

Communication: Good and Bad
Proverbs 10:18-21
February 28, 2016

Introduction

Communication is one of the more frequent topics that Solomon teaches us in Proverbs. It comes to no surprise because how we communicate impacts relationships. In this section, he tells us several things about communication, both the good and the bad.

I. Foolish Heart = Awful Communications (18)

Proverbs 10:18 *He that hides hatred with lying lips, and he that utters a slander, is a fool.*

- The heart issue
 - All forms of communication
 - Verbal and nonverbal
 - All reveal what is in the heart
 - Heart produces the words
 - How you think, feel, and desire
 - Will be shown in communication
 - Example: Cain (**Genesis 4:1-7**)
 - The heart is corrupted by sin and it influences how we communicate
- Bad communication
 - Hatred is concealed
 - Hatred is the motive for lying and slander
 - Hatred is from the heart
 - Cover-up
 - We cover up our hatred by lying
 - This is hypocrisy

Proverbs 26:24-26 *He who hates, disguises it with his lips, and lays up deceit within himself; 25 When he speaks kindly, do not believe him, for there are seven abominations in his heart; 26 Though his hatred is covered by deceit, his wickedness will be revealed before the assembly.*

- Example: Herodians and Judas Iscariot

Mark 12:13-15 *Later they sent some of the Pharisees and Herodians to Jesus to catch Him in His words. 14 They came to Him and said, "Teacher, we know You are a man of integrity. You aren't swayed by men, because You pay no attention to who they are; but you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not? 15 Should we pay or shouldn't we?" But Jesus knew their hypocrisy. "Why are you trying to trap Me?" He asked. "Bring me a denarius and let Me look at it."*

Luke 20:20-21 *Keeping a close watch on him, they sent spies, who pretended to be honest. They hoped to catch Jesus in something He said so that they might hand Him over to the power and authority of the governor. 21 So the spies questioned Him: "Teacher, we know that You speak and teach what is right, and that You do not show partiality but teach the way of God in accordance with the truth."*

Matthew 26:47-49 While He was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people. **48** Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with them: "The one I kiss is the man; arrest Him." **49** Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, "Greetings, Rabbi!" and kissed Him.

- Pretend to be nice
- Pretend to be friends and friendly
- Use flattery to get what is wanted

Proverbs 26:28 A lying tongue hates those who are crushed by it, and a flattering mouth works ruin.

- Use flattery to trap someone

Proverbs 29:5 A man who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his feet.

- Slander
 - To kill someone's character by talking bad about them

Proverbs 11:9a The hypocrite with his mouth destroys his neighbor

- The message
 - The fool in hatred spreads slander and conceals it by lying
 - Anytime a Christian has hatred in his heart against his brother
 - He will lie to the other and slander that person's name
 - The truth is for the Christian with hatred—he is not in the light (fellowship)

1 John 2:11 But whoever hates his brother is in the darkness and walks around in the darkness; he does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him.

II. Use Words Sparingly (19)

Proverbs 10:19 In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, but he who restrains his lips is wise.

- Talking too much
 - Increases sin—usually result of pride
 - Loving to hear self talk
 - Remember words come from the heart
 - This is when a person talks without thinking about what he will say
 - Talks too much about problems without solution
 - Says anything and everything that comes to mind

Proverbs 29:11 A fool vents all his feelings, but a wise man holds them back.

Proverbs 15:2 The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly, but the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness.

Proverbs 14:33 Wisdom rests in the heart of him who has understanding, but what is in the heart of fools is made known.

- Uncontrolled mouth gets the fool in trouble

Proverbs 13:3 *He who guards his mouth preserves his life, but he who opens wide his lips shall have destruction.*

- Talking much less
 - Stop, think, then talk or not talk
 - Many times the best thing for us is to say nothing at all

Proverbs 11:12 *He who is devoid of wisdom despises his neighbor, but a man of understanding holds his peace.*

Proverbs 17:27-28 *He who has knowledge spares his words, and a man of understanding is of a calm spirit. 28 Even a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace; when he shuts his lips, he is considered perceptive.*

Proverbs 29:20 *Do you see a man hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.*

- Goal for Christians
 - Ask God for help about controlling our words

Psalms 141:3 *Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips.*

III. Words Worth = Your Worth (20)

Proverbs 10:20 *The tongue of the righteous is choice silver; the heart of the wicked is worth little.*

- Tongue and heart are connected
 - Words reveal the worth of the heart

Matthew 12:34b-35 *For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. 35 The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.*

- Silver words = righteous heart
 - It is pleasant

Proverbs 15:23, 26 *A man has joy by the answer of his mouth, and a word spoken in due season, how good it is! 26 The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord, but the words of the pure are pleasant.*

Proverbs 16:24 *Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the bones.*

- It is appropriate

Proverbs 25:11 *A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.*

- It preserves

Proverbs 14:3 *In the mouth of a fool is a rod of pride, but the lips of the wise will preserve them.*

- Calms people down

Proverbs 24:26 *He who gives a right answer kisses the lips.*

- Wicked heart = worthless words
 - Offensive and turns people off
 - Breaks relationship because of sin and violence in words

Coram Deo (21)

Proverbs 10:21 *The lips of the righteous feed many, but fools die for lack of wisdom.*

It is intentional that for the word “feed” Solomon uses the word in Hebrew that means “shepherd”. The word “shepherd” is used in the Old Testament to describe God’s actions to guide, correct, and protect His people. This is the idea of godly communication—you pick your words to guide, correct, and protect the people around you. It is the outpouring of love that God has given to us to share with others.

When we have searched the wisdom of God and placed it in our hearts, the words we speak, thoughtfully and few (and maybe none) (**10:19**) become precious to those around you (**10:20**). The people will find those righteous words will shepherd, feed, and protect their souls. However, by being foolish with hatred for another, we learn that our words will increase sin (**10:19**), cannot help others (**10:20**), and cannot sustain our life (**10:21**). The fool does not understand that the wisdom of God has no part of his life, and he is being destroyed inside out.

For us Christians, we are to imitate Christ Jesus, the good Shepherd. His words are life giving and the most precious things we hear.

Matthew 12:20 *A bruised reed He will not break, and a smoldering wick He will not snuff out.*