matter?

Let's read Proverbs 12:22

- Why is it important to speak truthfully to one another?

Let's read Proverbs 18:21

- What are some things words can kill/harm?
- How can we use our words to either point people to Jesus or cause them to move further away from the Lord?

Let's read Proverbs 16:23 & Matthew 12:34

- How does our heart affect our speech?
- What are our heart motives? What are the fears that we have in our hearts?
- How does the Gospel help us with our speech?
- How can we grow as a church that uses words to please God and bless others?

Guide for Study Leaders

Use the C.O.M.A. (Context, Observation, Meaning, Application) method to work through the biblical text.

Context

Pay attention to the surrounding verses, paragraphs, chapters, events, etc. to see how this passage fits within the context of this particular book of the Bible.

Note how this passage fits within the larger storyline of the whole Bible, i.e. how God is saving a people through Jesus Christ to live under his rule in his place.

Observation & Meaning

Make careful observations of the biblical text. Notice details such as linking words (eg. "for", "if", "therefore"), repetition, dialogue, narrative, OT quotations, etc.

To understand the meaning of the biblical text, we need to discern the author's purpose or intent: Why is the biblical author writing this?

Helpful questions to ask include:

Who is writing and to whom?

What is the situation of the author and of the readers?

Are we made aware of any problems that need to be addressed?

Are there any repeated themes, or a single idea that holds everything together?

Application

Apply God's word to the heart. Move beyond merely addressing circumstances and behaviour by asking good "heart" questions. For example: Why do we do what we do? What do we really desire?

Always connect the gospel to application. For example, what difference does knowing Christ make to our obedience to God?

Ask what the passage teaches us about God, ourselves, salvation in Christ, the church, the world, etc.