

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. *Enjoy discovering more about Him!*

"WORDS AND THE TONGUE" | PROVERBS | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

- When was the last time you said something and immediately wished you could take it back?

"Words Can Heal or Wound" Proverbs 12: 18, Proverbs 31: 8-9

Words can hurt in gossip or even lead to death in propaganda, but wise words can heal and comfort and even bring Justice.

- What are the different ways people end up hurting others with their words?
- How can Christ followers be more intentional in using their words for justice and healing?

"Tone Matters More Than Content And Words Shape Life and Death" Proverbs 15:1, Proverbs 18:21

Proverbs show tone is a sign of wise delivery of words. Words shape identity and direction so they have power.

- What are examples of words shaping lives today?
- How do Christ followers know when they've had the right tone in the words they used?

"Right Words, The Right Time and Social Media" Proverbs 25:11

Wisdom is seen in the timing of words, recognizing context matters. Social media has increased the speed and impact of words.

- When have you felt God provide you or someone else the right words at the right time?

"Christ Connection to Wisdom: The Word Who Gives Life" 1 Peter 2:22-24

Jesus is the Word of Life so a relationship with Him transforms our hearts and our words.

- How is being guided by Jesus in our words different than trying harder to speak wisely?

REFLECTION AND APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

All of us have been hurt and have hurt others with our words. Many in our culture today use words for power, for attention or just are plain careless gossips, especially with social media. Jesus lives in His people and wants to use their voice for justice and healing.

- Who is someone you can help with your words by apologizing, encouraging or thanking them?
- Who are people in your life that need your voice and to speak up for them?
- Pray this week that God's Words will flow through you this week.

3 - Words and the Tongue

I. Announce:

- A. Welcome to those **online** **and** in the *Fellowship Hall 2nd*.
- B. **Slide1-3 AP: DC. REAL.** GriefShare.
- C. **Slide4 New Wed Night Series: Same God, Different Seasons.**
 - 1. Based on Phil.4:12 **abased/abound.** *Responding to God in diff seasons of life.*
- D. **Happy Birthday today to Kelly.** *Kelly carries a lot that no one sees, loves her family, and walks with me faithfully and keeps me grounded in every season, and sometimes still laughs at my jokes. I'm really grateful for you Kelly Bell.*
- E. **Slide5 Prayer:** Thank you for the gift of Wisdom.

II. Slide6 Intro: Words and the Tongue - words as power, not just communication.

- A. The tongue has: a **rich blood supply**. A **fast cell turnover**. **And** a **direct** connection to: *hydration, immunity, and circulation.*
 - 1. **So** changes show up there **early**, **before** other symptoms **fully develop**.
 - 2. **Doctors** look at the tongue because it reveals what's going on **inside**. **And Proverbs** says, our words do the same for **the heart**.
 - 3. **So** when a doctor asks you to *stick out your tongue*, they're doing a quick, visual health check. The **tongue** and **mouth** can reveal a lot about *what's going on in the body* (inside), *especially when you're sick*.
- B. **Big Idea: Words** reveal the heart **and** shape the future.

III. Slide7a **1 WORDS WE CAN'T TAKE BACK** - *No Take Backs!*

- A. Have you ever said something **and** the moment it left your mouth, you wished you could grab it & pull it back? [that Text you just sent *about* someone, **but** you sent it to them by accident]
 - 1. Words **weigh nothing** **but** they can leave **lifelong weight**. Words are **weightless** **but** they're never **harmless**.

- B. Proverbs tells us they have **the power** to *shape relationships, wound hearts, and even set the direction of a life.*
- C. This message **isn't** just about **what** we say. It's about **how** and **why** we say it.
- D. Slide7b Proverbs tells us our words don't just express **who we are** - they help shape who we *become*.

IV. Slide8a **2 WORDS CAN HEAL OR WOUND**

- A. Proverbs 12:18 *There is one whose rash words are **like** sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise **brings healing**.* [rash vs. wise - sword vs. healing]
1. Rash words are *quick, emotional, unfiltered*.
 2. Healing words are *intentional and discerning*.
 - a) The tongue can be a **weapon** - or a **balm**. [a weapon or a bandage]
- B. **WOUNDING WORDS** - The war in Ukraine. Literally is a war of words, **it pivots on words daily**. Literally words give *death or life*.
1. Words kill - in Hitler's **Mein Kampf** (my struggle), for every word he wrote 125 people died in WWII.
 2. Words, It just took a few words for the Rohingya to be removed from our property in Nepal. ("They're terrorists. They caused problems in their former country")
 3. **Politics** is all about **killing the opposing parties reputation**. Ruining people, has become a sport, in modern day politics.
 4. And, **Gossip is the devil's chariot**. It's what he often rides to do his work.
- C. **HEALING WORDS** - And words can give life - Like the young girl that spares Naaman's life. (2 Kgs.5)
1. John 6, Jesus's words gave life. After His **Bread of life** teaching, He said, *Do you take offense at this?* (many were leaving)... *The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.* or spiritual & life giving.
- D. Slide8b When you have *spoken up for others*, those are healing words. Proverbs 31:8,9 NLT *Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed. 9 Yes, speak up for the poor & helpless, & see that they get justice.*

1. Speak up to help others. Be justice focused. Words can defend.
2. Did you know? One of the purposes God has given you **influence** - is to speak up/advocate for those who **don't have influence**, or a **voice**.
 - a) It's what it means when we talk about *doing Justice* today. Staying silent were actually *perpetuating evil*. "*Evil persists because people say or do nothing.*"

E. We all still remember the names we were called when we were younger.

(mine? Bell Brand Potato Chip, Taco Bell, Dumb-bell).

1. It didn't help the company's headquarters were located in Santa Fe Springs, near our school. - I guess they didn't hear *the tag line* at the end of every commercial: "*If it's Bell, it's swell!*"
2. And honestly, I ended up doing the same thing to others that was done to me. "*Sticks and stones,*" right? Words aren't supposed to hurt. Yet - they do!
 - a) Sticks and Stones can *break bones* ... but Words and Replies *Crush Souls!*
3. Ok, that was kid humor. But not having the biggest interest *in school or studying*, the worse for me was "*your dumb!*" (Never by my parents. but inferred by teachers, and communicated by friends. eg. When they'd read off grades in front of the class, walk forward & pick up your paper). Carried that one most all my life.

F. Again, Prov.12:18 *There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts.*

G. You know blades cut instantly. The knife hits the skin, and the bleeding begins. It's *immediate* - and it can be *long-lasting*.

1. Have you noticed that about words? The hurt is instant but it also lingers.
2. Are you still carrying wounds from a long time ago? - From last night?
3. Word wounds take time to heal - but they **can** heal. And here's the **Hope**: the same thing that **cuts** is also the thing that **heals** - **Words**.

H. The writer goes on to say, *But the tongue of the wise brings healing.*

1. Today, there are wounded people all around you. Everywhere you go, someone is *bleeding out* from a reckless word.

2. They are, what they've heard: *"You're **dumb**, you're **ugly**, you're **fat**, you're **stupid**, you're **worthless**, you're **weak**, you're **messed up**."*
3. They need healing. They need words **from** the tongue of the wise.

V. Slide9 3 TONE OFTEN MATTERS MORE THAN CONTENT

- A. Proverbs 15:1 *A **soft** answer turns away wrath, but a **harsh word** stirs up anger.*
 1. NLT *A **gentle** answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare.*
- B. Right words, wrong tone = wrong outcome.
- C. **Tone** is the delivery system of truth.
 1. **Tone** communicates **value**. **Harshness** escalates **conflict**. **Gentleness** disarms **defensiveness**.
 2. **Correction** vs **Condemnation**, **Truth** spoken gently vs truth thrown harshly.
- D. Wisdom isn't just telling the truth - it's knowing **how** to tell it.

VI. Slide10a 4 WORDS SHAPE LIFE AND DEATH

- A. Proverbs 18:21 ***Death** and **life** are in the power of the tongue and those who love it will eat its fruits.*
- B. It's not magical language **but** **formative** reality.
 1. **Words shape**: Identity/self image ("You'll never change"). Direction ("You can do this!"). Atmosphere (hope vs despair). Futures (we speak **futures** into people more than we realize, **your words** might change their life course).
 - a) Eg. someone, making fun of your faith, **or** moral boundaries. Choosing purity or restraint. Believing differently than culture. Body shaming. Identity or self-worth.
 2. Slide10b **Words shape**: they don't just hurt feelings, they try to **rename** people

VII. Slide11a 5 RIGHT WORDS, THE RIGHT TIME

A. Proverbs 25:11 *A word **fitly spoken** is like apples of gold in a setting of silver. Or NLT **Timely advice** is lovely, like golden apples in a silver basket.*

B. Timing matters. Context matters. Discernment matters.

1. So even good words spoken at *the wrong moment* can do harm.
2. Slide11b Wisdom asks, *Is this the right time? The right tone? The right motive?*

C. I think what we do inside the sanctuary (worshipping/learning) is important.

1. But *equally important* is what happens **before** the service, **then after** the service. *Friendship, relationship, fellowship.* So important!
2. Because we were *made in the image and likeness of God*, and we have a *talking God* ... when God wanted to **create** the world, *He spoke it into existence.*
3. When Jesus **came to earth**, He came as *the Word made flesh*.
4. Heb. 1:3 *He* (Jesus) **upholds the world with the Word of His power**.
5. There's about 90 verses regarding **our speech** in proverbs, **2nd** only to **wisdom** in this book. [Your words illustrate whether you're wise!]

VIII. Slide12a **6 SOCIAL MEDIA: PROVERBS ON STEROIDS**

A. We **speak** more words than any generation in history. And we do it **instantly**, **publicly**, and **emotionally**. (think social media)

1. Slide12b Social media **didn't invent** *careless words* - *it just removed the pause*.
2. **Rash words** (12:18). **Harsh replies** (15:1). **Words of life or death** (18:21).
 - a) **Wisdom** slows us down before we speak ... **or post**.
 - b) **Wisdom** slows **our thumbs** ... before they speak!

(1) Or, as James said, *quick to hear slow to text* - oh, I mean *speak*.

B. Slide12c Yes, Social media removed the pause - **but wisdom** puts it back!

IX. Slide13a **7 CHRIST CONNECTION: THE WORD WHO GIVES LIFE**

A. Here's where we breathe: I want to *bring it out of moralism*. Jesus isn't just someone who *spoke wisely* - *He is the Word*.

1. And everywhere He spoke, **life** followed.

B. Jesus' words: *Healed the sick. Forgave sinners. Restored the broken. And Spoke peace into chaos* (from storms/to demoniacs).

1. Our words often react. His words **redeem**.

C. Don't miss it, don't walk away saying, "I'm going to *try harder!*"

1. **Slide13b** We need new hearts. Prov.4:23 *Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.*

2. How do you get a heart that's clean? You come to Jesus. Then He gives you a new heart (cuz He traded places with people like us who sinned w/ our lips). And with our new heart, we **daily** need it renewed! Jesus took the punishment that **gossips** like us deserve.

a) So there are a few ways you can walk away from this sermon: 1) *TY very much I'm going to do better now* (don't do that, esp in a sp of pride).

2) Don't sit there wallowing in depression, *omg I didn't know I was so bad!* (don't do that either).

3. The **gospel** offers another way: Not pride - Not despair. 3) We look to **Jesus** (when we do, we're *humbled* - we **can't** be arrogant, we **can't** do this on our own, we **can't** automatically speak **wonderful words**, for He said, *apart from Me you can do nothing* (also say nothing).

a) **Proverbs** hits us like a hammer and crushes us, but **Jesus** comes and He *lifts us*. The good news of the gospel shows us **One** who **never** sinned with His lips. **Never** had to say, *I'm sorry!* *Nor I didn't mean that.*

b) **Slide13c** **Peter** says that's one of the facets of His *sinless perfection*, His perfect use of Words. 1 Pet.2:22-24 *He committed no sin, **neither was deceit found in his mouth**. 23 When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly* (how He succeeded). 24 *He himself bore our sins in his body on the*

tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

4. We **do** go out of here saying we **can** do better/speak better, **BY** the Savior.

a) By His work on the cross we can have new hearts ... and new mouths :)

b) Jesus gives us both the example and the power to live out Proverbs.

c) Keep listening to this gospel. It will keep Renewing you!

(1) I'll keep saying it - Proverbs isn't just a set of Principles, it's a Person!

D. Slide13c And IF the Word of life lives in us our words should begin to sound like His.

X. Slide14a 8 PRACTICE: A FAST FROM CARELESS WORDS

A. Practice for the week: **Fast** from careless words - *especially online*.

1. Clarify: **Not** a vow of silence. **But** a commitment to *intentional speech*.

B. Slide14b I want to Encourage 3 pauses for *r* speech: *Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it loving?*

C. Slide14c **So Go For It Today: Go Sling Healing** with your words. Say kind things. Encourage everyone you see. Be over the top with it.

1. I promise - *those words* will land on wounds that need to be healed.

2. You've got a big day ahead of you. Go heal some people. Encourage the world. **We all need it!**

D. Next week Proverbs turns to something just as powerful, **the people we allow to shape us**. Because, wisdom is never practiced alone! Relationships & Friendships.

E. Prayer: Lord, *set a guard over our mouths*. Shape our hearts so our words bring life, not harm. Lord, Redeem our Words.

F. Keywords: Words, Tongue, speak.