

Heart Talk Finale

Part 11-Proverbs 31:1-9 (p. 552 of the Pew Bible)

3/28-29/2020

Last week, we looked at our incredible God from Psalm 46, a Psalm that gave us 5 names of God, each of which reveals an aspect of His nature

Today, we come to the end of what has been for me, a very helpful series called Heart Talk For 10 weeks we have looked to apply the words of Jesus when He said, *“out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks”* **Matthew 12:34**

We’ve grappled with **Proverbs 18:21: ‘Death and life are in the power of the tongue’**

Today we’re going to see what a life-giving mouth looks like...in real-life talk as we listen in on a mother who aims to shape her son’s heart so he will live the right way

You may have heard the saying, *‘The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.’*

Parents and especially moms...your words are seeds planted in the soil of your children’s hearts and they have an incredibly powerful impact

“The wisest of women builds her house, but folly with her own hands tears it down.”

Proverbs 14:1

Wisdom builds families, but there’s a difference between wisdom, knowledge and understanding

Those with *knowledge* collect, remember and access the right information at the right time

Understanding is the ability to extract meaning out of that information, gleaning principles

Wisdom is the God-given ability to apply knowledge and understanding in any given life context

You can have knowledge without understanding, and understanding without application, but wisdom brings all three together in a life that is lived well before the eyes of God

In Proverbs 31, we see a king sharing the message and impact of his wise mother’s words

“The words of King Lemuel. An oracle that his mother taught him” **Proverbs 31:1**

Nothing is known about the identity of this king, other than his name means *Belonging to God*

He is a likely a king outside of Israel who put his faith in the covenant God of Israel

But he graciously show us the power of a life-speaking mother in his own life

1-This mother spoke words of responsibility to her son

“What are you doing, my son? What are you doing, son of my womb? What are you doing, son of my vows?” **Proverbs 31:2**

Did you notice the progression: *‘my son...son of my womb...son of my vows’*?

This is an ancient version of, *I brought you into this world, and I can take you out of it*

She is affectionately telling him that he is her son that she dreamed of, whom she bore in her own body for 9 months, whom she had given over to God and vowed to raise him right

This mother’s heart beats with a love for her son that is without measure

She’s about to correct him, but only after she expresses her love and responsibility before God

It was Josh McDowell who said, *“Rules without relationship equals rebellion.”*

A loving relationship can bear up times when correction is needed, and this mother senses it is

A wise parent who speaks life will often express the responsible love for a child

2-This mother spoke words of passion to her son

Three times she sharply asks him, *“What are you doing...What are you doing...What are you*

doing...?” Proverbs 31:2

We look at our young children, and cannot imagine them walking away from the way we raised them, but they often do, and we who are parents often did the same with our parents

Lemuel began to contrary to how she raised him, so three times she asked what he was doing

“A wise son brings joy to his father, but a foolish son grief to his mother.” Proverbs 10:1

These weren’t questions of a curious nature, but of a corrective one... *What on earth are you doing... Why are you living this way??*

Repeated 3 times, like staccato beats, was to pull him up short and get him to examine his heart

For all of King David’s successes, parenting wasn’t one of them as his sons lived so defiantly,

Adoniah being one example who unlawfully tried to take the throne

We are told in **1 Kings 1:6** that David ***“had never interfered with him by asking, ‘Why do you behave as you do?’”***

Wise parents ask why, they get below the behavior and address the hearts of their children

Just like weeds cannot be dealt with until the roots are pulled up, a transformed life begins with a changed heart

This mother aims at his heart, asking him to examine why he was behaving the way he was

She doesn’t hold back and she is about to admonish him to change his ways

3-This mother spoke words of correction to her son

In 1869, Louisa May Alcott wrote this famous line in her classic book, Little Women: *“Boys will be boys, young men must sow their wild oats, and women must not expect miracles”*

Our wisdom-speaking mom wouldn’t agree with Alcott’s final statement, she expected change

If a child is sowing wild oats, then those weeds need to be uprooted and life-giving seeds planted

“Do not give your strength to women, your ways to those who destroy kings.” 31:3

She gives it to her son straight: *You are on your way to destruction in the area of impurity...Stop!!*

It is amazing how often a parent freezes up when they see a teenager or young adult child walking in a harmful direction in life and then decide to say nothing at all

But wisdom speaks, willing to correct and this mother warns he is heading toward ruin

The phrase ***‘destroys kings’*** means rub out or erase, completely removed

A child may grow up and accomplish many things in life, but a life of impurity will erase and rub out the good they did

It was the immorality of Solomon that brought God’s judgment and split Israel into two warring kingdoms, ultimately leading them both to bondage in foreign lands

A life of impurity leads to bondage, and parents, we can stand in the way of that happening: speak life over and over from their youth and even as they grow older

4-This mother spoke words of caution and counsel to her son

“It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, or for rulers to take strong drink, lest they drink and forget what has been decreed and pervert the rights of all the

afflicted. Give strong drink to the one who is perishing, and wine to those in bitter distress; let them drink and forget their poverty and remember their misery no more.” Proverbs 31:4-7

The brewing of beer and fermenting of wine from dates and grapes has existed since 4000 B.C.

Alcohol and drugs were problems in the ancient world just as they are in our modern one

During this pandemic, wine and beverage stores have been wiped out of alcoholic products

Lemuel’s mother had seen that her son had begun to look for happiness in a bottle

He lacked self-control and that has proven disastrous in countless leaders

His mother cautioned him that alcohol will affect his ability to make sound judgments and ruling

The Ancient Carthage people had a law that no magistrate of theirs should drink wine

The Persians permitted their kings to be drunk one day in a year, and never any other

In Athens, the lawyer Solon, created a law that put a prince to death for drunkenness

The royal children of God must possess self-control, a fruit of the Holy Spirit

Therefore, ***“do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit”***

Ephesians 5:18

Lemuel’s mother is no teetotaler, preaching total abstention from alcohol, neither is the bible

She tells her son that strong drink is for those who are dying, on their way to execution

And it is for those who are poor and miserable to soothe their grief and distress

She isn’t recommending that if you are miserable, go ahead and drown your sorrows for getting drunk only increases them

She is telling her royal son, the king, *Don’t stoop to the level of a drunk. You are the king, keep your head clear, so that you can judge well for the sake of the people*

If we aren’t careful, we’re going to get from this sermon the same exact moralistic message preachers have been giving since the pulpits were built: avoid wine and women

And some will leave today feeling righteous and others like the worst sinners on the planet

King Lemuel’s mother is not just giving her son a list of moral *Dos and Don’ts*

She is reminding him he is the king, the son of her vows, belonging to God

She begins by bringing him back to who he was, his identity if you will

And we would profit by letting her words do the same for us

Christian, you are the child of God, one He set His sights on before He created this world

He has given you life, a new heart, a new family, as well as His Spirit to teach and strengthen you to live in a way worthy of His name

He has promised an inheritance to you, and His Spirit is a down payment on it

Lemuel’s mother is the voice of wisdom, the same voice that God is speaking deeply to the heart of every Christian struggling with sin, warning and admonishing and encouraging

When the child of God chooses sin, he/she will lose strength and joy in life, leading to ruin

But to respond to the gracious words of wisdom is to be restored, and rejuvenated

5-This mother spoke words of purpose to her son

“Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.” 31:8-9

During this pandemic, I have seen people recoil from me in fear when I walk near them

I had a funeral director decline doing a funeral for fear of getting the virus
 While we must distance, the Christian must not disconnect, we cannot forget the needy
 We were *born again* and saved for these moments!
 Our mom's earlier advice to her son to avoid spending his strength on impurity and alcohol was
 all leading to her admonition to remember to live for what really matters: those in need
 A godly mother's teaching is not just a constraint on evil, it is a force for good
 The word '**poor**' was used in the literal sense for someone lacking material necessities
 But it came to mean someone who lacked power, was vulnerable, downtrodden had no one to
 defend them in court or speak up for them in community
 By NT times the general attitude toward poor people was that they were despised human beings
 Plato tried to legislate that the poor would be banished, and if anyone attempted to beg, he would
 be driven across the border that the land would be cleansed of such low creatures
 But God's heart beats fiercely for the poor and downtrodden
"This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him and saved him out of all his troubles."
Psalm 34:6
***"O LORD, who is like you, delivering the poor from him who is too strong for him, the poor
 and needy from him who robs him?" Psalm 35:10***

Lemuel's mother tells him twice, speak up, open your mouth for those who have no voice!
 For the unborn, the victim of racism, the poor, the kids being sold into slavery
 For the elderly, the unwanted, the sick and the victim of crime
 The royal child of the King of kings will '***defend the rights of the poor and needy***'
 Speak up and do what is in our power to do, even at personal cost to ourselves

Parents, speak words of life to your kids of all ages of their responsibility to live well
 Aim your words deeper than their behavior and to their hearts
 Be willing to speak words of correction if you see them walking into impurity
 Give them words of caution if they lack self-control and counsel them to find it
 Make sure your mouth speaks purpose into their hearts

This is heart talk that pleases God and powerfully brings life to your family!

Amen?

Pray