

Series Title: Proverbs: The really, really, great gift of wisdom.

Sermon Title: Week 1: Your not so secret super power

Date: 06-27-21

- **What are your *BUTTONS*? You know, things where you get *PUSHED* that result in you saying or doing something you later wish you hadn't said/done.**
- **Some people have *LOTS* of buttons... I don't have many (smile), but I do have a few. *ONE* is *TAILGATING*. Not *BBQ* before a football game... no, when a care comes *RIGHT UP* on your tail... *STORY***
- ***IN THAT MOMENT*... how does our faith in God make a difference? *NOT* just law&guilt... “I knew that was wrong, I shouldn't have done that”... How does God's word *EQUIP* us for when our buttons get pushed? *BECAUSE IT DOES*.**
- **Taking a two week break from Acts- taking a very short, but quite *DEEP*, dive into the treasure trove – the *REALLY REALLY GREAT GIFT OF WISDOM* that is the OT book of *PROVERBS*.**
- ***BUT FIRST*... Sunday June 27th, TO, PE...**

† The really, really, great gift of Wisdom

Proverbs 1:1-7 *The proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel: ²for gaining wisdom and instruction; for understanding words of insight; ³for receiving instruction in prudent behavior, doing what is right and just and fair; ⁴for giving prudence to those who are simple, knowledge and discretion to the young— ⁵let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance—⁶for understanding proverbs and parables, the sayings and riddles of the wise. ⁷The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*

- ***Proverbs* is 1 of 5 books of wisdom- along with *Job*, *Psalms*, *Ecclesiastes*, *Song of Solomon*.**
- ***The proverbs* are thought provoking, stirring, convicting, and at times downright funny.**
- ***But through them all*, the *Proverbs* are a really, really, wonderful gift of *WISDOM* from God.**
- ***WISDOM*, simply, is the combining of knowledge, experience, and good judgement to make sound- *WISE*- decisions.**
- ***IMPORTANT*- *proverbs* aren't *PROMISES*. “*proverbs* are true, except when they are not.”...**

Proverbs 22:6 *Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it.*

- ***Unless they do!* This is a principle, and a powerful one... but it's not a promise. This is true of all proverbs, biblical and otherwise...**

The proverbs aren't promises- rather, they are PRACTICAL and powerful PRINCIPLES of wisdom from the heart of God.

- ***BIG* principles we see throughout... *DESIRE WISDOM! DON'T BE A FOOL! DON'T BE LAZY! DON'T GO INTO DEBT!***
- ***But at the core of ALL* of the proverbs is one consistent theme- the greatest, and ultimately only source of true wisdom... it is *THE LORD*.**

Proverbs 3:5-6 *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.*

- **Today and next Sunday we are looking at TWO principles from the Proverbs. HOW WE RESPOND in the moment, 2nd, WHAT WE VALUE.**
- **SO! Today's principle- incredibly practical, penetrates virtually every situation we deal with every day. TURNS OUT, you have a SUPER POWER. When LIFE HAPPENS... BAM!**

† Your super power: The power to RESPOND and not REACT.

Reality! Much of life is experienced in the MOMENT.

- **Something happens. Car cuts in front of you. Your child is late. Your food arrives cold. Your husband doesn't do what he said he would do...**
- **BAM! What happens? Do you respond, or react?**
- **You see, in the moment, when life happens...**

Our great power is wielded through what we SAY.

- **By 'say', I meant what we COMMUNICATE. With our words, how we say our words, and our countenance.**
- **If you don't think your words have super power...**

Proverbs 18:21 *The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.*

By how we respond or react, we have the power to:

- **Stir things up or calm things down**
- **Further divisiveness with reaction, or engender peace with a thoughtful response**
- **React in anger, Exacerbate a wound or respond with patience and bring healing**
- **Power to Tear down or build up**
- **Power to Bring death... or bring LIFE.**
- **As we will see, the Proverbs generally don't just say what is GOOD- what you should do. They also tell the consequence of NOT doing what is good.**
- **In other words, our decisions, actions, and words are rarely MORALLY NEUTRAL. By how we respond or react, in ways large/small, we are either building up or tearing down. THIS IS CALL to be SELF AWARE!**
- **So let's look at some of these. I'm not going to comment much, they speak for themselves. Your job is to go back, consider, pray... SO-IN THE MOMENT**

† In the moment- the power of KINDNESS

Proverbs 15:1 *A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*

- **A person comes at you with anger, accusation. Do you react in anger? Ratchet things up? THEY HAD IT COMING!... OR, do you diffuse their wrath with kindness, listening.**
- **We see this in 1 Peter 3:9 "Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing"—GREAT POWER.**

Proverbs 15:4 *The soothing tongue is a tree of life, but a perverse tongue crushes the spirit.*

- **Soothing- reference to medicine.. kind words have the power to heal.**

- **TREE OF LIFE . THREE places in scripture- GENESIS (presence of life of God), REVELATION- Heaven- life and provision of God, and 4 times in the proverbs. HERE, this is an image of our words, our kindness- having the power to bring the very goodness, provision of God to another person. POWERFUL!**

Proverbs 15:18 *A hot-tempered person stirs up conflict, but the one who is patient calms a quarrel.*

- **Again- when we react, it makes things worse. But with patience and kindness we bring calm.**

Proverbs 16:24 *Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.*

- **Honey- image of joy- nourishment- and also of deep healing. This is the power we have with our words.**

† In the moment- the power of **THINKING** before we speak

Proverbs 15:28 *The heart of the righteous weighs its answers, but the mouth of the wicked gushes evil.*

- **It is a MARKER of God's presence in our lives that we are people who THINK. CONSIDER what we say.**
- **What look like? Few considerations/questions**
 - **Breath! No natural law demanding we immediately respond- because we usually REACT.**
 - **Q: What is my motivation for what I'm about to say? Defending me? Pride? Building me up?**
 - **Q: Am I angry, fearful- if so, I am vulnerable to making rash statement**
 - **Q: Do I really need to say this? If I think I do, do I need to say it NOW?**
- **"Evil gushes"... powerful image. If I'm about to go on a rant.. feel like GUSHING... that's a tip as to what is at work in my heart.**

Proverbs 13:3 *Those who guard their lips preserve their lives, but those who speak rashly will come to ruin.*

- **When I think before speaking... when I give time and thought for a response... I'm not just protecting others from ME, I'm protecting ME from ME.**

Proverbs 17:27 *The one who has knowledge uses words with restraint, and whoever has understanding is even-tempered.*

- **This is beautifully counter-intuitive! We think "I have knowledge, I know so much, I need to let everyone know." NO! To the contrary, knowledge, understanding, will lead us to say LESS, not more.**
- **THINK!!! IT IS POWERFUL!!!**
- **OK.... This is a hard one...**

† In the moment- the power of **LETTING it GO**

Proverbs 17:14 *Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam; so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out.*

- **Have you ever seen video of a dam being breached? It starts with a trickle, then a little more, more, leading to catastrophic failure and destruction.**
- **There are times... MANY TIMES... when we just need to DROP IT. LET IT GO. MOVE ON!**
- **"But that person insulted me! I can't let them get away with that! It's not fair!"... Okay, so in order to be RIGHT, to defend my PRIDE, I'll risk even greater destruction.**
- **By the way, this isn't about being passive, or unhealthy conflict avoidance. There are times wisdom will lead us to confront difficult issues- but not in haste, and not out of pride**

and self defense. AND it just may be that some of these things we just think HAVE to be said... it may be better to let go.

Proverbs 17:9 *Whoever would foster love covers over an offense, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.*

- **Again in 1st Peter we are told “ABOVE ALL, love each other deeply, for love covers over a multitude of sin”**

† In the moment- the power of LISTENING

Proverbs 18:13 *To answer before listening—that is folly and shame.*

- **In the moment- we want to TELL PEOPLE what they need to hear! But first, we need to listen. This is a vanishing skill today- to first and sincerely listen, consider what a person is saying- but this is an action from the heart of God.**
- **AND THEN, maybe the most important...**

† In the moment- the power of being SILENT

Proverbs 11:12 *Whoever derides their neighbor has no sense, but the one who has understanding holds their tongue.*

- **Question to learn- ‘Do I really need to say this!’ If you really have to debate, the answer is probably no!**

Proverbs 12:23 *The prudent keep their knowledge to themselves, but a fool’s heart blurts out folly.*

- **One of proverb’s great themes- Don’t be a fool! How? One big way... Keep your mouth shut!**
- **Finally, in the theme of self-preservation....**

Proverbs 17:28 *Even fools are thought wise if they keep silent, and discerning if they hold their tongues.*

- **What’s modern take on that? “Better to be silent and thought a fool than to speak and remove all doubt”**
- **HEAR! There are times when there is wisdom, and GODLINESS, in keeping silent.**
- **LOTS OF WISDOM- VERY practical. BUT HERE’S THE BIG QUESTION... HOW? HOW do we change our patterns... When LIFE HAPPENS- IN THE MOMENT- HOW do we learn to RESPOND rather than react?**
- **The answer is what we do...**

† Before the moment: the daily choice to GUARD your HEART.

Proverbs 4:23 *Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it.*

- **In Luke 6, Jesus said...**

Luke 6:45 *The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.*

We guard our heart through the choice of our SOURCE. The choice of how we set our minds. The choice of where, and who, we look to for LIFE.

Philippians 4:4-9 ⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

- **“THINK about such things”... “Set our minds on things above”... “Be filled with the Spirit”... and The God of peace will be WITH YOU.... I’ll add... the PEACE OF GOD will flow through you.. in how you respond.. in the moment.**