

The Book of Proverbs

Godly Wisdom for Everyday Life

SSBC Proverbs Bible Study # 27

Take this Bible Study home and use it to guide your exploration of the scripture passage that next Sunday's sermon will be focused on.

The Wise Use of the Tongue

Key Passage: Proverbs 12:18

Related Passages: 11:9; 11:12; 15:1; 15:4; 26:2; and 26:18-19

Sermon Date: April 6, 2008

The tongue of the wise brings healing.

Have you ever observed the magical healing power of a band aid. If you haven't, take the time to watch a small child when they stub their toe or prick their finger. They will be crying and yes even screaming with pain, but when Mom puts on that band aid, magic happens and there are only smiles from that little one. It is magical, band aids are the great healing physicians to all one and two year olds.

Proverbs tells us that our words can be used in this same way to bring healing to those around us. This week we are going to look at the verses in Proverbs that speak to us about using our spoken words for healing.

As we read these verses this week about healing, think about what it takes for a person to be ready to speak those words that will bring healing. Are you ready right now to bring healing to someone that you might run into on the street that needs those special words from you to help them heal? Think on this as we look together at the verses this week and let's all try to get prepared to speak those healing words to someone in need when the opportunity presents itself.

1. Read this week's Bible passage and use the following charts to note your observations and any questions you have. The first verse below is the key verse for this study. Keeping this verse in mind, read each of the subsequent verses and note how each provides further insight into the meaning of this key verse.

Scripture	Your Observation & Questions
<p>Key Verse Proverbs 12:18 (NIV)</p> <p>12:18 Reckless words pierce like a sword,</p> <p>but the tongue of the wise brings healing.</p> <hr/> <p>11:9 With his mouth the godless destroys his neighbor,</p> <p>but through knowledge the righteous escape.</p> <p>11:12 A man who lacks judgment derides his neighbor,</p> <p>but a man of understanding holds his tongue.</p>	

Scripture	Your Observation & Questions
<p>15:1 A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.</p> <p>15:4 The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.</p> <p>26:2 Like a fluttering sparrow or a darting swallow, an undeserved curse does not come to rest.</p> <p>26:18 Like a madman shooting firebrands or deadly arrows</p> <p>26:19 is a man who deceives his neighbor and says, "I was only joking!"</p>	

2. Next, use this chart to interpret some key observations.

a. From the chart on the previous pages, select a few of your observations & questions that you find most interesting or important. Rewrite these below, and then interpret and apply each of them using the columns to the right.

b. For each observation, begin to interpret by asking yourself these kinds of questions:

- What does it mean?
- Why is this important?
- What does this tell me about the Father? Jesus? The Holy Spirit?
- Are there other scriptures that could help me understand this?

Observation What does it Say?	Interpretation What does it mean?

3. Now consider how you can **apply** the Word to your life. Look for:

- ◆ **S**ins to avoid
- ◆ **P**romises to believe
- ◆ **E**xamples to follow (remember "SPECK")
- ◆ **C**ommands to obey
- ◆ **K**nowledge to share

Don't just write things to write them — listen carefully to God's Word and what he seems to be teaching you, and look for relevant things that you're truly stirred to do. Then as you do them, God will help will help you learn, grow, and help others grow.

Application How do I apply what it means?

4. Consider some ways that our words can build up or tear down:
 - a. What are some of the ways that godless people can destroy another person with their words? (Proverbs 11:9a.)
 - b. When have you experienced reckless words piercing you (or someone else) like a sword? (Proverbs 12:18a)
 - c. How will knowledge (and what knowledge) allow the righteous to escape? (Proverbs 11:9b) Consider also John 8:31-32 and Romans 16:17-19.
5. Proverbs 15:1 tells us of the contrast between “harsh words” and “gentle words” . What are the characteristics a person must possess to speak a “gentle answer” in the midst of a heated situation? Consider 1 Samuel 25:4-35.) How well do you do at speaking with such gentleness when facing difficult situations?
6. Proverbs 15:4 compares a healing tongue to a “tree of life.”
 - a. What is “the” tree of life that is referred to in Genesis and Revelation? (See Genesis 2:9, 3:22 and Revelation 2:7, 22:1-2, and 22:14.)
 - b. The book of Proverbs refers to “a” tree of life several times. (See Proverbs 3:13-18, 11:30, 13:12, and 15:4.) What does it mean to refer to something as a tree of life? Therefore, how is a tongue that brings healing like a tree of life?
 - c. At times in our lives we face different challenges – such as physical, emotional, and spiritual difficulty. When in your life would it have been especially helpful to have someone bless you with healing words? Who in your life today might be especially helped if you were to speak some loving words to them?
7. Do you think prayer is an example of this idea of the tongue being used for healing? Consider James 5:13-16. When have you experienced prayer leading to someone’s physical, emotional, or spiritual healing?
8. The ultimate way to bring healing to someone is through the gospel. Notice how Jesus healed the paralytic in Matthew 9:1-8, first spiritually, then physically. Are you prepared to use your tongue to share the gospel with others? How might you get more ready? Who could you plan to share it with this week?
9. Proverbs 16:24 says “Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.” How can you apply what you have learned in this study to your life this week?

Memory Verse

Proverbs 12:18

^{12:18} Reckless words pierce like a sword,
but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

Have you ever heard the old hymn with the title of “There is a balm in Gilead”? It has a great message of one that will bring words of healing for the soul.

There is a balm in Gilead
To make the wounded whole;
There is a balm in Gilead
To heal the sin sick soul.

1.
Sometimes I feel discouraged,
And think my work's in vain,
But then the Holy Spirit
Revives my soul again.

2.
Don't ever feel discouraged,
for Jesus is your friend,
and if you look for knowledge
he'll ne'er refuse to lend.

3.
If you can't preach like Peter,
If you can't pray like Paul,
Just tell the love of Jesus,
And say He died for all.

Yes, Jesus did die for all and he can heal your heart, by accepting him as your Lord and Savior. Take a moment now and surrender your will to him and ask him to become Lord of your life. Then seek out a good Bible preaching church and begin attending and growing in Christ.

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