

“Love Does Not Boast”

“The tongue has power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.”

Proverbs 18:21

Boast: talk with excessive pride and self-satisfaction about one's achievements, possessions, or abilities.

“Words, like nature, half reveal and half conceal the soul within.”

Alfred Lord Tennyson

1. THE POWER

“The Tongue is a Fire,” James 3:1-12

a. LOVING LIFE

For, Whoever would love life and see good days must keep their tongue from evil and their lips from deceitful speech. They must turn from evil and do good; they must seek peace and pursue it. 1 Peter 3:10-11

Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies. Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. Psalm 34:12-14

b. NURTURING SKILLS

The soothing tongue is a tree of life, but a perverse tongue crushes the spirit. Proverbs 15:4

Anxiety weighs down the heart, but a kind word cheers it up. Proverbs 12:25

c. CULINARY SKILLS

Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. Colossians 4:5-6

Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones. Proverbs 16:24

d. ECONOMIC SKILLS

But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. Matthew 12:36

What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs.

Luke 21:3

So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. Isaiah 55:11

e. WISDOM & KNOWLEDGE REVEALS

Fools find no pleasure in understanding but delight in airing their own opinions.

Proverbs 18:2

With their mouths the godless destroy their neighbors, but through knowledge the righteous escape. Proverbs 11:9

The lips of fools bring them strife,
and their mouths invite a beating. Proverbs 18:6

I. LESS IS MORE

And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Matthew 6:7

Sin is not ended by multiplying words, but the prudent hold their tongues.

Proverbs 10:19

A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy person keeps a secret.

Proverbs 11:13

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. Romans 8:26

Save me, Lord, from lying lips and from deceitful tongues. Psalm 120:2

All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty. Proverbs 14:23

II. STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART

A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. Luke 6:45

III. BRIDLING THE BUCKING BRONCO

Those who guard their lips preserve their lives, but those who speak rashly will come to ruin. Proverbs 13:3

Even fools are thought wise if they keep silent, and discerning if they hold their tongues. Proverbs 17:28

We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check. James 3:2

Words from the mouth of the wise are gracious, but fools are consumed by their own lips. Ecclesiastes 10:12

It is to one's honor to avoid strife, but every fool is quick to quarrel. Proverbs 20:3

Keep your mouth free of perversity; keep corrupt talk far from your lips. Proverbs 4:24

IV. TIMING IS EVERYTHING

A person finds joy in giving an apt reply—and how good is a timely word! Proverbs 15:23

V. CONTROLLING THE TRANSACTION

Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing. 1 Peter 3:9

A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. Proverbs 15:1

VI. AFTER YOU

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. Ephesians 4:15

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Ephesians 4:29

Three Hard Words

By Amos Russel Wells

He can memorize long orations, And regards the work as play;
His masterful dissertations The clearest of thought convey.
His speeches are never the weaker For lack of a suitable word;
In fine, he's the readiest speaker You probably ever have heard.
He never was known to stutter, His voice is vibrant and strong;
Yet three words he never can utter, Those three little words,
"I was wrong."

IF YOU ARE GOING TO BOAST, BOAST IN THIS:

This is what the Lord says: "Let not the wise boast of their wisdom or the strong boast of their strength or the rich boast of their riches, but let the one who boasts boast about this: that they have the understanding to know me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, or in these I delight," declares the Lord. Jeremiah 9:23-24

Therefore, as it is written: "Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord."
1 Corinthians 1:31

My mouth is filled with your praise, declaring your splendor all day long.
Psalm 71:8

Discussion

1. What experience or example can you share of the words giving life or death?
2. Tomorrow being Valentine's Day, is there a word you are thinking you might want to give as a gift to someone, anyone? What is that word?
3. Is there anyone you might need to exchange the temporary pain for the freedom, by saying, "I was wrong" or "I am sorry?"
4. Do you have an example of when you experienced bridling or unbridling of the tongue?