

"The World's Most Powerful Muscle" Selections from Proverbs

The world's most powerful muscle is not our bicep or quadricep. Instead, it is a little two-ounce mass of skeletal muscle covered by a mucous membrane...otherwise known as the "tongue." This amazing muscle has the power to build up or crush someone's spirit; to sing a baby to sleep or to split a church; to bless or curse God...the choice is mine.

Proverbs 6:16-19

There are six things which the Lord hates,
Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him:
Haughty eyes, **a lying tongue,**
And hands that shed innocent blood,
A heart that devises wicked plans,
Feet that run rapidly to evil,
A false witness who utters lies,
And one who spreads strife among brothers.

Big Idea:

My tongue can build up or crush someone's spirit, praise or curse God...the choice is mine.

Proverbs Overview

1. Solomon wrote most of Proverbs
2. Written from a father to his child
3. Intended to be used to intentionally train up children to become godly leaders and influencers
4. Very practical advice that impacts our daily lives- moral and ethical
5. Presents two, competing paths in life

Two Paths in Life...

1. DEATH- Proverbs 16:25
There is a way which seems right to a man,
But its end is the way of death.
2. LIFE- Proverbs 24:3-4
By wisdom a house is built,
And by understanding it is established;
And by knowledge the rooms are filled
With all precious and pleasant riches.

Our Worldview...

Proverbs 9:10

The **fear of the Lord** is the beginning of wisdom,
And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

Our Heart...

Proverbs 4:23

Watch over your heart with all diligence,
For from it flow the springs of life.

Proverbs 23:7a

For as he thinks within himself, so he is.

Our Behavior...

Proverbs 1:3

To receive instruction in wise behavior,
Righteousness, justice and equity.

Principles About Our [Behavior] Speech...

1. Our speech flows from our heart.

"A wise man's heart guides his mouth,
And his lips promote instruction."
(Prov. 16:23)

See Luke 6:45

2. Our words are incredibly powerful.

"The tongue has the power of life and death..."
(Prov. 18:21)

Destructive Uses...

Foolish Joking

Like a madman who throws firebrands, arrows and death,
So is the man who deceives his neighbor,
And says, "Was I not joking?"
(Prov. 26:18-19)

Watch Your Tongue

“A sharp tongue is the only edge tool that grows keener with constant use.”

—Washington Irving

Gossip

With his mouth the godless destroys his neighbor, but through knowledge the righteous escape.

(Prov. 11:9)

For lack of wood the fire goes out,
And where there is no whisperer, contention quiets down.

(Prov. 26:20)

Slander

He who conceals his hatred has lying lips, and whoever spreads slander is a fool.

(Prov. 10:18)

A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city,
And contentions are the bars of a castle.

(Prov. 26:18-20)

Quarrels

Better to live on a corner of the roof than share a house with a quarrelsome wife.

(Prov. 21:9)

Hurtful Words

Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing. Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue lasts only a moment. (Prov. 12:18-19)

Untimely Words

He who blesses his friend with a loud voice early in the morning,
It will be reckoned a curse to him.

(Proverbs 27:14)

Consequences

A fool's lips bring him strife, and his mouth invites a beating. A fool's mouth is his undoing, and his lips are a snare to his soul.

(Prov. 18:6-7)

Constructive Uses...

Encouragement

The lips of the righteous nourish many, but fools die for lack of judgment.
(Prov. 10:21)

An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up. (Prov. 12:25)

A man finds joy in giving an apt reply;
and how good is a timely word!
(Prov. 15:23)

A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.
(Prov. 25:11)

Healing

The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.
(Prov. 15:4)

Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.
(Prov. 16:24)

Imparting Knowledge & Wisdom

My son, pay attention to my wisdom, listen well to my words of insight, (Prov. 5:1)

Gold there is, and rubies in abundance, but lips that speak knowledge are a rare jewel.
(Prov. 20:15)

Rebuking

Through patience a ruler can be persuaded, and a gentle tongue can break a bone.
(Prov. 25:15)

He who rebukes a man will in the end gain more favor than he who has a flattering tongue.
(Prov. 28:23)

3. Quality takes priority over quantity.

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.

(Prov. 10:19-20)

Even a fool is thought wise if he keeps silent, and discerning if he holds his tongue.

(Prov. 17:28)

Hold Your Tongue!

On a windswept hill in an English churchyard stands a drab, gray slate tombstone. The faint etchings read....

"Beneath this stone, a lump of clay,
Lies Arabella Young,
Who, on the 24th of May,
Began to hold her tongue."

4. Honesty is the best policy.

A truthful witness gives honest testimony, but a false witness tells lies.

(Prov. 12:17)

The LORD detests lying lips, but he delights in men who are truthful.

(Prov. 12:22)

An honest answer is like a kiss on the lips.

(Prov. 24:26)

5. Engage our minds before our mouths.

He who guards his lips guards his life, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin.

(Prov. 13:3)

Do you see a man who speaks with haste? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

(Prov. 29:20)

Silence is Golden

"I have often regretted my speech, never my silence."

—Publius- Geek Sage

6. Our speech should be sparkling clean.

The lips of the righteous know what is fitting, but the mouth of the wicked only what is perverse. The mouth of the righteous brings forth wisdom, but a perverse tongue will be cut out.

(Prov. 10:31-32)

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

(Ephesians 4:29)

Keeping Our Tongue in Check

“If your lips would keep from slips,
five things observe with care;
To whom you speak;
Of whom you speak;
And how, and when and where.”

—William Norris- American Journalist

King David said it best...

I said, “I will watch my ways and keep my tongue from sin; I will put a muzzle on my mouth...”

(Psalm 39:1)

Big Idea:

My tongue can build up or crush someone’s spirit, praise or curse God...the choice is mine.

Applications

1. Pray for self-control
2. Listen
3. Become a vault
4. Who will you encourage?
5. Anyone you need to ask their forgiveness or forgive?
6. Share the Gospel

The Gospel (Good News)

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

(John 3:16)

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

(Romans 3:23)

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
(Romans 6:23)

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
(Romans 5:8)

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.
(Ephes. 2:8-9)

And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.
These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.
(1 John 5:11-13)

7. Praise & Worship!

Psalm 150

Praise the Lord!
Praise God in His sanctuary;
Praise Him in His mighty expanse.
Praise Him for His mighty deeds;
Praise Him according to His excellent greatness.
Praise Him with trumpet sound;
Praise Him with harp and lyre.
Praise Him with timbrel and dancing;
Praise Him with stringed instruments and pipe.
Praise Him with loud cymbals;
Praise Him with resounding cymbals.
Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.
Praise the Lord!