

Sermon Series: "Wisdom for All"—Lord of Life Lutheran Church—1/21/2001

Title: "Wisdom for Speech"

Text: Proverbs 10: 11-14 & 18-21

Introduction: *Illus.: Rules for Conversation William Penn*

If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man's religion is worthless. James 1:26

Theme: Since our speech is a clear barometer of the wisdom of Christ that dwells within us, to be wise in our speech the grace and lordship of Jesus must steer what we say and how we say it.

*Ask yourself the question, "Is my mouth a fountain or a cesspool?"*

- Print and read Proverbs 10: 11, 20, & 21
- Confronting and throwing the brakes on violent speech which is straight from hell
  1. "There is none that is righteous, not even one. . .their throat is an open grave, with their tongues they keep deceiving, the poison of asps is under their lips." Romans 3: 10, 13
  2. Stepping back from the "scorched earth doctrine" (hurt and rage and revenge)  
-- **ILLUS.: WHEN WORDS DESTROY**
  3. Getting ride of "water-cooler chatter" (gossip and political lobbying)
  4. Refusing to "play in the mud puddles" (silly and polluted talk and vulgar jokes/stories)
  5. When we allow our tongue to be used by Satan, it not only shows our foolishness but brings on self-destruction
- Fostering talk and speech which offers life and encouragement
  1. "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.'" Jn7:38
  2. Let your tongue be an ambassador of peace (as much as depends upon you be at peace with everyone. Rom 12:18)
  3. Let your words be the advocate of the oppressed (defending the character of another being assassinated)
  4. Let your words be seasoned for witness (let others hear the new life of Christ rather than the old polluted life)

*Words of reconciliation versus words of division*

- Print and read Proverbs 10: 12, 14, & 19
- Understanding that we can not live with hate speech and live with Christ
  1. Racial and prejudicial comments have no place in the life of a follower of Christ who came for those people
  2. If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother. 1 John 4:20-21
  3. **ILLUS.: HUNGER AND HATE**
  4. Defamatory adjective find no place when we understand God created saved the one who receives our words
- Learning that spiritual maturity is demonstrated in restraint and forgiveness
  1. Be the first to blink in saying "I'm sorry" & "I forgive you"
  2. Often would could be said and should be said are different when considering kingdom principles
  3. "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. Matthew 6:33
- Measuring our speech rather than flapping our lips (avoiding the conflicting situations in the first place)
  1. Less is better—the more that you say the more likely you are to get yourself in trouble through misunderstanding
  2. **ILLUS.:** Never use a gallon of words to express a spoonful of thought.
  3. Wisdom over knowledge—people are not impressed or blessed by "know-it-alls"; rather by applied knowledge
  4. **ILLUS.:** "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

*A word about lying and integrity in speech*

- Print and read Proverbs 10: 18 & Colossians 3: 9-10
- **ILLUS.: NEW DOUBLESPEAK**
- Why do believers still lie?
  1. Living in the dark and are embarrassed and guilt ridden
  2. Carrying around unconfessed sin and feel condemned, trapped, and defensive
  3. **ILLUS.:** No one has a good enough memory to lie. Citation: Abraham Lincoln
- The wise solution to lying is stop doing it
  1. Come out of the dark into the light—confess and be forgiven—live in the confidence of your life in Christ
  2. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. 1 John 1:7

## Rules for Conversation

Avoid company where it is not profitable or necessary, and in those occasions, speak little, and last. Silence is wisdom where speaking is folly, and always safe. Some are so foolish as to interrupt and anticipate those that speak instead of hearing and thinking before they answer, which is uncivil, as well as silly. If thou thinkest twice before thou speakest once, thou wilt speak twice the better for it. Better to say nothing than not to the purpose. And to speak pertinently, consider both what is fit, and when it is fit, to speak. In all debates, let truth be thy aim, not victory or an unjust interest; and endeavor to gain, rather than to expose, thy antagonist. [William Penn](#)

## When Words Destroy

Abigail Van Buren once wrote about a woman who listened to a mother verbally destroy her child. The woman told the mother, "I'll give you a dollar for him." Only then did the mother realize the value of her child.

## Hunger and Hate

My two grandsons had discovered a new word to use when upset with each other. Their mother was shopping with them when suddenly they became angry with each other. "I hate you!" and "I hate you, too!" they yelled back and forth. "That's not very nice," their mother said. "I'm certainly not going to take two little boys who hate each other to McDonald's for lunch." Five-year-old Jamie quickly backed down. "I don't really hate you, Billy." But Billy, with the clear logic of three years, responded, "I still hate you! I'm not hungry."

## New Double Speak

In *The New Doublespeak: Why No One Knows What Anyone's Saying Anymore*, author William Lutz defines a few of the more creative doublespeak terms currently in vogue:

- Meaningful downturn in aggregate output (recession)
- After-sales service (kickback)
- Resource development park (trash dump)
- Temporarily displaced inventory (stolen goods)
- Strategic misrepresentation (lie)
- Reality augmentation (lie)
- Terminological inexactitude (lie).

## Proverbs 10:11-14 & 18-21

[11] The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life, but violence overwhelms the mouth of the wicked.

[12] Hatred stirs up dissension, but love covers over all wrongs.

[13] Wisdom is found on the lips of the discerning, but a rod is for the back of him who lacks judgment.

[14] Wise men store up knowledge, but the mouth of a fool invites ruin.

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

[19] When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise.

[20] The tongue of the righteous is choice silver, but the heart of the wicked is of little value.

[21] The lips of the righteous nourish many, but fools die for lack of judgment [\[NIV\]](#)

## Col. 3:9-10

<sup>9</sup>Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices <sup>10</sup>and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. [\[NIV\]](#)