

# (Proverbs) ch.18:4 - 19:5

by Zac Poonen

---

*The sermon emphasizes the importance of wisdom in speech, the dangers of foolishness, and the security of the Lord's name.*

**Duration:** 55:45

**Scripture:** Numbers 32:23, Proverbs 18:6-7, Proverbs 18:16-17, Proverbs 19:5-6, Proverbs 19:9

**Topics:** "Dangers Of Sin", "Righteous Judgment"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the danger of building a crowd of admirers based on generosity, as it can hinder the growth of the body of Christ. The Bible warns that a false witness or someone who tells lies will not escape punishment, either in this world or at the judgment seat of Christ. The speaker also highlights the negative consequences of sin, such as losing honor and testimony before others. The importance of not bringing reproach on the Lord's name is emphasized, as well as the need to avoid showing partiality to the wicked and thrusting aside the righteous in judgment.

---

## Transcript

Let's turn to Proverbs chapter 18. We were looking at verse 3 where it says, Sin and shame go together. If you lose your honor, you will get scorn in its place.

And that's one of the results of sin, that we lose our testimony before others. And once we have lost our testimony, it's very difficult to regain it. And that's why we have to be watchful that we do not bring reproach on the Lord's name.

Verse 4, Proverbs 18, The words of a man's mouth are deep waters, and the fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook. There are two things spoken of here. One is depth, and the other is freshness, like a spring.

And here it says that the words of our mouth should have a depth in them, and there should be a freshness in them. And that is one of the results of wisdom. The more we acquire the wisdom that's spoken of in the book of Proverbs, the more value there comes in the words that we speak, and there is a freshness in what God gives to us to share with others.

And this should be our goal, that in all of our giving God's word to one another, and I'm not just thinking of the meeting. I'm thinking of the many times that we meet other people, and meet one another, and we talk

together, that there should be a depth. The world is characterized by a tremendous shallowness in their speech.

They're only interested in shallow, earthly things. And even with believers sometimes, that is the case, most of the cases, and also not only depth, but freshness. When we are in touch with God, there won't be anything stale or stinking in what we have to say.

There'll be a freshness. The words of a man's mouth are deep waters, the fountain of wisdom is a bubbling brook. Verse 5, to show partiality to the wicked is not good, nor to thrust aside the righteous in judgment.

Now that's very plain and self-evident, and that is a description of how folly has taken over in the courts of law in this world, particularly manifested in the case of the judgment of Jesus himself, where the righteous was thrust aside in judgment. Verse 6 and 7. I want to read this to you in the Living Bible. Proverbs 18, verse 6 and 7. A fool gets into constant fights.

His mouth is his undoing. His words endanger him. And as we have seen, the book of Proverbs has much to say about the use of our tongue.

And here it says, a fool gets into fights because of the way he uses his tongue. And none of us would like to consider ourselves fools, according to the teaching of Proverbs, but if we create a fight by our words, then we have to remember that the word of God calls us fools. If you kick up a row with a shopkeeper with the words you speak, you're a fool.

Or you kick up a row with your husband or wife by the words you speak, according to God's word, you're a fool. A fool gets into constant fights. And people who get into fights, the word of God says, are fools.

And it's amazing how we can deceive ourselves tremendously in this area. And the Holy Spirit had to emphasize through James that let no one deceive himself. He says in James 1.26, if a man cannot control his tongue, his religion is worth zero.

Whatever doctrine he may believe. And here is where the devil deceives people that because of an increase in their knowledge of Scripture, they are becoming spiritual. But it is not an increase of the knowledge of Scripture that makes us spiritual, it's a control of our tongue.

And so we have to take these words seriously. A fool gets into constant fights, his mouth is his undoing, his words endanger him. Or as the Good News Bible says, when a fool speaks, he is ruining himself.

That's something we don't realize. That our words pollute us. And Jesus said, by our words we will be justified, and by our words we will be condemned.

And the fool ruins himself and he gets caught in the trap of his own words. So words is something that the Book of Proverbs speaks much about, and we need to take that seriously if we are interested in wisdom. Verse 8, what dainty morsels rumors are.

Or as the Good News Bible says, gossip is so tasty. How we love to swallow it. If we find gossip tasty, like we have considered before, then that is perhaps why people supply it constantly to our house.

It's just like various vegetable vendors and fishmongers and people who sell meat or any other thing stop by our house because they have found from past experience that we regularly buy that. In the same way,

gossip mongers also stop by those houses where they find people are regularly giving a ready year to that type of thing. As we have seen before, supply meets demand.

And we cannot blame just the person who spreads the gossip. We have to see that this particular person has come to my house because he has found from past experience that I give my year to this type of gossip. That gossip is tasty to me and that I love to swallow it.

So when a gossip monger comes to my place, if he's coming for the first time and he doesn't know who I am, it's another thing. But if it's a person who comes every now and then to spread some gossip, then I have to see that is an indication of my condition. You see, a fishmonger will never keep coming to your house because every time you turn him away at the gate and say we don't want any fish, after a few days he won't come.

The supply is because there is a demand from within that house. That's something we must remember. That's how we drive all these gossip mongers far from us.

Because we are not interested in it. We do not consider gossip tasty. And yet the word of God says it is to many people like that.

Verse 9. In the Good News Bible it says, A lazy person is as bad as someone who is destructive. Now, we wouldn't think of classifying a person who is destroying property in the same category, put him in the same category as a lazy person. But the Bible does.

He says a person who is lazy is exactly the same as a person who is destructive. And this is one of the themes which the book of Proverbs brings forth. It's very good that we can read these words again and again because when something is repeated again and again and again, it's like a father writing a letter to a son who is far away and he repeats something many, many times in the letter.

Then you know that's something important. Something very important. And there we see words, diligence.

These are the things the book of Proverbs emphasizes tremendously. Verse 10 of Proverbs chapter 18. The name of the Lord is a strong tower.

The righteous runs into it and is safe. This is a beautiful verse, Proverbs 18.10. Our security is in the name of the Lord. And that name in the Old Testament represents the nature of God.

The nature of God. His love. God is love.

That's his name. Father, that's his name. Jesus, that's his name.

And we know that all those names symbolize something that brings security to us. It's like a tower. We run into it and say, Jesus, I see who you are in the scriptures.

Father, I see who you are in the scriptures. I know you are love, perfect love. And I find my security in that and I don't have any fear.

I was reading something very encouraging today, how very often Christians can be tortured by preachers who tell them, God's not doing anything for you because of your unbelief. When the person is crying out to God for help. And so many people can get into bondage in this area.

We can think that if, to use an illustration, this is the illustration that this person used. He said, if my son were lying in a pit or something like that, and was crying out to me for help, and I was a father, I wouldn't dream of asking, do you trust me? Let me see if you've got faith. I wouldn't think of asking him all that.

I would go and help him. The very fact that he calls out to me proves that he believes that I can help him. And we don't have to torture ourselves into thinking, do I have faith? Do I have faith? If I call out to the Lord, that proves that I trust him.

And that's why I call out to him. And his name is love. Sometimes we can get the idea of God as a sort of a tyrant.

Here I am lying in the pit, and I'm saying, Daddy, help me. And he says, let me see if you've got faith. Oh, I see a little bit of unbelief there.

Sorry, you've got to stay there in the pit. That's an insult to think that God is like that when a father won't treat his own son like that. And we can get into that type of bondage.

Oh, there's a wee bit of unbelief there, so God leaves me in the pit. It's ridiculous. The name of the Lord, his nature, his loving.

And let me never forget that, let me get my security there. The strong tower, I run into it, and I'm safe. And the doors are wide open.

The train's gone. But on the other hand, you know what are the two masters? God and mammon, of course. Jesus said that.

There are only two masters, God and mammon. So, the rich man, his strong tower is his money. But it's only in his imagination.

In other words, he thinks that he's getting security in money. And here's the contrast in verses 10 and 11. For the righteous, their security is in the name and the nature of the Lord.

They know God is love. For the person of the world, his security is in money and in earthly things. And so we find that here is something, an area where we can profitably examine ourselves to see where we find our security.

Is it in the nature of a God who is perfect love? Or in something earthly? Which in my imagination is this is the thing that will protect me. I've got a job in an office or in a factory from which I cannot be terminated because of the wonderful trade unions that are there to fight. What a security there is there, isn't it? Unlike some of these other fellows who are not in a place where there are secure trade unions to fight for them.

It's amazing how believers can have their confidence more in trade unions helping them even though they don't join those trade unions but they are thankful that they are there because it makes their job secure in the office or factory and it is not in God. It isn't in their imagination. It is this earthly thing that protects me that gives me leave, travel, concession, gives me provision for medical expenses and so many things.

My security is in that. It's amazing how easily the flesh has such a tremendous tendency to lean upon the arm of flesh. That's why there's a curse.

There's a curse, it says, upon those who lean upon the arm of flesh. Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord. Blessed are you if your confidence is not in anything earthly but in the Lord and the Lord alone.

My security is in Him. If I seek His kingdom, firstness, righteousness I don't need any trade unions or leave, travel, concessions or medical benefits or X, Y or Z. The name of the Lord is more than sufficient. I have to be very careful that my wall of security around me and my family is not the terms and conditions laid down in my appointment order.

Then I'm serving the wrong master. Then I can never make progress in my Christian life. The blessing is on those who lean upon the Lord and who trust Him.

Verse 12 I'll read this in the Living Bible. Pride ends in destruction and humility ends in honor. Of course, we understand that in the case of Jesus.

Humility ended in honor. In the case of Satan pride ended in destruction. And those are two ways described in that verse.

Two ways in which all people of the world are going. Either in pride that leads to destruction or in humility that leads to honor. Verse 13 In the Good News Bible it reads like this.

Listen before you answer. If you don't listen before you answer you're being stupid and insulting. I wonder whether you have noticed people who while you're speaking to them and saying something they don't even wait for you to finish.

They are quick to say something. It is an unconscious sin but it's an unconscious sin that we should get light on quickly. To interrupt another person when he's saying something.

That means I haven't listened and I want to answer. I want to say something. It's usually an indication of how important I consider myself to be.

It's extremely sad when it is found in a person who is supposed to be wise and mature. It's alright when it's seen in a person who is a new convert who doesn't have light on his flesh. But there's an area that we really need to ask God for grace.

If we have a weakness in this area. Listen before you answer. And that when someone is speaking to you don't interrupt.

That's not good manners. Wait till he or she finishes speaking. And then speak.

Unless of course the other person is a chatterbox and you've got to make the person keep quiet. That's a different thing. But if a person is trying to say something to you the principle here is listen before you answer.

Verse 14 reads in the Good News Bible like this Your will to live can sustain you when you are sick. But if you lose it, your last hope is gone. You know, we know that those who commit suicide are actually taking away a life which they have no right to take away.

And therefore are in the same category as murderers. The only thing is they murdered themselves. And we know the word of God says that no murderer has eternal life.

So we know that no person who commits suicide can be saved. He has no eternal life. But when a person longs to die you know, oh I'm sick and tired of life and I'd like to die.

It is actually the same spirit the spirit of suicide that's influencing a person to say that. You must remember that. There is actually no difference between the spirit that led that man to put his head under the train and kill himself and the spirit that makes you say, oh I'm sick and tired of life I'd rather die.

Elijah said it. But it is the spirit of suicide that he was listening to at that time. That's wrong.

Because the word of God says in 1 Corinthians 15 that death is an enemy. And that's something we need to understand very clearly. 1 Corinthians 15 and verse 26 verse 25 it speaks about Jesus must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.

Now let's see this as a battle ground. On one side is Jesus and on the other side are his enemies. And he's going to defeat all his enemies.

And then it says there's one enemy who's going to hold out for quite a long time against Jesus and that's mentioned in verse 26 the last enemy fighting against Jesus that will be abolished is death. So death is an enemy of Jesus according to 1 Corinthians 15 26. How then can you welcome it? Can you welcome an enemy of Jesus into your home? Into your life? No.

It is not the will of God that we welcome death. That we are ready to die at all times. That's another thing that my conscience is clear.

And I don't need any preparation time. Either for death or for the Lord's coming. But to welcome it that's 100% wrong.

That is to welcome an enemy of Jesus into your life. And that's why we need to see that sickness and death are to be resisted in the name of Jesus Christ. So that I say Lord I want to live on earth as long as you want me to live.

I don't want to die too soon. I want to die when God's time for me is up. The number of your days I will fulfill the Lord has said in Exodus 23 26.

And then I have to take that seriously. God has a certain number of days for me. And I want to fulfill it.

But you know out there in the world people talk so lightly about death. And we can be infected by that spirit. We are to be different.

We don't look for death. We look for the coming of Jesus Christ. Always.

Even if you are 100 years old. We are to look for the coming of Jesus Christ. Not for death.

By any means. And so the will to live can sustain you when you are sick. And we must have a will to live.

Not for ourselves. Certainly not. But for the glory of God.

Lord I want to make use of my earthly life for your glory. That can sustain you if you don't capitulate and give in to the enemy. Death.

Say oh well I'm going to die now. No. But if you lose it.

If you lose that will to live. You don't see that death is an enemy. Then your last hope is gone.

The letter teaches us what our attitude should be towards death. In the living bible it reads like this. Verse 14 A man's courage can sustain his broken body.

But when courage dies what hope is left? In other words when we get discouraged our case becomes hopeless. The opposite of being discouraged is to have courage. To say yes God is going to help me even now.

Those are words of courage. As long as such a spirit is there yeah even his broken body can be sustained. But when that courage dies and discouragement sets in there's no hope left.

And there are people who die very soon physically too. When they are discouraged and don't receive encouragement from others. Verse 15 In the living, in the good news bible it says intelligent people or wise people are always eager and ready to learn.

That's another thing that the book of Proverbs speaks in relation to wisdom. That a person who is wise is a person who has got a willingness to learn. He recognizes that he knows so little.

Like Socrates said if I'm wiser than others it's only because I know that I know nothing. All the others they also know nothing but they don't know it. That's the only difference.

So when we know that we know nothing then we can be wise. In the midst of a world also of people who know nothing but they don't know it. Because then we are willing to learn.

We are willing to learn. And then we come to verse 16 in the living bible it says, here it says a man's gift, in the NASB makes room for him and brings him before great men. Now we can look at this verse in two ways.

One like the living bible says a bribe does wonders. It will bring you before men of importance. In the book of Proverbs speaks about gifts.

It can be gifts and sometimes bribes. And we know that in the world they say that if you give a bribe, that can bring you before great men. So that you can get something accomplished.

And if we keep a sensitive conscience, we shall find sometimes there is a very thin line between giving a gift and giving a bribe. That's something we need to give a little thought to. Because if you find yourself in such a situation it's easy to justify ourselves by saying that's only a gift.

Maybe a bribe. Either that I'm giving or receiving. The thing I need to ask myself is am I influenced in any way by this thing that I have received so that I become partial towards that person in some situation.

And it is a bribe, even if it's called a gift. Or am I giving this with the intention that he will be influenced in some way towards me in a better way. Then it's also a bribe.

You can see we can give gifts in the church to one another which can be a form of bribe in the sense I want that brother to be attached to me. What is that? That's a bribe. It's a bribe to get that brother to be attached to me.

It's a bribe to get that brother to be a special friend of mine. There's tremendous amount of bribing that can go on even under the guise of giving. And so we have to remember there's a very thin line between a gift and a bribe.

And we need to keep our conscience sensitive here that gifts given are not bribes and gifts received are not bribes. The other way we can look at that verse is spiritually, a man's gift makes room for him and brings him before great men. That means there is no need for any person to sit and think, well I'm not being given an opportunity to do something for the Lord.

There are people who say that. They say, well out in my church my pastor never gives me an opportunity to serve the Lord. He's always suppressing me.

Well, if a man has a gift from God no human being can ever suppress. That is impossible unless the God he believes in is some powerless, helpless person. But if it's the Almighty God the Bible speaks of and he has got a gift to the Holy Spirit no amount of men can stop that man's gift from making room for him.

His gift can expand his sphere of ministry and it's not a question of anybody trying to suppress us. It's not a question of anybody trying to have more opportunity than we have. The fact of the matter is that God gives a man a gift and he doesn't give another man the same gift and it's pointless trying to covet.

A man's gift makes room for him and that's why we can be at rest. If God has given you a gift, that will make room for you spiritually. But if we covet, we only end up in frustration and criticism and jealousy.

Verse 17 it says here, the first to plead his case seems just until another comes and examines him. And that's true. You see, you know we hear, supposing we're hearing a conflict and those of us who are fathers and mothers know, we've got plenty of experiences if you've got more than one child you have plenty of experiences that one child comes and says this and then the other child comes and says that.

That's why God's given us two years so that we can hear this side and then we can hear the other side and then we can arrive at a judgment. And we must not live as people who've got only one year. Partiality.

No. It says I hear and then I hear. And then I can form a right decision.

Now the sad thing is that Christians also can behave like this. When it says the first to plead his case seems righteous. Why is that? Because he presents his case in such a way that he hides all the mistakes he did and only presents the mistakes the other person did.

That's how children are. He did this, he did this, he did this, he did this. Then the other person will come and say, he did this, he did this, he did this, he did this.

And all both what they've said is absolutely true. The only thing is, it's not the whole truth because they have concealed what they themselves did. Each person.

Now it's alright with children, they haven't come under grace. It's alright. How sad it is when grown up believers who understand the new and living way, also have this spirit of self justification.

That when we present a case we do not understand how to be absolutely righteous in presenting something. That this is what that person did, but this is what I did also. I also did some foolish things there.

It's almost impossible to find a believer who can present a case like that. There are a few who have judged themselves and cleansed themselves from this self-justifying spirit which runs in our flesh, so that they can be no longer interested in justifying themselves, but in honesty and truthfulness. That's something we must develop brothers and sisters, that when we present a particular case or describe a situation we are so truthful that we will speak absolutely honestly about our own blunders and failures and the wretched things we did as well.

So that this verse cannot apply to us anymore. That when the first puts forward his case, he has spoken the whole truth. Think of that.

Think to be a believer like that. That after I have put across the truth, there is nothing more for my opponent to say because I have said his side also. I have said everything that I did.

Wonderful, if we can be so upright and love righteousness so much. But in the world it is quite different that everybody speaks in such a way that his case seems righteous until the other person comes and pleads his case. Verse 18, in the Old Testament this was the way they settled disputes.

You know, it's related to verse 17, these two people are quarreling and we haven't been able to come to a conclusion. So in the Old Testament it says, they used to cast lots. It's like tossing a coin, heads or tails.

And the lot puts an end to contentions and decides between the mighty. But praise God that in the New Testament we don't have to toss a coin. Jesus has taught us something far better and that is that when there is a contention to yield, to have grace, to yield.

And that is the mark of a really spiritual person. Like in the case of the two women who came to Solomon with one baby and when Solomon said, let's cut it into two. Who yielded? The real mother.

She said, no. Let her have it. That's always the proof of the real mother.

That's always the proof of a more mature spiritual person. Yeah brother, have it your way. Think of that story of the real mother.

That's a tremendous lesson in yielding. Husband and wife locked in some battle. Just like those two mothers before Solomon.

And they're even willing to cut something into two. And nobody is willing to yield. Believers who are in such situations, learn to yield.

It's not by a coin toss that we end our arguments in the New Testament. It's by the way of the cross. Verse 19 it says in the Living Bible, it's harder to win back the friendship of an offended brother than to capture a fortified city.

His anger shuts you out like iron bars. We can ask ourselves if someone has said something to you or done something and you are offended. Is it now very difficult for that person to have fellowship with you? Like, what is this? The bars of a castle and the strong city surrounded by walls.

You know what it is? It's just a cold attitude towards that brother. That's what it is. I see that brother and just a little coldness in me towards him because I don't forget what he said to me five years ago.

I've got these bars, this wall around me. Of course, he's a good brother. I stand up and say I've got nothing against anybody.

I praise you Lord that my heart is clear. I've got nothing against anyone. But there is a slight coldness towards somebody.

A slight coldness towards a particular sister. Bars, bars, bars. When will we get over it? Who are we ruining? We are not ruining the other person.

We are only ruining ourselves. I really believe with all my heart, the reason why many believers do not grow spiritually is because of some little resentment that is not completely cleansed out. It's like these people who get a sickness, typhoid and then a relapse.

And then they get over it and relapse again. And then they get over it and relapse again. There are believers like that who have a resentment, get over it, then there's a relapse again and relapse again.

Always towards the same person. Why is that? Always towards the same person. That indicates that just like in the case of typhoid or cholera or jaundice or anything, there's a root which has never been pulled out at any time.

It was just a superficial recovery from that disease but very soon relapse again. And we really need to be radical if we find ourselves every now and then having wonderful fellowship as we think with somebody and then a relapse back again to a little resentment against that person. That means there is something underneath that we need to cleanse out.

We're not to spend the rest of the time till Jesus comes in this constant relapse and recovery and relapse and recovery. No! There are some bars. We always thought this referred to somebody else who got offended and we discovered it applies to ourselves.

A brother who was offended. Something, my pride was hurt in the way that person spoke to me or did something and I cannot completely eradicate it. Yes, I've forgiven him.

And 99% is gone but that little 1% keeps on bringing a relapse every time some new provocation comes up in relation to that sister or that brother. We have to be very careful, dear brothers and sisters. Here's how we can check up whether we are offended.

If I'm cold towards one human being, I know I've been offended. Somewhere along the line I've been offended. My pride has been hurt and it's a tremendous amount of garbage when I say I'm not offended.

That's a lot of rot. It's an absolute lie. I'm just deceiving myself.

I am offended. That's why I'm a bit cold towards that person. But because in the church we say we shouldn't get offended, therefore I get up and justify I'm not offended but I'm just fooling myself.

Verse 20 and 21 in the Good News Bible it says, You will have to live with the consequences of everything that you say. What you say can preserve life or destroy it. So you must accept the consequences of your words.

We can say that words that we speak are like seeds sown. And of course we can repent of the words we speak. But let me tell you something.

Repentance does not remove the consequences of those words. I can feel sorry for what I said or what I spoke but I cannot remove the consequences of those words because the consequences are there forever. Supposing for example somebody told me something and said brother this is confidential, please keep it to yourself.

Don't tell anyone about it. And I went and told someone about it. Of course you know how I'll tell another person brother this is confidential, please don't tell anybody about it.

I'm only telling it to you. And then afterwards having told it to that person, it went round and it did some terrific damage to this brother. And he comes to me and I say ya I'm sorry I told one person and I'm really sorry brother for what I did.

I've repented. But the consequences of my words are still there. Are still there.

There's a certain confidence in me that he's lost which he'll never be able to regain perhaps for 25 years. Ya. He can't trust me in the same way as he trusted me before even though he's forgiven me.

I've repented. And the consequences that affect him also are there even though we've forgiven one another, we are in good fellowship. We must remember that.

That though we can repent and God forgives us and men forgive us, yet there are consequences of the way we speak which we will have to live with. That's why I say to young people be very careful as you grow up about the way you speak. Because gradually you will get a testimony in the church brother or sister that so and so is such and such type of person.

Because they have heard reports of your speech. And of course you can repent and you can feel sorry but you've got to live with the consequences of that testimony that you've earned through many years of being that type of person. What can you do about that? Now that's why we've got to be very careful that we don't say a lot of foolish things which are like seeds sown.

I can repent of it but the seed will still bring forth fruit. And that's something God has permitted so that we become extremely careful about the way we speak. And Jesus said an amazing words which I'm sure most believers in the world just do not believe.

Matthew 12 verse 37 He said, By your words you will be justified and by your words you will be condemned. Do you know that? By your words you'll be justified and by your words you'll be condemned. In other words, when I stand before the Lord, the words I've spoken can be played back, then I can decide whether I deserve to be justified or not.

And the words I've spoken played back and I decide whether I'm to be condemned or not. We have to take very seriously the words we speak. He said that just after the verse which says every idle word men will speak they'll give an account on the day of judgment.

So that's something we have to be very very careful about in our speech. It says in the NASB, with the fruit of a man's mouth his stomach will be satisfied. And in the Old Testament stomach refers to the conscience.

You turn to chapter 20 verse 27 20 verse 27 it says the spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord searching all the innermost chambers of the body. And it's an expression that symbolizes the conscience. And it says

here one meaning could possibly be that my conscience should be satisfied that the words I've spoken are truthful kind and necessary.

Verse 21 Death and life are in the power of the tongue and those who love it will eat its fruit. And that refers to the power that my tongue has to be filled with the fire of heaven as we read in Acts 2-4 tongues of fire came upon them and then we read in the whole book of Acts that the main instrument that God used thereafter in the apostles was their tongues and through their tongues they brought life to people all over the world. At the same time in James chapter 3 it says your tongue can be set on fire with another fire and that is the fire of hell.

In Acts 2 we have the fire of heaven setting the tongue on fire and James 3 the fire of hell setting the tongue on fire and it says I am the one who makes the choice. I can have my tongue set on fire with the fire of heaven or I can have my tongue set on fire with the fire of hell and I have to be very careful that it is always the fire of heaven that burns on my tongue so that the words I speak are words which are fiery in love not fiery with the nature of Satan, of evil and bitterness etc. Verse 22 it says here he who finds a wife doesn't say he who finds a woman, he who finds a wife that means one whom the Lord has appointed like when God gave Adam not just a woman but a wife to be a help mate for him lot of people just look around and find a woman maybe a graduate, maybe good looking etc.

but a woman but here it says he who finds a wife a God given wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord, that's a tremendous favor from the Lord that God gives you not just some woman from out of the two billion women there are in the world but a wife a help mate like he gave to Adam, that's a real if you get one like that you can say the Lord's blessed you it's a favor of the Lord and think also sisters of your calling if you are married to so live and so bless your husband that God can describe you as a favor God has granted to your husband as a blessing favor means a blessing think that you can be called by the Lord a blessing to your husband fantastic, think of a title like that, to be a wife like that to your husband, there is a calling that you can really seek to press

on towards that goal verse 23 the poor man utters supplications but the rich man answers roughly in other words the rich man is rude but when the poor man speaks he is to beg politely what does that teach us it teaches us a tremendous truth about what money does to the character of a person, money tends to make a man haughty remember that dear brothers and sisters and we are not talking about people out in the world, we are talking about believers and we can talk about people right in the middle of our church the more money we have the more we are in danger of being independent of others I don't need you type of attitude and haughty there comes a little arrogance into our speech if we don't work out our own salvation with fear and trembling think on the other hand of a brother who is

really poor he doesn't have enough money and maybe many other brothers in the assembly have to always help him financially just think how he would speak there would be a a humility there because he is so helpless but we can be one of those who nobody in the assembly needs help me I am quite alright, in fact I got so much to give to all the others and there can be a arrogance in my spirit because of my wealth which can corrupt me and which can withdraw the grace of God because God gives his grace to the humble and so those and many of us are in this category that we have more than enough for our needs I just want to say this verse teaches us that we are in terrific danger much more than those poorer brothers who have always don't have enough to meet their needs and are dependent on others

just you can see it, the way a person speaks there is a helpless polite asking but as with the other there can be an arrogance because I have everything I am not saying it has to be like that I am saying that if we are not aware of that danger it can affect our spirit, it can be like unconscious sin which other people notice but we need to be aware of this danger so we cleanse ourselves and say Lord I fall into this category of a person who is not really poor I have more than enough for my needs in fact enough to help others therefore I am in the danger of the second part of verse 23 of the one who can have a little roughness in my spirit a little arrogance in my attitude and speech, a little spirit of independence which hinders me from receiving God's grace and that's why I am so

defeated in so many areas of my life because God's grace is withdrawn let me just see if this may not be the reason that I am earning quite a bit you know he who has ears can hear and verse so we can, those who are in financial need can thank God for some blessing that comes out of that a sense of helplessness that makes it easier for us to receive God's grace verse 24 it says here a man of many friends comes to ruin but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother that means it's dangerous to have too many friends it's good to have brothers and sisters but if we have too many friends, it's going to ruin us then of course it speaks about the friend who sticks closer than a brother in contrast to all these friends, here is a brother that is Jesus, the friend who sticks closer than a

brother and in the amplified translation, this says reads like this, that a man of many friends will prove himself to be a bad friend to you yeah that just warns us, it's just a little warning to be careful that we are not people who have too many unnecessary friends out there in the world it's brothers that we need, brothers and sisters in the church, there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother and there are many, those who have the likeness to Jesus more and more, they are also brothers and sisters and they are the ones with whom we are to cultivate our fellowship chapter 19 verse 1 it says, better is a poor man who walks in his integrity than he who is perverse in his speech and is a fool in other words it's far better to be poor and honest and rather than rich and dishonest,

that's how the living bible translates it and in other words, here is a person who is perverse in his speech means he tells lies in his speech, in order to gain some money and by telling lies, he makes some profit and therefore he becomes rich and I would say that the vast majority if not all, the businessmen in India have become rich like that by lying and there is a word which says it's far better to speak the truth even if that makes you a little poor rather than to tell a lie and as a result of telling that lie, you make a little profit the book of Proverbs has much to say about that verse 2 also it is not good for a person to be without knowledge and he who makes haste with his feet errs there it teaches us the importance of knowing God and knowing the scriptures and having wisdom

and of not making haste and the good news bible puts these two sentences together one about the lack of knowledge and the other about the making haste and it reads like this enthusiasm, that is zeal without knowledge is not good impatience will get you into trouble and when we are young, we usually have a lot of zeal, but not so much wisdom and that zeal is good by itself but we need to grow in wisdom for it to go in the right direction and that's why when we have a lot of zeal and we find we are very critical of this, that and the other and judgmental of everybody else, it's good to not rush with our feet into a judgment but to just wait and think ask God for wisdom impatience and ignorance are both bad wisdom is manifested in patience not in haste a lot of hasty action that believers

take is invariably the result of their tremendous lack of wisdom verse 3 the good news bible reads some people ruin themselves by their own stupid actions and then blame the Lord I'm sure we've come across

cases like that where we do something stupid and we suffer for it and then say Lord why have you allowed this thing to happen to me as if the Lord allowed it it's a result of our own stupidity it's a result of why Lord have you allowed me not to have a good testimony in the church did the Lord do that? it's your own stupidity that's caused you to have a bad testimony in the church don't blame the Lord for that you humble yourself and say Lord that's my own stupidity there is so much of blaming the Lord for things that we ourselves have done, we have to humble ourselves then God can help

us verse 4 it says here wealth adds many friends but a poor man is separated from even the only friends he has he's got none left and that's true in the world that a wealthy man has got many friends and it's possible also for that spirit to creep in the church where we can try to make friends for ourselves with our money that's a misunderstanding of what Jesus said in Luke 16.9 when he said make friends for yourselves with the mammon of unrighteousness he didn't mean that we should draw people to ourselves but he meant that we should seek to win friends for eternity we should seek their eternal profit but it's very easy for us to make friends with material things and that type of friendship is not the fellowship in the body of Christ we are not to make friends for ourselves with money,

that's the spirit of the world wealth adds many friends and if God's given us wealth, we're not to use that to add friends we're to use it to build a church not add people to my crowd of admirers it's very easy to build a crowd of admirers around me who admire me because of my generosity towards them there I can hinder the building in the body of Christ.

Verse 5 a false witness will not go unpunished and he who tells lies will not escape be sure your sin will find you out the Bible says in Numbers 32.23 so if a person is given a false witness or has told lies one day or the other his sin will catch up with him if not in this world certainly at the judgment seat of Christ and verse 6 many will entreat the favor of a generous man this is related to verse 4 and every man is a friend to him who gives gifts, we know that that it's very easy to be a friend to some brother who gives us gifts but that's not the relationship that God wants in the body of Christ

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/14/SID14949.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/proverbs-ch184-195/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**