

"THE BOOK OF PROVERBS"

Lesson 3 - Wisdom Regarding Speech

INTRODUCTION

1. **Christians** are to give careful heed to their speech...
 - a. Avoiding corrupt words, speaking that which edifies - **Ephesians 4:29**
 - b. Abstaining from filthy talk, giving thanks instead - **Ephesians 5:4**
2. The book of Proverbs has much to say about speech...
 - a. The power of speech
 - b. Both to tear down and to build up - **Proverbs 11:9,11**

[What wisdom can be gleaned from Proverbs concerning our speech or language? First, there is the...]

I. **DESTRUCTIVE USE OF SPEECH**

A. **LYING...**

1. Which is an abomination to God - **Proverbs 12:22; 6:17-19**
 - a. Lying lips, a lying tongue
 - b. Bearing false witness
 2. Often fostered by hatred - **Proverbs 10:18; 26:24-28**
 - a. In efforts to hide hatred
 - b. Trying to disguise one's true feelings
 3. Which will Prove to be short-lived - **Proverbs 12:19; 20:17; 21:6**
 - a. Just for a moment
 - b. Sweet at first, but only a fleeting fantasy
- Lying will eventually destroy the liar, and often the one lied about**

B. **FLATTERY...**

1. Not sincere compliments, but deceitful praise to win another's favor and to manipulate
 2. Also a source of ruin - **Proverbs 26:28; 29:5**
 - a. Often crushing others
 - b. By entrapping those who are flattered
 3. Often used effectively by the adulteress - **Proverbs 6:24; 7:21**
 - a. A truly evil woman
 - b. Who uses enticing speech to seduce
- Like lying, flattery can destroy both the user and subject of the comments.**

C. GOSSIP...

1. Also known as the tale-bearer, slanderer, whisperer - **Proverbs 11:13**
 - a. Who reveals secrets
 - b. Unlike a faithful person
2. Betrays and destroys friendships - **Proverbs 17:9**
 - a. By repeating a matter
 - b. When one who truly loves will remain silent
3. Creates strife - **Proverbs 16:27-28; 26:20-22**
 - a. Revealing the perverse character of the gossip
 - b. Whose words are like wood to a fire
4. Destroys character and integrity - **Proverbs 11:9; 25:9-10**
 - a. The work of a true hypocrite
 - b. Whose own reputation will eventually be ruined

-- **Whether true or not is incidental; gossip destroys both the user and the subject**

D. CURSING...

1. Especially one's parents - **Proverbs 20:20**; see **Exodus 21:17; Leviticus 20:9**
 - a. Such a person's lamp would soon be put out in deep darkness
 - b. Under the Law of Moses, it was a capital offense
2. But also another's associate - **Proverbs 30:10**
 - a. Even maligning a lowly servant can be disastrous
 - b. The master (or servant) may turn on you

-- **Speaking evil of others harms the speaker as much as those spoken against**

[As James tells us in his epistle, there is great danger in misuse of the tongue (**James 3:2-12**). But there can also be much good done through Proper speech (**Proverbs 15:4**)...]

II. **CONSTRUCTIVE USE OF SPEECH**

A. GOOD WORDS...

1. Words of the righteous - **Proverbs 10:11,20-21**
 - a. A well of life
 - b. As choice silver/gold
 - c. Feeds the souls of many
2. Pleasant words - **Proverbs 16:24**
 - a. Like a honeycomb
 - b. Sweetness to the soul, health to the bones
 - c.

3. Comforting words - **Proverbs 12:25**
 - a. Addressed to the anxious and derepressed
 - b. Making their hearts glad

-- Such speech reveals the good heart of the speaker

B. TIMELY WORDS...

1. Well-timed words - **Proverbs 15:23; 25:11**
 - a. Spoken in due season, how joyful and good it is!
 - b. Like apples of gold in settings of silver
2. Well-thought words - **Proverbs 15:28**
 - a. Studied carefully by a righteous person
 - b. On how best to answer

-- Such speech reveals the wisdom of the speaker

C. CONTROLLED WORDS...

1. That benefits the one who speaks - **Proverbs 13:2-3; 15:1-2; 21:23**
 - a. Preserving the life of the one who guards his mouth
 - b. Defusing potentially violate situations
 - c. Keeping one's soul from trouble
2. That reveals true knowledge and understanding - **Proverbs 10:19; 17:27-28**
 - a. By sparing words, with a calm spirit
 - b. Which even a fool can benefit from

-- Such speech enhances the reputation of the speaker

CONCLUSION

1. From the Proverbs we learn the value of being careful of our speech...
 - a. Avoiding much harm to ourselves and to others
 - b. Doing much good to ourselves and to others
2. Which may help us appreciate why Paul was so concerned that Christians...
 - a. Let their speech always be with grace - **Colossians 4:6**
 - b. Let no unwholesome word come out of their mouths, only good words - **Ephesians 4:29**

Do we truly appreciate the importance and wisdom of practicing the right kind of speech...?