

# The Book of Proverbs

Godly Wisdom for Everyday Life

## SSBC Proverbs Bible Study # 29

*Take this Bible Study home and use it to guide your exploration of the scripture passages that will be the basis of the sermon next week.*

### **Wise use of the Tongue**

*Key Passage: Proverbs 10:19*

Related Passages: 12:23; 17:28; 18:2; 18:13 and 29:20

Sermon Date: April 20, 2008

### **Wisdom is found in holding your tongue.**

Last week the Proverbs study looked at gossip. In that study we learned that what we say can be very destructive to others and to relationships. This week we are looking at the wise use of the tongue—especially our need to “hold our tongue”.

Isn't it amazing that we can use our tongues for healing or for lifting one's spirit. And with the same tongue, we can speak thoughtless words that hurt others deeply and even break another person's spirit? How can one member of our body be so powerful that it can both heal and destroy, almost at the same time?

How should we, as Christians, conduct ourselves when it comes to speaking to others? How do we keep ourselves from being destructive in our speech?

Let's think on this subject together as we look into Proverbs this week and learn about how the wise learn to control their speech.

1. Read this week's Bible passage and use the following charts to note your observations and any questions you have.
2. 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><b>Key Text Proverbs 10:19 (NIV)</b>  <sup>10:19</sup> When words are many, sin is not absent,</p> <p>but he who holds his tongue is wise.</p> <hr/> <p><sup>12:23</sup> A prudent man keeps his knowledge to himself,</p> <p>but the heart of fools blurts out folly.</p>	

Scripture	Your Observation & Questions
<p><sup>17:28</sup> Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent,</p> <p>and discerning if he holds his tongue.</p> <hr/> <p><sup>18:2</sup> A fool finds no pleasure in understanding</p> <p>but delights in airing his own opinions.</p> <hr/> <p><sup>18:13</sup> He who answers before listening—</p> <p>that is his folly and his shame.</p> <hr/> <p><sup>29:20</sup> Do you see a man who speaks in haste?</p> <p>There is more hope for a fool than for him.</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. Why does sin tend to be present when we use many words? How have you experienced this in your own life?
  
5. Proverbs 12:23 says that a prudent man keeps his knowledge to himself.
  - a. Does this mean that we should not share our knowledge with others? Under what conditions is it appropriate for a wise person to keep knowledge to himself? Consider Matthew 2:9-12.
  
  - b. When or under what circumstances, then is it appropriate for the wise to speak up and not hold their tongue? Consider Acts 4:8-14 and Esther 4:10-17.
  
6. Proverbs 18:2 speaks about a fool finding no pleasure in understanding but delighting in speaking his own opinions. Why do you think people want to speak their opinions without seeking understanding first? Consider Psalm 14.
  
7. Give some examples from Scripture of people who spoke foolishly. For example consider Matthew 16:21-28.
  
8. Give some examples from Scripture of people who showed wisdom by keeping silent. For example consider Hebrews 11:31 and Joshua 2:1-14.
  
9. Considering these examples of wise people who kept silent and foolish people who did not, how could you presently apply the wisdom of Proverbs 10:19 in your own life?

**Memory Verse**

**Proverbs 17:28**

<sup>17:28</sup> Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent,  
and discerning if he holds his tongue.

We have spent some time this week in Proverbs looking at the words spoken by the wise as opposed to the opinions of the foolish person who often speaks before listening and delights in airing his own opinions. However, as bad as these character traits may be, the greatest foolishness of all is to reject Jesus Christ.

A person who believes in the resurrection of our Lord Jesus and puts his faith in Christ as his Savior will know all he needs to know to be saved and to spend eternity with God. All that it takes is for a person to acknowledge that he has sinned and been guilty of wanting to control his own life.

Take time to ask Jesus into your heart today. Ask him to become Lord of your life. You will not regret it.

*These studies are produced by South Shore Baptist Church in conjunction with our weekly sermon series. Studies are distributed one week prior to the sermon and can be picked up from the table at the back of the sanctuary and are also posted at <http://sermonhouse.com/SSBC>.*

*Sermons are also recorded and can be listened to later by visiting that same website.*

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