

South Salem Sunday night series...

# PROVERBS

exceptional wisdom for a successful life



A landscape photograph showing a field of tall grasses in the foreground. In the middle ground, there is a large, dark tree with a bright sun setting behind it, creating a lens flare effect. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, with some wispy clouds. The overall scene is peaceful and evocative.

# PROVERBS

Wisdom and our Words

*Build Up or Tear Down?*

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Wisdom and our Words

## Understanding Proverbs:

- The Language: poetic parallelism
- 'Universally true but not true universally'
- Proverbs are concise
- Proverbs are **BLACK** and **WHITE**

“A proverb is a concise, memorable saying, usually in poetic form, expressing a generally accepted observation about life as filtered through biblical revelation.”

Robert McCabe

# PROVERBS

Wisdom and our Words

## I. Words are powerful

Proverbs 11:9, 11(ESV)

<sup>9</sup> With his mouth the godless man would **destroy his neighbor,**

but by knowledge the righteous are delivered.

<sup>11</sup> By the blessing of the upright **a city is exalted,**  
but by the mouth of the wicked it is overthrown.

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Wisdom and our Words

## I. Words are powerful

James 3:2–5 (ESV)

<sup>2</sup> For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. <sup>3</sup> If we put bits into the mouths of **horses** so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. <sup>4</sup> Look at the **ships** also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a **very small rudder** wherever the will of the pilot directs. <sup>5</sup> So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire!

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## II. The Destructive Power of Words - Lying

Proverbs 6:16–19 (ESV)

- 16 There are six things that the LORD hates, seven that are an abomination to him:
- 17 haughty eyes, **a lying tongue**, and hands that shed innocent blood,
- 18 a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil,
- 19 **a false witness who breathes out lies**, and one who sows discord among brothers.

# PROVERBS

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## II. The Destructive Power of Words - Lying

Proverbs 26:27–28 (ESV)

<sup>27</sup> Whoever digs a pit will fall into it, and a stone will come back on him who starts it rolling.



**Destroys the Liar**

<sup>28</sup> A lying tongue hates its victims, and a flattering mouth works ruin.



**Destroys others**

# PROVERBS

Wisdom and our Words

## II. The Destructive Power of Words - Lying

Proverbs 20:17 (ESV)

17 Bread gained by deceit is  
sweet to a man,  
but afterward his mouth  
will be full of gravel.



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Wisdom and our Words

## II. The Destructive Power of Words - Flattery

Proverbs 29:5 (ESV)

<sup>5</sup> A man who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his feet.

Proverbs 5:3–4 (ESV)

<sup>3</sup> For the lips of a forbidden woman drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil,

<sup>4</sup> but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.

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*“Sometimes the grass is greener on the other side because it’s fake.”*

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Wisdom and our Words

## II. The Destructive Power of Words - Gossip

Proverbs 11:13 (ESV)

**13** Whoever goes about slandering reveals secrets, but he who is trustworthy in spirit keeps a thing covered.

Proverbs 17:9 (ESV)

**9** Whoever covers an offense seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates close friends.

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## II. The Destructive Power of Words - Gossip

Proverbs 26:20–22 (ESV)

- 20 For lack of wood the fire goes out, and where there is no whisperer, quarreling ceases.
- 21 As charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire, so is a quarrelsome man for kindling strife.
- 22 The words of a whisperer are like delicious morsels; they go down into the inner parts of the body.

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## II. The Destructive Power of Words - Gossip

Proverbs 25:9–10 (ESV)

- <sup>9</sup> Argue your case with your neighbor himself, and do not reveal another's secret,
- <sup>10</sup> lest he who hears you bring shame upon you, and your ill repute have no end.

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## III. The Constructive Power of Words - loving

Proverbs 10:11, 20-21 (ESV)

<sup>11</sup> The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life . . .

<sup>20</sup> The tongue of the righteous is choice silver . . .

<sup>21</sup> The lips of the righteous feed many . . .

Proverbs 12:25 (ESV)

<sup>25</sup> Anxiety in a man's heart weighs him down,

but a good word makes him glad.

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## III. The Constructive Power of Words - timely

Proverbs 25:11 (ESV)

<sup>11</sup> A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver.

Ecclesiastes 3:7 (ESV)

<sup>7</sup> a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;



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## III. The Constructive Power of Words – careful

Proverbs 15:28 (ESV)

**28** The heart of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.

Proverbs 13:3 (ESV)

**3** Whoever guards his mouth preserves his life; he who opens wide his lips comes to ruin.

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## III. The Constructive Power of Words – careful

Proverbs 17:27–28 (ESV)

**27** Whoever restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.

**28** Even a fool who keeps silent is considered wise; when he closes his lips, he is deemed intelligent.



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## IV. Application

- A. Quick to listen, slow to speak, & slow to get angry (James 1:27)
- B. Don't be hypocritical in our speech (James 3:9-10)
- C. Let your words be a blessing (Ephesians 4:29)
- D. Let your words be wise (Colossians 4:5-6)



How SWEET  
are your  
WORDS  
to my taste,

SWEETER THAN HONEY TO MY MOUTH!

PSALM 119:103