

Wise Words

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This booklet was created from a message preached by Pastor Stevens.

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

GRACE PUBLICATIONS

P.O. BOX 18715

BALTIMORE, MD 21206

Printed in Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A.

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From a message preached on September 29, 1999.

Tape # 6704-7435

Grace Publications is a ministry of
Greater Grace World Outreach, Inc.

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INTRODUCTION

Skillful communication is such a lost art among people today. It is even very rare among Christians. Knowing exactly what to say and when to say it is so important. In a marriage, skillful communication makes such a difference. We have to understand just what needs to be said to the person we love. Intimacy in the purpose of God is so necessary. Godly love must be exchanged in communication between husbands and wives.

There is a lot of surface communication. You know this type of talk—people saying the same old things just for the sake of saying something. We waste hours saying things that mean so little.

This booklet will reveal that, as believers, we need to communicate deep things from the heart of God to each other. This can happen when the Holy Spirit is allowed to take over our human spirit and the ego of our soul. It is then that we become very thoughtful and skillful in our com-

munication. It is then that we begin to speak only wise words.

Chapter One

TENDERNESS AND MEEKNESS

“David also arose afterward, and went out of the cave, and cried after Saul, saying, My lord the king. And when Saul looked behind him, David stooped with his face to the earth, and bowed himself.

“And David said to Saul, Wherefore hearest thou men’s words, saying, Behold, David seeketh thy hurt?

“Behold, this day thine eyes have seen how that the LORD had delivered thee to day into mine hand in the cave: and some bade me kill thee: but mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the LORD ’s anointed.

“Moreover, my father, see, yea, see the skirt of thy robe in my hand: for in that I cut off the skirt of thy robe, and killed thee not, know thou and see that there is neither evil nor transgression in mine hand, and I have not sinned against

thee; yet thou huntest my soul to take it.

“The LORD judge between me and thee, and the LORD avenge me of thee: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

“As saith the proverb of the ancients, Wickedness proceedeth from the wicked: but mine hand shall not be upon thee.

“After whom is the king of Israel come out? after whom dost thou pursue? after a dead dog, after a flea.

“The LORD therefore be judge, and judge between me and thee, and see, and plead my cause, and deliver me out of thine hand.

“And it came to pass, when David had made an end of speaking these words unto Saul, that Saul said, Is this thy voice, my son David? And Saul lifted up his voice, and wept.

“And he said to David, Thou art more righteous than I: for thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil” (1 Samuel 24:8-17).

Why did David call himself a dead dog and a flea when he was speaking with Saul regarding this incident? Later on, David, now king of Israel, referred to himself as great because God’s gentleness had made him great (Psalm 18:35; Psalm 71:21). But here, he was very skillful in his

conversation with a deranged ruler who was bent on destroying him. David was exercising wisdom.

In this business of skillful communication, I know when it is necessary to take my wife's hand and be very sensitive and tender toward her. There is an exchange that goes from my heart to her heart. This love relationship is far from a surface relationship. Our talks aren't centered on what's on TV, or on what bills we owe, or on what we will have for supper. We have communication that goes far deeper.

"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

"And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace" (James 3:17-18).

This passage reveals the essence of skillful communication. Words from this type of communicator are words of peace, words of joy, and words of wisdom. It makes such a difference when a person relates to another person with spiritual skills to communicate a true heart, true compassion, and true love.

Careful, spiritual initiation draws out a specific, spiritual response. A specific, spiritual re-

sponse brings joy and soundness to our hearts. I believe in learning how to be a good initiator and a good responder. If I can become a good, godly initiator and responder, then I will be someone people love to be around.

The Savior's Identification

If I have a "bad" day, I won't get moody. I will be filled with the Spirit and I will make right choices in the words that I use. I will walk circumspectly and speak to the atmosphere with truth.

Read of how Jesus responded when he went to Bethany after Lazarus had died. In John 11, Jesus wept and groaned in His spirit. He was not living in a surface relationship. The crowd was weeping over their dead friend and brother. And now Jesus was there, weeping in deep identification with their loss.

Jesus was saying, in effect, "I understand what death has done to you. I know how much you miss Lazarus and how sad you are because of what has happened." They watched as He groaned and wept.

That was spiritual communication in the spiritual realm—pure, peaceable, gentle, full of mercy. This communication and exchange of

wise words is easy to be intreated and full of good fruit. It is without hypocrisy and partiality. It sows in peace and reaps in joy (James 3:17-18).

For young people and older people, for new Christians and longtime Christians, for all people everywhere, it is so important to learn and to exercise spiritual skills with each other.

Chapter Two

RESCUE, RESTORATION, AND EDIFICATION

“And the vale of Siddim was full of slimepits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain.

“And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way.

“And they took Lot, Abram’s brother’s son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.

“And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, and brother of Aner: and these were confederate with Abram.

“And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and

eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan.

“And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus.

“And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people” (Genesis 14:10-16).

Lot was in trouble, mostly because of his own bad choices. Still, Abraham went out and brought his nephew Lot and Lot’s family home. Family matters required a family response. Sure, Abraham could have left Lot in his problems. A man reaps what he sows, and Abraham could have dismissed it all as not being his business.

Abraham made it his business to rescue Lot.

In Jeremiah 31, Israel was in the midst of a massive failure. God spoke through His prophets and communicated many harsh realities toward His people. Yet, read what the Lord said in verse 4 of this chapter: “Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry.”

God’s wise words to Israel focused upon

what she would become and the expected end God ordered for her. He skillfully communicated His heart of love toward His people. That's the great design of God in His wisdom. He always speaks truth in love, and He always loves according to truth.

As men, we would simply see these people as miserable idolaters. Instead, God says, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee" (Jeremiah 31:3). These folks were far from God's design. Some were worshipping idols under trees that God Himself had made (Ezekiel 6:13). Yet, through the prophet, God spoke wise words full of love and kindness to them.

We can use God's wisdom in this wonderful and precious way ourselves. I know one man who calls me after every sermon I preach, and he always leaves an edifying message. He's been doing this for ten years now. He speaks right from his heart, and it makes my day every time he does it.

This is how husbands and wives should talk to one another. This is how children should communicate to their parents. We should all develop precious communication skills because our days are few upon the earth.

I love to meet someone in the hallway and truly express my appreciation for his life. That's great substance for some people. Unskillful communicators spill milk all over the place, and milk left out in the air too long spoils. But those who are mature use strong meat, and they are able to express stable and sure words that serve to bring discernment to the hearers.

The Substance of Loving Communication

Consider the woman taken in adultery in John 8. Jesus could have spoken something to her that would have torn her down and frustrated her. Instead, He said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more." That is a compassionate statement of substance toward a guilty woman. She was guilty. She was feeling much shame. There was great fear that she was about to be stoned to death.

But Jesus gave her God's heart of love. He protected her. He forgave her. He cleansed her. He gave her something she could live on, hope in, and treasure forever—wise words that were substance and truth.

I can remember a little girl in one of my first churches. She had an alcoholic father. One afternoon she went home and made a statement she

had heard in church. “Daddy, will you let me love you just as you are?” He had been drinking and said to her, “No, honey: I am no good.” But she pressed on and said, “Please just let me love you just as you are.”

Well, who do you think came to church for the first time the next Sunday? Daddy and Mommy were there with the little girl. Who went forward at the altar call to receive Christ? Daddy did. Who soon had a glorious baptism? Daddy did. I never had more fun in church than watching that man come forward. I really wanted to just take that little girl and dance her around the whole building.

Loving communication motivated by God got through to that man. He came to see the substance of God’s love. He realized that he didn’t have to change for his daughter to love him, and he found that he didn’t have to change for Christ to love him.

Chapter Three

THE INITIATIONS AND RESPONSES OF CHRIST

“I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 1:4).

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

“These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full” (John 15:11).

It is a very precious thing when God’s people, in the power of the Spirit, learn how to initiate and respond. Response is so crucial because, as humans, we are so prone to getting in the habit of living in reaction. We easily fall into ruts of exhaustion and tiredness. That is all understandable. Still, it is so much better for us to learn how to stir up the gift that is within us.

Jesus Christ so beautifully initiates to His people. He is so creative with that initiation. When others attack, Jesus initiates. He loves His own until the end (John 13:1). In 1 Corinthians 1, Jesus initiated grace. Thank God for that great, great gift. He initiates peace, but not the peace that the world gives. He makes us the righteousness of God by putting us into Himself (2 Corinthians 5:21).

In our distresses, Jesus hears us and He answers our call. The things we pray, if we believe, we shall receive them. Wise words—words that come from the throne of God—warm our hearts. They are Jesus' initiations and His beautiful responses. A relationship is so alive when there is initiation and response in the power of love, the power of mercy, and the power of identification with others.

Some husbands think their wives are rebellious in their failure to respond. Let me tell you, it is all on the husband. He should pray and communicate to his wife in love and gentleness. He should learn to lay down his life as Christ laid down His life for the Church. A man needs to be creative and learn how to touch his wife's heart. Then, I believe, you will see a beautiful, thoughtful, and sensitive response. She will

begin to build her husband up in what God wants him to be.

Learn to Hear God

All of us so much need to learn more how to hear the voice of God in His initiations. He initiates to us and calls us by name. He leads us in this great way. His initiation is never condemnation or indictment. His initiation is never intimidation.

In Romans 7, we see Paul struggling with his self-image and wrestling with issues about his performance. In Romans 8, God initiates and says, “Paul, there is therefore now no condemnation. You are in Christ Jesus. There is not a thing that can separate you from My love.”

Those are wise words from God—wise words that build up and do not tear down.

There isn't anything sweeter in the world than to see someone restored in pure love because of wise words. The pure initiation of love is brought out in confidence. It is so great to discern that there has been a misunderstanding and just embrace someone in the love of God. You really love that person, and you reveal a precious initiation of wise words.

God said, “Who will go for us?” in Isaiah

6:8. The initiation came and the prophet responded, “Here am I; send me.”

We are trained by God to respond and initiate—to respond to Him and then initiate to others. God gives us time and His Word so that we can study and develop spiritual skills.

One of the greatest things that can come between administrators, family members, parents, and children is a dialogue of wise words. Dialogue that is filled with purity and peace and gentleness comes from initiations that reveal the heart of God and the mind of Christ. There is nothing better on earth than a believer who engages in conversation that is from above.

CONCLUSION

“In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve” (Jeremiah 50:20).

Oh, how I love this chapter! Go and look for the sins and iniquities of Israel and Judah. They cannot be found. There is no record of them, and in wisdom we should not bring them up.

All of our sins were placed upon the God-Man, Jesus Christ, at Calvary. For me to judge and discuss sins that have already been judged once and for all is just not wisdom. Words spoken about someone’s failure are not wise words. God gave His law so that every one of our mouths would be shut (Romans 3:19).

In Song of Solomon, there are verses about the sweetness of the Bridegroom’s lips and the sweetness of his mouth. We savor the tongue that speaks the truth in love. We rejoice to hear

speech that is wise. Oh, wise words would do so much to change our relationships. They would be absolutely revolutionized by executing spiritual life and exercising grace and mercy in communication from God.