

“Words of Wisdom”

1. The Power of Your Words is LIMITED

A. *Your words can't take the place of action*

- 14:23 – In all toil there is profit, but *mere talk tends only to poverty*.
- 29:20 – Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.
 - cf. Ecclesiastes 5:4-5 – When you vow a vow to God, do not delay paying it, for he has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you vow. It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay.

B. *Your words can't change the facts*

- 26:23-26 – Like the glaze covering an earthen vessel are fervent lips with an evil heart. Whoever hates disguises himself with his lips and harbors deceit in his heart; when he speaks graciously, believe him not, for there are seven abominations in his heart; though his hatred be covered with deception, his wickedness will be exposed in the assembly.
- 28:24 – Whoever robs his father or his mother and says, “That is no transgression,” is a companion to a man who destroys.
- 24:12 – If you say, “Behold, we did not know this,” does not he who weighs the heart perceive it? Does not he who keeps watch over your soul know it, and will he not repay man according to his work?

C. *Your words can't force people to respond*

- 29:19 – By mere words a servant is not disciplined, for though he understands, he will not respond.
- 17:10 – A rebuke goes deeper into a man of understanding than a hundred blows into a fool...
- 17:4 – An evildoer listens to wicked lips, and a liar gives ear to a mischievous tongue.

2. The Power of Your Words is Still Significant!

- 18:21 – Death and life are in the power of the tongue....

A. *Your words can pierce others*

- 12:18a – There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts....
- 18:8 [KJV] – The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.
- 18:14 – A man's spirit will endure sickness, but a crushed spirit who can bear?
- 12:18b – ...rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

- 16:24 – Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body.
- 15:30 – The light of the eyes rejoices the heart, and good news refreshes the bones.

- 26:28 – ... And a flattering mouth works ruin (i.e. causes to stumble).
- 29:5 – A man who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his feet.

- 15:4 – *A gentle tongue is a tree of life*, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit.
- 12:25 – Anxiety in a man’s heart weighs him down, but *a good word makes him glad*.

B. *Your words can spread!*

1. *Negatively*

- 16:27-28 – A worthless man plots evil, and his speech is like a scorching fire. A dishonest man spreads strife, and a whisperer separates close friends.
- 6:12, 14 – A worthless person, a wicked man, goes about with crooked speech...continually sowing discord.

2. *Positively*

- 10:11 – The mouth of the righteous is *a fountain of life*...
- cf. 18:4 – The words of a man’s mouth are deep waters; the fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook.
- 15:4 – A gentle tongue is *a tree of life*...

- 12:14 – From the fruit of his mouth a man is satisfied with good...