

September 5th, 2021

Prov 15:1-7, vv 23 & 28 – “Lips to Glorify Christ”

A. The Proverbs are designed to give us much-needed wisdom so that we can know how we ought to live.

1. As a whole, this book can be summed-up as the “**words of the wise**” (1:6).
2. Think about the scope of human activity covered in this book.

B. Today’s text gives contrasts between wise vs. foolish speech.

1. How we act is important; however, how we speak is of equal importance. Both reveal our hearts.
2. As those saved by grace through faith in Christ, we are called to live not for ourselves “**but for Him who died & rose again**” for us (2 Cor 5:15). We are to “**...do all to the glory of God**” (1 Cor 10:31).

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| Use the words of your lips to the glory of Christ. | I. CONTRASTING WISE vs FOOLISH SPEECH II. THE LAW AS A SCHOOLMASTER & GUIDE |
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I. CONTRASTING WISE vs FOOLISH SPEECH

A. What you say matters, but how you say it also matters. **Prov 15:1** “**A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.**”

1. This is among the most highly recommended verses for peace in a marriage.
2. Respect authorities in the home by how you speak to them.
 - a. Children, a respectful answer turns away wrath, but a disrespectful word stirs up a parent’s
 - b. Wives, a respectful answer turns away wrath, but a disrespectful word stirs up a husband’s
 - 1) OPC wedding vows “And will you love him, comfort him, respect & submit to him even as the church submits to Christ?” (OPC BCO p.184-185).
 - 2) Wives, when your husband makes a mistake or sins, he still deserves your respect because of your vow to God & because Scripture commands you (Eph 5:22-24).
3. Husbands, a gentle answer rather than a commanding or abrasive tone will bring better progress.
 - a. **Prov 15:4** “**A soothing tongue is a tree of life, but perversion in it crushes the spirit.**”
 - b. **Eph 6:4** “**Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline & instruction of the Lord.**” Cruel words can crush a son or daughter’s spirit.

B. Think before speaking.

1. **Prov 15:23** “**A man has joy in an apt answer & how delightful is a timely word!... (v28) The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things**”
 - a. An “**apt answer**” is appropriate or suitable to help in your particular situation or need.
 - c. (v28) says the “**righteous ponders how to answer**”— thinks deeply— about how to answer. Notice the contrast with the wicked & the rash person who “**pours out evil things.**”
2. **Prov 25:11-12** “**Like apples of gold in settings of silver is a word spoken in right circumstances. Like an earring of gold & an ornament of fine gold is a wise reprov-er to a listening ear.**”
3. **Prov 17:27** “**He who restrains his words has knowledge, & he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.**”²⁸ **Even a fool, when he keeps silent, is considered wise; when he closes his lips, he is considered prudent.**” It is not wise to blurt-out the first thing that comes to your mind.
 - b. **Prov 18:13:** “**He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him.**”
 - c. When a thought comes to your mind, ask yourself such questions before speaking: Is it pleasing to God? Do these words build-up/encourage or tear-down? → turn to **Eph 4:29-32**

C. Wise lips brings favor (16:13): “**Righteous lips are the delight of kings, & he who speaks right is loved.**”

D. A Fool’s lips bring him great harm (18:6-7a): “**A fool’s lips bring strife, & his mouth calls for blows. A fool’s mouth is his ruin, & his lips are the snare of his soul.**”

E. God calls you to pursue persuasive speech rather than harsh speech that stirs-up strife. → **Prov 16:21f**

II. THE LAW AS A SCHOOLMASTER & GUIDE

A. Even after years of God's blessing his ministry, Paul the apostle never felt as though he "arrived" in his fight against sin. **Rom 7:13** "...through the commandment sin would become utterly sinful."

1. The moral law acts as a schoolmaster to show us our sinfulness & need for God's mercy that can only be found in the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - a. If you are an unbeliever, the law is designed to show you that you are not a good person.
 - b. Believers, the law continue to show you of your ongoing need of Christ.

2. The sins of our lips especially show us how our sin is "utterly sinful." → Turn to **Mat 12:33-37**.
 - a. **Prov 18:7**: "A fool's mouth is his ruin, & his lips are the snare of his soul."
 - b. "Behold, now is the acceptable time, behold, now is the day of salvation" (1 Cor 6:1-2).
→ Repent while there is yet hope.

B. Even Christians who have a sincere, saving faith in Christ continue to fight against the sins of the flesh. It is a life-long battle. For some of us, sins of our lips can be one of our greatest struggles.

1. One of the keys to growing in this area is to keep on fighting.
2. Don't give in to the sins of Ur lips. Tonight we will study WCF 14 "Of Saving Faith." Sec 2 says, "By this faith, a Christian believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God Himself speaking therein. . . yielding obedience to the commands, trembling at the threatenings, & embracing the promises of God for this life, & that which is to come"
 - a. Christ's warning about giving an account for every careless word ought to cause trembling.
 - b. Yet we are to embrace "the promises of God for this life, & that which is to come."
 - 1) By faith, we believe that Jesus has paid for every careless, vain, & sinful word.
 - 2) Otherwise, we would have absolutely no hope.

3. As a Christian, you ought to seek God's grace to transform your speech to honor your Lord Jesus.
 - a. You are not saved by having perfect, sinless speech. If such was required, each one of us would be utterly doomed!
 - b. Still, your calling in life is unto sanctification— to "more & more to die unto sin, & live unto righteousness" (WSC 35).
 - 1) Endeavor to make progress in your speech month by month & year by year.
 - 2) Try to find tactics that works in putting-up a good fight rather than giving-in:
 - a) When something breaks or goes wrong, transform the tendency to curse or take God's name in vain into a sincere prayer. "Oh God help me, I ask ..."

 - b) When tempted to back-bite, try to first put yourself in that person's place 1st & ask yourself whether or not you should talk to that person directly about...

 - c) **1 Cor 15:33** "Do not be deceived: bad company corrupts good morals."
→ Bad company can corrupt your Christian walk, including your speech.

Review, conclusion, & further application: