

Proverbs #10 - Student

The **Proverbs 10:19-32** section is a chiasmus made up of four separate collections, with a single proverb standing at the center as a somewhat humorous “bridge.” The structure is:

- A: On the tongue (vv. 19–21)
- B: On personal security (vv. 22–25)
- C: On laziness (v. 26)
- B': On personal security (vv. 27–30)
- A': On the tongue (vv. 31–32)

Proverbs 10:19-21 - “When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise. The tongue of the righteous is choice silver, but the heart of the wicked is of little value. The lips of the righteous nourish many, but fools die for lack of judgment.”

- Warren Wiersbe said, “A judge speaks some words and a guilty prisoner is taken to a cell on death row. A gossip makes a phone call and a reputation is blemished or perhaps ruined. A cynical professor makes a snide remark in a lecture and a student’s faith is destroyed. Never underestimate the power of words. For every word in Hitler’s book, *“Mein Kampf,”* 125 people died in World War II.” Solomon was right: **“Death and life are in the power of the tongue” (Proverbs 18:21).** No wonder James compared the tongue to a destroying _____, a dangerous beast, and a deadly _____ (James 3:5–8). Speech is a matter of life or death.
- Jesus was the greatest example of a person who held His tongue. Out of all the people in history who had the right to, it would have been Him. Jesus knew when to speak and when to hold His tongue.
- Things to be cautious of:
 - Those who _____ too much! It is human nature for our conversations to drift into sin. Do those you listen to have wholesome things to say or is gossip and slander involved?
 - When we talk too much. I know I have found myself in situations in which I wish I could take back what I said. We need to be cautious with our words. Remember the old saying, “If you don’t have anything nice to say, don’t say anything at all!” That’s good advice. Wisdom is found in _____ our tongue.
 - Speech can be destructive. Our words can cause extensive damage.
 - Speech can nourish. Not only can speech hurt, speech can _____. (Jesus *reinstates* Peter in John 21.)

Proverbs 10:22-25 - “The blessing of the LORD brings wealth, and he adds no trouble to it. A fool finds pleasure in evil conduct, but a man of understanding delights in wisdom. What the wicked dreads will overtake him; what the righteous desire will be granted. When the storm has swept by, the wicked are gone, but the righteous stand firm forever.”

- By stressing repeatedly in Proverbs that disaster comes to the wicked and various rewards are for the righteous, Solomon sought to convince the uninitiated and naive that the long-range, not the immediate, fruits of _____ and folly should be kept in view.
- Verse 22 shows us that wealth, in and of itself, is not the symbol or mark of true blessings. Many people who have wealth have lots of trouble. True wealth is found in _____ our blessings from the Lord.
- Most of the most important blessings are actually _____ - _____ in nature.
 - Health - ability to work!
 - Family - relationships with others
 - Laughter - Ability to enjoy the simple things in life.
 - Purpose - Knowing the Lord and what we are here for.
- Verse 25 speaks of the storms of life. We will all face storms at times. The difference between the righteous and the wicked is what we are anchored to. When we have deep roots in Christ, we will be _____.

Proverbs 10:26 - “As vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes, so is a sluggard to those who send him.”

- The humor of this proverb well compares the irritation of an unreliable person with that of vinegar in the mouth and smoke in the eyes. Whereas the smoke and vinegar are irritable to the physical person, the sluggard is irritable to the emotion of the individual and to the fabric of society. (Garrett, D. A. (1993). Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of songs (Vol. 14, pp. 121–122). Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers.)
- Just as vinegar (made from wine) is sour tasting, and as smoke irritates the eyes, so a sluggard aggravates his employers, those who send him to do some work or go on an errand. He is aggravating because he _____ to carry out his responsibilities. (Buzzell, S. S. (1985). Proverbs. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures (Vol. 1, p. 927). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.)

Proverbs 10:27-30 - “The fear of the LORD adds length to life, but the years of the wicked are cut short. The prospect of the righteous is joy, but the hopes of the wicked come to nothing. The way of the LORD is a refuge for the righteous, but it is the ruin of those who do evil. The righteous will never be uprooted, but the wicked will not remain in the land.”

- Here once again we see some contrasts between the righteous and the wicked. Let's take a look:
 - Righteous - Length to life / Wicked - cut short
 - Righteous - Joy / Wicked - No hope
 - Righteous - Refuge / Wicked - Ruin
 - Righteous - Security / Wicked - Exile

Proverbs 10:31-32 - “The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, but a perverse tongue will be cut out. The lips of the righteous know what is fitting, but the mouth of the wicked only what is perverse.”

- From Satan's speech to Eve in Genesis 3 to the propaganda of the False Prophet in the Book of Revelation, the Bible warns us that words can be used to _____, control, and destroy. It is estimated that the average American is exposed to over 1,500 “promotion bites” in the course of a day, some of them subliminal and undetected, but all of them powerful. Whether it's political “double-speak,” seductive advertising, or religious propaganda, today's “spin doctors” know how to manipulate people with words. But it isn't only some of the professional promoters who are guilty. There are many ways that you and I can turn words into weapons and damage others. (Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). Be Skillful (p. 118). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.)
- What are some of the common ways we hurt others with our speech?
 - We hurt others by lying.
 - We hurt others by gossiping.
 - We hurt others by flattery.
 - We hurt others by speaking in anger.
 - We hurt others by talking too much. Learn to listen sometimes.
 - We hurt others by talking instead of _____. **“All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty” (Proverbs 14:23, NIV).** Mankind seems to be divided into three classes: dreamers who have great ideas but never _____ much, talkers who exercise their jaw muscles and vocal cords but not their hands and feet, and doers who talk little but, with God's help, turn their dreams into realities.
- When David prayed, **“Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.” (Psalm. 141:3)**, he was doing a wise thing and setting a good example. All of God's people need to _____ their bodies to the Lord (Rom. 12:1), and this includes the lips and the tongue. We must also yield our hearts to the Lord, because what comes out of the mouth originates in the heart.
- Sometimes to be silent is best, but sometimes we need to address an injustice with our lips. **“The lips of the righteous know what is fitting,”**
 - The Apostle Paul considered Biblical doctrine to be “healthy doctrine” (“sound doctrine,” KJV) that nourishes the Believer's spiritual life. He warned Timothy to _____ of anything that was **“contrary to sound [healthy] doctrine” (1 Tim. 1:10)**, and he reminded him that the time would come when professed Christians wouldn't **“endure sound [healthy] doctrine” (2 Tim. 4:3)**. Spiritual leaders are to use sound doctrine to exhort

the careless and rebuke the deceivers (Titus 1:9–10; 2:1). The words of Jesus are **“wholesome [healthy] words,” but the words of false teachers are “sick” (1 Tim. 6:3–4, see NIV). “Their teaching will spread like gangrene” (2 Tim. 2:17, NIV)**, but God’s words are “life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh.” Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). *Be Skillful* (pp. 113–114). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.)

- Examples in Scripture where Jesus used His words to correct false teaching:
 - Mark 7:1-23 - Using tradition for evil.
 - Mark 3: 1-6 - Using the _____ to avoid helping.
 - Matthew 19:1-9 - Taking an exception and abusing it.
- The Christian who recognizes how awesome is the gift of speech will not abuse that gift, but will _____ it to the glory of God. The New Testament scholar Bishop B.F. Westcott wrote, “Every year makes me tremble at the daring with which people speak of spiritual things.” We all need to heed the words of Solomon: *“Do not be rash with your mouth, and let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God is in Heaven, and you on earth; therefore let your words be few.”*