

Studies In Proverbs Lesson 8

The Power Of The Tongue

The Bible in general has much to say about the proper use of the tongue.

- a. James 1:19; James 3:5ff.
- b. Matthew 12:35-36; Romans 3:13-14; Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 4:5-6

Proverbs mentions different kinds of tongues, such as:

- a. "A lying tongue," Proverbs 6:17; 12:19; 26:28.
- b. "A gentle tongue," Proverbs 15:4; cf. 2 Timothy 2:24-25.
- c. "A mischievous (or "spiteful," NKJV) tongue," Proverbs 17:4.
- d. "A flattering mouth," Proverbs 26:28.
- e. "A backbiting tongue," Proverbs 25:23.

The Power Of The Tongue

- Text: Proverbs 18:21, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof."

The Tongue Has Power To Produce Death, Proverbs 18:21, When It Is Used For:

- A. Lying, Proverbs 6:17; 10:18; 12:19; 26:28.
- B. Giving False Testimony, Proverbs 6:19; 14:5.
- C. Sowing Discord, Proverbs 6:19. Discord is sown by:
 1. Hatred, Proverbs 10:12.
 2. Anger, Proverbs 15:18; 29:11, 22.
 3. Talebearing and Whispering, Proverbs 16:27-28; 18:8; 26:20-22.
 4. Backbiting, Proverbs 25:23.
 5. Nagging, Proverbs 19:13; 21:9,19; 27:15.

The Tongue Has Power To Produce Death, Proverbs 18:21, When It Is Used For:

- D. Seducing people to do evil, Proverbs 7:5-22.
- E. Teaching False doctrine, Matthew 7:15; 2 Timothy 3:13; 2 Peter 2:1-2.

The Tongue Has Power To Give Life, Proverbs 18:21, When It Is Used To:

- A. Properly instruct Children. Proverbs 1:8-9; 22:6.
- B. Teach the truth. Proverbs 4:5-7.
- C. Turn away Wrath. Proverbs 15:1-2.

The Tongue Has Power To Give Life, Proverbs 18:21, When It Is Used To:

- D. Reprove Evil Doing. Proverbs 9:8; 13:18; 17:10; 27:5.
- E. Encourage others. Proverbs 12:18,25; 15:4; 16:24; 31:26.
- F. Convert the lost. Proverbs 11:30.

In View Of These Facts, We Should:

- A. Use Restraint in speech. Proverbs 17:27-28.
 - B. Guard our mouth and tongue. Proverbs 21:23.
- Proverbs 13:3: "He that guardeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction."

In View Of These Facts, We Should:

- C. Think before we answer. Proverbs 15:28; 18:13; cf. Matthew 17:4; cf. Luke 9:33.

Conclusion:

1. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in network of silver," Proverbs 25:11.
2. How we say what we say, generally affects how what we say is received. cf. Colossians 4:6
3. The tongue used wisely is a great blessing to others. It is likened to "choice silver," Proverbs 10:20; it is "health," Proverbs 12:18; it is called "a tree of life," Proverbs 15:4; it is called "a precious jewel," Proverbs 20:15

Conclusion:

4. The tongue has great potential for good or for evil. With it we may inspire confidence or create doubt; we may win friends or alienate the best of friends; we may win souls or drive people from the Lord; we may improve marriages or destroy families. It is no wonder that Jesus said that "*by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned,*" Matthew 12:37!