Taming the Tongue 9.7.08

Cautions:

- To think that wise speech is only about two lists—the things we should and shouldn't say.
- To miss the connection that Jesus makes between our hearts and our mouths.
  - This is really a conversation about "roots and fruit."

The Power of Words:

- Have the power to wound or heal (12:18)
- The tongue can be a 'tree of life' or break the spirit (15:4)
- Death and life are in the power of the tongue (18:21)

Our Words Have the Power of Life and Death.

- Our words can keep us out of trouble (21:23)
- Our words can also lead us to ruin (13:3)
- Our words offer us a choice—wisdom or folly.
- Our words reveal what is in our hearts (Matt. 12:34)

When you open your mouth, do you realize what kind of power you have? Am I using my words to bring life or death?

The Character of Our Words:

Avoid:

- A lying tongue (6:16, 12:19, 21:6, 17:20)
- Crooked speech, devious talk (4:24)
- Gossip (20:19, 18:8)
- Flattering mouth (26:28)
- Talking too much, too many words (10:19)
- Speaking rashly (13:3)
- Hasty in his words (29:20)
- Harsh words (15:1)

Where do you see evidence of this kind of speech already at work in your life?

Embody:

- Gracious speech (22:11, 16:24)
- Speech that shows restraint (10:19, 17:27)
- "Fitly spoken" words (right word at the right moment) (25:11)
- Judicious speech (16:23)
- Sweet speech increases persuasiveness (16:21)
- Good / Positive (12:25)

Where do I see the evidence of grace already at work in me using this kind of speech? Where can I encourage it in the lives of those around me (myself, spouse, coworkers, children, etc.)?

How Do We Walk in It?

1. Recognize how much is at stake with our words.
   a. Look back at the power the Bible says they have.
2. Assess where you are in light of what we have heard today.
   a. Listen to your words. Listen to your heart.
3. Allow this to remind you of your great need for Jesus and repent.
   a. Despair or depend.
   b. Repentance is not just a moment but a way of life.
4. Ask "What changes God is calling you to make?"
   a. Tell the truth.
   b. Eliminate lying, gossip, filthy language.
   c. Think before you speak.
   d. Respond don't react.
   e. Make it your goal to **bring life with your words.**
      i. Am I loving this person with what I am about to say?
      ii. Have I prayed about what I am about to say?
   f. Seek accountability from your Community Group.
5. Ask ***"What is the WISE CHOICE in this situation?"***

Are these actions a habit in our lives? If not, what needs to change?

What Words Are Defining Me Today?

Homework:

1. Review these notes and think about their implications for your own life.
2. Parents! Look for ways to help see the power of their words and the kind of speech to avoid and embody.
3. Read a chapter of Proverbs a day (31 chapters). Soak in it!
4. Pray for wisdom like Solomon did. God will answer this prayer!
5. Continue asking "*Where do I most need wisdom in my life?"* Ask God. Ask others.

Visit www.crossinglouisville.com for more helpful resources.

Works Consulted : Expositor's Bible Commentary, Life Application Bible, MacArthur Study Bible, Messages by Steve Hart, Tim Keller, Darrin Patrick, Gary Shavey