

# WISDOM FOR LIFE

## LESSONS FROM PROVERBS

*How to gain wisdom in our speech*

**How many words  
do we say each day?**

**Average: 16,000 words per day**

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# 1. Speech is important

20-30% of the book of Proverbs relates in some way to speech

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## 2. Speech is powerful

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## 2. Speech is powerful

‘The tongue has the power of life and death,  
and those who love it will eat its fruit.’ 18.21

The words of the reckless pierce like swords,  
but the tongue of the wise brings healing’ 12.18

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## 2. Speech is powerful

to bless and bring life

‘The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life,  
but the mouth of the wicked conceals violence’  
10.11

to cheer up

‘Anxiety weighs down the heart,  
but a kind word cheers it up’ 12.25

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## 2. Speech is powerful

to heal

‘Gracious words are a honeycomb,  
sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.’ 16.24

to nourish

‘The lips of the righteous nourish many,  
but fools die for lack of sense.’ 10.21

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## 2. Speech is powerful

### Can be destructive

The lips of fools bring them strife,  
and their mouths invite a beating.

The mouths of fools are their undoing  
and their lips are a snare to their very lives.' 18.6-7

'Those who have no sense deride their neighbours,  
but those who have understanding hold their  
tongues.

Gossips betray a confidence,  
but the trustworthy keep a secret.' 11.12-13

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# 3. Being wise in our speech

- T ruthful
- H elpful
- I nteresting
- N ecessary
- K ind

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# 3. Being wise in our speech

## Truth – is it true?

- ‘An honest answer is like a kiss on the lips’ 24.26
- ‘Like a snow-cooled drink at harvest time is a trustworthy messenger to the one who send him; he refreshes the spirit of this master’ 25.13
- **Those who are wise are truthful:**
- ‘The lips of the wise spread knowledge, but the hearts of fools are not upright.’ 15.7

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# 3. Being wise in our speech

## What is our motivation?

- 'A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.' 15.1
- 'The soothing tongue is a tree of life, but a perverse tongue crushes the spirit' 15.4

### 3. Being wise in our speech

**What is the tone of what we are saying?**



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# 3. Being wise in our speech

## What is the tone of what we are saying?

- ‘Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones’ 16.24
- ‘A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.’ 15.1

# 3. Being wise in our speech

## Is what we are saying necessary?

- ‘Those who have knowledge use words with restraint, and those who have understanding are even-tempered’ 17.27
- ‘Those who have no sense deride their neighbours, but those who have understanding hold their tongues’ 11.12
- ‘Sin is not ended by multiplying words, but the prudent hold their tongues.’ 10.19

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# 3. Being wise in our speech

## Is what we are saying necessary?

- 'A person find joy in giving an apt reply – and how good is a timely word!' 15.23
- 'To answer before listening – that is folly and shame' 18.13

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4. As we reflect on the importance and power of words and what it means to be wise in speech, what might God be saying to us?

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