



Introduction

1. Think of a situation in which you spoke too quickly or said something that you didn't really mean. What was the impact?

An opening question to get your group thinking about the things that we say to one another, and the times at which that sometimes goes wrong.

Read the 'Proverbs About Wise Speech' sheet – Part 1

2. How are the righteous/wise and the wicked/fools contrasted in these verses?

Simply looking for broader answers here. Whilst you may focus on a few specific things mentioned, it's worth not getting bogged down in finer details at this point. Simply introduce the great distinction between the speech of the righteous/wise and that of the wicked/fool, and the impact that can have.

3. What is the overall message given by these proverbs?

The overall message for this first group of Proverbs is that there is a difference between the words of the righteous/wise and that of the wicked/fool. We mustn't fall into the trap of thinking that it doesn't matter what we say.

Read the 'Proverbs About Wise Speech' sheet – Part 2

As you read these proverbs, mark any that you find particularly interesting or challenging.

4. How would you summarise the overall message of this group of proverbs?

This group of Proverbs focuses more specifically on the danger of wicked or foolish speech. Draw out some of the dangers that the proverbs refer to.

5. In what ways do we need to take notice of this encouragement to be more careful with our speech?

This is a chance for your group to think through how this may particularly apply to them (either individually, or as a group as a whole).

Read the 'Proverbs About Wise Speech' sheet – Part 3

As you read these proverbs, mark any that you find particularly interesting or challenging.

6. According to this group of proverbs, what makes for good speech?

A question to summarise and draw out some of the details mentioned in this group of Proverbs.

Digging Deeper

7. In what ways should the message of all these proverbs impact the way in which we communicate with others:

Use this question (both parts) to draw out some specific application that can be put into practice. In many ways there should be little difference between part a and part b, however this is not always the reality of the way in which we choose to act.

a. Face-to-face?

b. In other ways (for example, over the internet)?

8. If you have time, read Matthew 12:33-37. How is Jesus' warning here a further encouragement for us to be people who carefully consider what we say?

Jesus' words here are a stark reminder of the very real and serious danger associated with unwise speech. It should help us to see the ongoing relevance of the words of the Proverbs, and challenge us to seriously consider how we act in this area.

Pray

Spend some time sharing in groups of two or three the particular ways in which you have been challenged by this study. Pray for one another that you would be people who understand the value of wise speech, and that you would help each other in this area of Christian living.