

Proverbs Week #92 (10:20)

Psa 119 – Suggestions for using words wisely or good ways to use your words

In my reading and review of Psalm 119 I found 7 ways the psalmist used his mouth which can be considered as wise and right in relationship to God.

1. To give thanks (v 7, 62, 108)
2. To tell of the words of God's mouth, His ordinances, or His testimonies (v13, 26, 46)
3. To meditate (v 15, 23,43,48, 78, 97, 149)
4. To rejoice or sing (v 14, 54, 162, 172)
5. To answer those who reproach God (v 42)
6. To petition or cry out (v 131, 145, 146, 147, 169, 170)
7. To praise God (v 164, 171, 175)

The tongue of the righteous is as choice silver, the heart of the wicked is worth little. The lips of the righteous feed many, but fools die for lack of understanding. It is the blessing of the LORD that makes rich, and He adds no sorrow to it. Prov 10:20-22

In a recent lesson, I suggested that loving God and being wise should be understood from the perspective of our extended families and those who live as our neighbors. God's command to love others has real people in mind. As we continue to study, much will be said about how we use our mouths. As we consider what we need to learn and what these few verses have to teach us, consider the friendships and relationships that God has allowed you to have. These are people you speak to on a regular basis.

To learn: Oh to be blessed by the LORD, to be rich, and not to have sorrow and grief! Now that is a worthy goal. Being rich does not always mean having a large bank account.

“Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed.” 1 Timothy 6:17-19

“To be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share” are things that deal with how we relate to others. I believe these are the very means with which God will enable us, in order to have strong and healthy relationships and to understand the true meaning of being rich.

To discern: Can our choice of words really be part of being rich or poor? I think it can. Because our words can make a difference, we should stop and think before we speak. We should also remember that there is a connection between the words you speak and your heart. The comparison in verse 20 contrasts the tongue of the righteous and the heart of the wicked. The difference in the two can be seen in something as simple as the words they speak. Our love for others is founded in our love for God. We are to love Him with all our hearts. The words in our hearts will find their ways to our lips. Our lips can be used to build up or tear down. The beginning of wisdom in this area is understanding the condition of our own heart and crying out to God to create in us a new heart. As He does this, He will also enable us to train our families to know the difference between righteous and foolish uses of our tongues.

To receive: To acquire this skill will take practice. Building habits takes time and proper exercise. James teaches us that we are to be good listeners. We are to hear what scripture has to teach and then put it into practice (James 1:5). To receive what God teaches in His Torah we must not forget what we have learned.

To impart: We often hear, “It is not what you say that counts, but what you do” and “actions speak louder than words.” In this case, our imparting wisdom in this area has everything to do with what we say! For the sake of others, we need to remember to discipline ourselves in how we speak as well as what we speak. The whole point of speaking is to impart something upon someone. We might want to inform, persuade, or entertain when we speak to others. A wise person wants to feed people not starve them when they speak.

A wise person will build someone up with their words not tear them down.