

Pondering Proverbs #1

Proverbs 14-15

MEMORY VERSE

PROVERBS 15:2

“The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, but the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Chalk or dry erase markers and a chalk / dry erase board.

A sheet of construction paper for each child (or poster board 9”x 12”), markers, scissors and tape.

Small prizes.

ATTENTION GETTER!

Comparisons

For this activity you will need chalk or dry erase markers and a chalk/ dry erase board. At the beginning of your lesson draw the following things on your board:

1. A horse’s bridle.
2. A spark.
3. A ship’s rudder.
4. A tongue

Ask the children what these four things have to do with each other. Next, draw the next four items:

1. A horse.
2. A forest
3. A ship
4. A mouth

Ask the children to match the items on the first list that goes with the items on the second list. Have a volunteer come to board to connect them.

Read the passage from James 3 that deals with the tongue. Explain that like a bridle that controls a horse, a spark that starts a forest fire and a small rudder that controls a big ship our tongues are very important parts of our bodies. They may be small, but they are very powerful. They can be used for good and can be used for bad. Today we are going to learn about our tongues and what the Bible has to say about our speech.

LESSON TIME!

What do you think is the strongest part of your body? Perhaps you said your arms or even your legs? The Bible teaches us that our tongue is the strongest member (part of our body). It is certainly the part that can do the most damage or good. Why is that so? Because we can either tear someone down or build them up with the use of our tongue.

In James 3:8-9 we are told, "...It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God." Here it says that our tongue will be a blessing or if not used wisely, a curse! In today's lesson we are going to look at our tongues and how the Lord wants us to use it wisely and for the good of others. **We must use our tongue wisely.**

PROVERBS 14:3

In the mouth of a fool is a rod of pride, but the lips of the wise will preserve them.

What is it to be prideful? It is to think highly of oneself and to place oneself on a throne and be exalted. If we are following the Lord, we know that God is the only Person who is to be exalted on

high. When we are proud, sometimes it shows in the way that we speak. In this verse, when a foolish person speaks it is compared to a rod of pride.

During the time that this proverb was written a rod was used for several purposes. It was used as a sign of authority and could also bring much affliction or pain. Shepherds used the rod to keep the sheep together and if a sheep were to stray, the shepherd would oftentimes have to strike the sheep to get it with the rest of the fold.

So it is with the tongue. When we are filled with pride we will speak as though we have authority, yet bring affliction and problems upon others and ourselves. Sometimes when we want others to like us, we will say things that we think will make us look cool and get attention. When we do this we will get God's rod of discipline in our lives, but if we speak truthfully, we will be wise and have safety. **We must use our tongue wisely.**

PROVERBS 14:5, 7, 25

A faithful witness does not lie, but a false witness will utter lies.

Go from the presence of a foolish man, when you do not perceive in him the lips of knowledge.

A true witness delivers souls, but a deceitful witness speaks lies.

Our tongues can also lie. What happens when we tell a lie? If we lie about another person it could destroy their life and in the end we will also be injured. Think about the Lord Jesus Christ when He was brought before Pilate. There were false witnesses saying things that were not true against Him. What was Jesus' reaction to the false things these people were saying about Him? It is written in Mark 14:61 "But He kept silent and answered nothing." Jesus did

not need to defend Himself for He knew what the final outcome was to be. He would be crucified and die for the sins of these men who were saying all kinds of lies about Him, but He would rise from the dead and sit at the right hand of Almighty God.

These verses teach us about the wisdom of not lying and walking away from such people that speak false things. We also see the wisdom that Jesus taught us in His example of being silent. We are true witnesses when we speak the truth about Jesus Christ and when we don't get in arguments with those who want only to argue about the truth of God. They are considered scoffers and don't want to know the truth; they only want to argue. Here the Bible teaches us that we are to be true witnesses, especially to the truth of God's Word. **We must use our tongue wisely.**

PROVERBS 15:1-2

A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, but the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness.

What happens when someone speaks to you in a mean voice and says cruel things to you? Have you ever said something to someone that was not kind? What happens when someone else speaks to us in harsh tones? We have a choice when someone speaks rudely to us to either answer back in the same manner or say something gentle and kind. The Bible tells us in these verses that when we answer softly we will bring peace to a situation that may otherwise turn angry. And when we do answer back in a rude way, we are being a fool. **We must use our tongue wisely.**

PROVERBS 15:4

A wholesome tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit.

Again, when we use wisdom in our speech it brings forth blessings to others and us. But when we are foolish in our speech our words have the power of breaking someone's spirit. That is mighty powerful.

This verse describes the tongue, when used to build up, it is like a tree of life. When we say kind things to people and encourage them with the words of our mouth it brings healing and life to them. But just the opposite happens when we don't pray or think before we speak. Our words are powerful enough to bring destruction to their spirit.

To speak perversely is to turn someone away from the truth and to lead them astray. In doing so, we will lead them down a path that leads to death. We must also remember not to listen to perverse words either or we will find that we have taken the wrong road. We need to be careful in what we listen to. We should not listen to friends or watch television or movies with bad language. It will end up hurting us. God wants us to be careful in what we speak and in what we hear.

Using bad language can bring about a broken spirit. When we have a broken spirit we are sorrowful and it is as though we have no life within us. Remember there is good or evil in words spoken. **We must use our tongue wisely.**

Megaphones

Today we are studying how important our words are. We are going to make a megaphone to help us to remember how important our words are. You will need a sheet of construction paper for each child (or poster board 9"x 12"), markers, scissors and tape.

Give each child a sheet of construction paper. Have them roll the paper to make a cone shape. Leave a small opening at one end of about 1". At the other end leave the opening 3 to 4 inches. Cut off

any excess paper from the ends to make it round. Tape the seam on the inside of the cone shape.

Next, write the first part of today's theme, "**We must use our tongue wisely**" on the outside of the megaphone. Explain to the children that the megaphones are used to speak through and amplify their voices. Also explain that as we are learning in our lesson it is important to speak the right words.

PROVERBS 15:7, 12, 14

The lips of the wise disperse knowledge, but the heart of the fool does not do so.

A scoffer does not love one who corrects him, nor will he go to the wise.

The heart of him who has understanding seeks knowledge, but the mouth of fools feeds on foolishness.

So far we have learned that in using the tongue wisely we will:

1. Be protected from the rod of pride
2. Speak the truth
3. Be peacemakers
4. Build others up

But that is not all the Bible tells us about the wise use of the tongue. In using the tongue wisely we will speak forth knowledge that will help others grow in the truth of Jesus Christ. When we speak the Word of God we are speaking the truth.

In Matthew 15:18, when Jesus explained a parable to His disciples He said, "But those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man." This is what the writer of these proverbs is referring to; whatever comes out of our mouth in

words is what is really in our heart. When there are good things in our heart then good things will come out of our mouths. When our hearts are far from God and doing what our flesh wants then bad things can come out of our mouths. If we want our tongues to be right then our hearts need to be right!

The heart that loves knowledge is a wise heart. In desiring knowledge and seeking the counsel of wise, mature Christians, we are made wise. **We must use the tongue wisely.**

PROVERBS 15:23, 26, 28, 30

A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, and a word spoken in due season, how good it is!

The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD, but the words of the pure are pleasant.

The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil.

The light of the eyes rejoices the heart, and a good report makes the bones healthy.

Finally, what are the benefits that will come to the person that speaks wisely? Verse 23 tells us that we will have joy and when we share a good word to someone who needs it at the right time, it will bring joy to them. We must pray for the Lord to help us in praying for wisdom to know when to speak and when to be quiet. **We must use the tongue wisely.**

Lastly, yet most importantly, using wisdom when we speak delights the Lord. We should always consider how the Lord would have us speak in each situation. If we are unsure what to say, then “be quiet.” God knows how difficult it is for us to use our tongue wisely, which is why we are given so much instruction on its use. But God did not leave us without help. All we have to do is call

upon Him in our time of need and He will be sure to answer us in wisdom. **We must use our tongue wisely.**

Relay Verse Writing

For this game you will need chalk or dry erase markers, a chalk/dry erase board and small prizes. Split the class into two teams. Line up the two teams a good distance from the board. When you say, “go,” one member from each team should run to the board and write the first word of the memory verse. Then they run back to the line and the next person runs to write the second word. Keep going until the complete verse is written.

It is OK to refer to their Bible, but that will take more time. This game will encourage the children to memorize their verse. Whichever team completes their verse first is the winner. You may reward them by giving them a small prize.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to the Lord to use their tongues wisely. Have the children ask the Lord for strength to always say the right things to others. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.