

Proverbs 16:23, “The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.”

Here are some thoughts to help you remember the reference:

Chapter ‘16’- I (that’s 1) can choose to be foolish and let my mouth run with no controls resulting in sin (6 – the devil’s number and represents sin). Proverbs 10:19, “In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.”

Verse ‘23’ – My goal in controlling my mouth is two-fold (‘2’): guarding my personal words and allowing Him (‘3’) to give me His words.

There are many verses which talk about the need to control our mouths. I believe God knew this would be a difficult battle for all of us. Here He gives us the plan for achieving this goal: adding learning to our lips. This learning must be nothing more than learning His precious Words and hiding it in our hearts so when the time comes to speak, the Holy Spirit can take those words and guide us in how we present them to others, like apples of gold in pictures of silver! (Proverbs 25:11)

Here are some other verses which I find most meaningful in helping me to control my mouth.

Psalm 141:3, “Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.”

Proverbs 29:11, “A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.” (A wise man does not let the words fly out until after he has thought about them!)

Proverbs 29:20, “Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? There is more hope of a fool than of him.”

Proverbs 15:2, “The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness.”

Ecc. 5:1-2, “Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.”

Ecc. 10:12, “The words of a wise man’s mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself. “ (Verses 13-14 are also very good.)

Proverbs 31:26, “She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.” Wisdom and kindness comes from none other than our Heavenly Father and through His precious Word.

Proverbs 25:11, “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.”

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3 Things I Am Praying for My Words

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Words are powerful things. Spoken, written, typed, or texted – they are vehicles of communication that tend to last. If not on paper, in the hearts and minds of others.

With our words we build up, and with our words we tear down. Solomon declared, “*Death and life are in the power of the tongue*” (Proverbs 18:21). James said that with the same tongue we “*bless*” and “*curse*” (James 3:19-20).

Many a marriage bears the wounds of a word that never should have been spoken. Children carry the powerful words of their parents with them their entire life. Churches are often divided, fellow children of God alienated from one another, because of senseless words.

There are three things I have begun to pray regularly concerning my words. Would you join me in this prayer?

- Lord, may my words be **guarded**.

Now, I would like to think that I could guard my own words, but I cannot trust my emotions to do that. David prayed, “*Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips*” (Psalm 141:3). I need God to guard my words!

The only one powerful enough to guard my words is the Holy Spirit. When I am under His control my words are not fleshly and foolish. The secret is not found in restraining my words but in yielding to the Spirit of God. He will set a watch at my lips.

- Lord, may my words be **guided**.

It is said of the prophet Samuel that the Lord did not let any of his words fall to the ground (1 Samuel 3:19). Because his words came from God they went directly to their target! They went to the heart.

We should pray that every day God will give us the right words to speak to each person we meet. “*A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver*” (Proverbs 25:11). “*A word spoken in due season, how good is it!*” (Proverbs 15:23).

“*A word*” – one word – guided by God is more powerful and helpful than a hundred words spoken without Him. Ask the Lord to make you His mouthpiece today!

- Lord, may my words be **grace filled**.

In the end, this is the way to have guarded and guided conversations: let all of your words be filled with grace.

“*Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man*” (Colossians 4:6).

This verse implies that grace filled words are most needed (and perhaps most difficult) when we are responding to the words of others. It is so easy to react with words that are not gracious! Homes and hearts are hurt when we speak angry and unkind words.

In Ephesians 4, the same chapter that teaches we are to speak the truth in love, we read these words,

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you (Ephesians 4:29-32).

Others need God's grace. And we need God's grace to speak to them.

The sign of Spirit fulness is not that you speak in other tongues; it is that the Spirit controls your tongue! The worst thing about our words is not what they do to us or even to others, but, rather, what they do to God. Our words grieve the sweet Holy Spirit of grace.

Many years ago a dear friend said to me, "Scott, if you want God to take his hand of blessing off of your life, speak critical and hurtful words against other of His servants." How many times I have opened my mouth to say something and the Holy Spirit has brought those words to my mind!

Words are powerful things. They live on in the divine record. We will meet them someday! May God help us to remember that today...