

The Words of a Friend Are Worth Your Support

Hebrews 13:22

*“I urge you, brethren, **bear with this word of exhortation**, for I have written to you briefly” (Heb. 13:22).
*“Do not speak within the hearing of a fool, for **he will despise the wisdom of your words**” (Prov. 23:9).**

In the Bible, words of an enemy intended to harm are called “pierces of swords” (Proverbs 12:18), but appropriate words from a friend are called “apples (jewelry) of gold” (Proverbs 25:11). A Proverb is a short catchy statement about wise living that can be easily remembered. Our English word “Proverb” is made up of two Latin words: *pro* which means before, and *verba* which means words or verbage. So a proverb is a sentence that gives wisdom with few words. It is a short statement that summarizes a wise principle. In this study, we will compare and contrast how the Bible encourages us to speak wisdom.

I. All Christians have “good sense” or wisdom that comes from God.

The Hebrew word *sekel* (wisdom) has God’s name in its root (el) and it means “good sense from God.” David used it when he prayed for his son, *“May the Lord give thee wisdom”* (1 Chron. 22:12). Jesus Christ is wisdom personified in the Old Testament, and the life of God brings “good” sense.

A. This good sense involves perceptive insight ... “you see things the world does not see.”

This word speaks of an ability to think through things from an eternal perspective, as in:
“The righteous one takes note (sekel) of the house of the wicked” (Proverbs 21:12).

B. This good sense involves practical insight ... “you are able to apply what you know.”

This word “wisdom” was used of David when he understood the details of the pattern of the Temple furniture used as the direct representation on earth of eternal realities.
“All this (the pattern of the furniture) he made (sekel) clear to me” (1 Chron. 28:19).

C. This good sense involves personal insight ... “brethren, bear this word of exhortation.”

The writer of Hebrews had a concern for his readers. That’s real love. “I urge you ...”

II. The Christian will refrain from sharing wisdom (exhortation) with a fool.

This is the injunction of Proverbs 23:9 *“do not speak in the hearing of a fool.”* There is no possibility for you to convince, coerce, manipulate or maneuver, or in any other manner produce the desired spiritual effect in the life of the person that you love. *“The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned”* (1 Cor. 2:14). *“A fool is right in his own eyes”* (Prv 12:15), in need of nothing outside himself (Prv 28:26), is deceitful in his relationships (Prv 14:16-18), and complacent (Prv 1:32).

III. The Christian ought to count as worthy the words of wisdom from a brother and “bear them.”

The word “bear” (*anechomai*) means **in** (*aná*) and **up** (*echomai*) and is in the middle voice. This means you ought “to move in” and “to bear up” the words of exhortation from a brother in Christ. This means you ought tolerate, to forbear, and be patient with those who love you enough to exhort.

A. Faithful are the wounds of a friend ... (Proverbs 27:6).

The word *sycophant* – “a servile self-seeker who attempts to win favor by flattering influential people” comes from the ancient Greeks who used to “show the fig” (an obscene gesture of putting the thumb between your first two fingers) after they had just flattered the person. True friends will say that which hurts for the good of the person they love. Faithful is a friend.

B. Wise is the friend who welcomes the wound ... (Hebrews 13:22).

I urge you to “bear this word of exhortation.” Don’t run. Don’t shut down. Don’t hide. Bear it.