

Proverbs 14:33–15:4
Speaking Before the King

Monday, June 2, 2025 ▪ Proverbs 14:33–15:4

Questions from the Scripture text: What does wisdom do in the heart of one who has understanding (v33a)? But what happens to what's in the heart of a fool (v33b)? What does righteousness do to a nation (v34a)? What does sin do to a people (v34b)? What does a wise servant receive from the king (v35a)? What does the one who causes shame receive (v35b)? What does a soft answer do (15:1a)? What does a harsh word do (v1b)? What does the tongue of the wise do (v2a)? What does the mouth of fools do (v2b)? What are in every place (v3a)? Doing what (v3b)? What does a healing (NKJ: wholesome) tongue do (v4a)? What does perverseness of tongue do (v4b)?

How should we use out tongues? Proverbs 14:33–15:4 looks forward to the sermon in this week's midweek meeting. In these seven verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **we should use our tongues as those imaging God, before the eyes of God.**

This section deals with the character and consequences of our speech. v33 focuses on self-control in speech. The man of understanding knows when to keep his wisdom to himself (v33a) and when to use it (15:2a), but the fool has no filter for what comes out of his mouth (v33b, 15:2b).

14:34–15:1 deal with both the king's duty to punish evil and reward good (v35), together with the sort of speech that either dissipates his wrath (v35a vs 15:1a), or stirs it up (v1b). The righteousness that exalts a nation (v34a) is especially the fear of the Lord: true, biblical wisdom that is expressed in (among other things) wise speech. This should receive the king's favor. But, since sin causes shame to the people (v34b), the king has a duty to express his wrath (v35b) upon those whose shameful speech proceeds from a shameful heart.

This is not restricted to earthly kingdoms. For, there is One Who is king over all, and He perfectly performs His kingly duties (v3). We are created to use our tongues in life-giving imitation of the King Himself (v4a). Using it crookedly, perversely, imitates the devil by crushing life (v4b).

How are you filtering what comes out of your mouth? What effect do your behavior, and your speech, have upon your own family/church/community? Would others characterize your speech as gentle or harsh? What consideration do you give to what God sees, in how you use your mouth? To whom are you giving life with your words? How are you refraining from harming with your words?

Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for creating us in Your image, so that our speech can do good. Forgive us for when we have been unrestrained in harsh or harmful speech, and make us more like Christ, we ask in His Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP1 "How Blessed the Man" or TPH400 "Gracious Spirit, Dwell with Me"

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Proverbs 14 verse 33 through chapter 15 verse. These are the words of God.

Wisdom rests. And the heart of him who has understanding? But what is in the heart of fools is made known? Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin. There's our approach to any people. The king's favor is toward a wise servant. But his wrath is against him who causes shame. A soft answer turns away wrath.

But a harsh word stirs up anger. The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly. But the mouth of fools pours forth foolishness. The eyes of Yahweh are in every place. Keeping watch on the evil and the good? A wholesome tongue. Is a tree of life. But perverseness in it.

Bricks. The spirit. Amen. So far, the reading of gods inspired and an errand worked. When I was younger than Sophia, we learned. A little song in my family.

When I was young, like Sophia, we learned a little song in our family and the first stanza went. Be careful little eyes what you see. Be careful little eyes, which you see. The father up above. He is looking down in love. Be careful little eyes what you see. And be careful little ears.

What you hear? Be careful little hands. What you do? And one of the stanzas was. Be careful little tongue, what you say? Be careful little tongue, what you say? For the father up above, he is looking down in love, so be careful little tongue. What you say? Now, he is looking down in love upon the good.

But, as verse 3 says, he's also looking down. Upon the evil. And he does so in wrath. Because he is? The perfect King! What Earthly kings are supposed to do is in verses 34 and 35, and how we then should use our tongues since Earthly kings are watching out for those who are evil and whether you're good or evil will show up, especially in how you use your tongue.

that's described in verse 1 and 2 and 4. We. Have been given our tongues, which can do. Either. Great good! Or great harm. You remember that from the last section that we did in verse 25 of chapter 14, a true witness delivers souls. The tongue can do.

Great! Good! But a deceitful witness speaks lies and in the context of when there's a soul on the line. Speaking, the lie means destroys that soul fails to deliver that soul. So, the tongue can do great evil. And we see that again. Now, in verse 4 of our passage?

A hole, some tongue, or a healing tongue is a tree of life. Look at how much good. A tongue wisely righteously employed can do. It's like a tree of life. It's a continual source of that, which is not just. Healthful and? pleasant in that. It enables us to thrive, and it feels good to experience.

The Tree of? Was a sacramental tree in the Garden of Eden. Our tongues are designed to give that life that is from God. This is one of the reasons why we have his word in the scriptures. So that we can speak those words and we can speak according to those words and.

Communicate God's word, and he will use his word, of course, to give us life. A wholesome, tongued a healing tongue. Is a tree of life. The tongue of the wise? The tongue of the one who fears Yahweh? And knows the Holy One. Who is instructed by God's word? Is a healing tongue.

But perverseness in it. Crookedness being used apart from and even opposite to its design. Breaks the spirit. And so, how important it is. to have those soft answers rather than those harsh words in verse one. Because God cares about all his creatures, and he is the perfect King.

And if we use? Harsh words. In opposition to how our tongues were created and designed and purposed to be used. That's perverseness, and it breaks people's. And God, the good King is furious with it. His wrath is stirred up. Against it. And he will certainly punish. The tongue to the Y is, however, verse 2.

Uses knowledge rightly? It is a healing tongue verse 4, which new King James translates wholesome, but they give you in the margin. That the word means healing. The wise man knows. That his words, his tongue, his mouth, have a god-given purpose. And so he's careful about what he says.

To only speak with that god-given purpose. Wisdom rests in the heart of him who has understanding. It's stored up there. It's ready to be used. But he's careful about what he says.

Verse 2 the tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly. The fool, however.

Whatever is in his heart is made known. He's not careful. He doesn't care about the purpose. He uses his tongue impulsively in whatever way occurs to him and impulsively is going to be almost always entirely sinfully. And so the mouth of fools verse 2 pours forth foolishness. But the whole world is God's kingdom, and just like in.

Human Kingdom, a smaller Kingdom. a good wise King knows that righteousness exalts the nation. But sin is a reproach to any people. The. Has favor towards those who are righteous. The king's favor is tortoise servant, but the King has a wrath. Against him, who causes shame? Against The Sinner, who is a reproach to the people.

So, you see how, verse 34 and 35 go together. one thing because it's so often quoted out of context. that is. I think less commonly understood is that verse 1 is talking, especially about. The Wrath and anger of the king. A soft answer turns away wrath. But a harsh word stirs up anger.

Now, this is generally true. conversations, and even in conflicts. It's not exhaustively true. There are people who want to be angry and want to have conflict. And if you speak softly to them, it just infuriates them even more because you're trying not to have conflict. I had.

Extended dose of s at one point in my life. Where someone would come in with wrath and anger to my office every single day. And after a few days of trying and discovering that the software was. The soft answer was not turning away wrath. I just learned to. Sit there and take it, which still upset him.

but eventually he would run out of steam and the daily dose would be over and. So it doesn't. Generally, it doesn't. In every case, work with everyone. But verse one is talking, especially about the good King. The good King, who? The reason he is full of Wrath is because you have been sinful and causing shame.

Because perhaps even you have used your tongue incorrectly? And the soft answer in this case isn't just soft in style. Or manner. Not just even gentle and humble, although that's closer to what it means by the soft answer. Gentleness and humility, but even especially in this case. Contrite. Accepting responsibility.

Confessing your sin? Grieved over your sin.

Not talking back. Making excuses in the circumstances, drawing attention to what others have done wrong. But the humble answer in the particular situation of someone who has done wronged? And his King is rightly offended with him. Now, this is true with good Earthly Kings, the better the Earthly King.

The most is true of him. But it is especially true of the King of Kings. The sacrifice that pleases God is the broken. And the contrite heart. he, of course, gives the broken spirit and the contrite Heart by his grace. But he responds to it with more grace.

A soft answer turns away wrath. With a harsh word. your own. indignation. anger. defending yourself and? Making excuses. Especially by attacking others. this just brings more Fury. Because that's more evidence of that perverse that breaks the spirit. That's the end of verse 4, says.

And. We should be careful little tongues. What we say. Because God up above Yahweh up above. Is looking down. And he's a father. He's looking down in love and those who are as children in Christ. Love him because he loved us, and we want to talk in the way that pleases him when he sees it.

But there are many unto whom he is not father. There are many unto whom he is only. Righteous King and judge. And he looks down upon them in Wrath. So, let's learn to have our wisdom rest in our heart. Let's learn to remember the healing and life-giving, especially God's Life, by God's word, giving purpose of our tongues.

Let's learn to filter what comes out. And have that tongue of the wise. That uses knowledge rightly. To give life to others, healing to others as a tree of life. Amen. Let's pray.

Father in Heaven. Thank you for this portion of your word. Thank you for your spirit who gives. The broken spirit and the contrite heart. Thank you for your spirit who conforms us to Christ and makes us gentle and meek and humble and kind. Thank you for your spirit, by whom you have caused the scriptures to be written.

So that we might speak from your own word. trusting you to make those words. Healing to those to whom we speak. Glorify Yourself by. Applying all of these things in our lives. We ask in Jesus name. Amen.