

Pleasant Valley
Church of Christ

3317 Amidon
Wichita KS 67204
(316) 838-4195
www.letjesusleadus.org

Schedule of Services

Sunday

Classes 9:30 am
Worship 10:30 am
Evening 6:00 pm

Wednesday

Classes 7:30 pm

The Pleasant Valley Church of Christ is a non-denominational group of believers who are committed to following Jesus in our attitudes, our relationships, and our worship. If you want the same thing in your life, please contact us. We'd like to help.

Unless otherwise noted, all scripture quotations are from the New King James Version Bible, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Wings



*"But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles" (Isaiah 40:31)*

March 18, 2007

A soft answer

by David King

"A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger" (Prov. 15:1).

"He who has knowledge spares his words, and a man of understanding is of a calm spirit" (Prov. 17:27).

"By long forbearance a ruler is persuaded, and a gentle tongue breaks a bone" (Prov. 25:15).

James says that the fellow who can control his tongue is a perfect man, "able also to bridle the whole body" (Jas. 3:2). Perhaps that is why so many of the Proverbs deal with the wise use of the tongue. If we can learn how to say just the right words at just the right time in just the right way, everything else in life will be easy.

Of course, controlling our tongues is not easy, especially when we are under pressure. Our first urge is usually to speak — anything, everything, whatever it takes to express our frustration or anger. Too late do we realize that such passionate outbursts are like pouring gasoline on a fire. They serve only to make everyone else just as frustrated and angry as we are; the problem becomes worse, not better.

The true wise man is he who restrains his passion and speaks in carefully controlled tones. His words are few and well-chosen. He speaks not merely to express himself, but to persuade others. He knows full well the potential impact of his words on those who hear them. So his mind is always three steps ahead of his tongue, carefully measuring the impact of every word on the listener.

This kind of self-disciplined speech is far more powerful than the verbal outbursts that so often characterize our confrontations. It has a calming effect on everyone and melts the icy barriers that hinder communication. More importantly, it wins the respect of others. If a person displays such good judgment in his speech, it is reasonable to assume that he will exercise good judgment in every other aspect of life as well. Indeed, even a ruler can be persuaded by a man who knows how to control his tongue. That's why good communication skills are considered to be the most important trait of those who are in a position of influencing and leading others.

How do we develop this talent? There are several strategies for reaching this goal.

A steady diet of Bible study will help. A mind that is trained by divine wisdom will not be quick to express its opinion, nor easily swept away by emotion.

We can also pick up some good pointers by observing others who remain calm under pressure, and have a knack for choosing their words well, especially under pressure. Listen carefully to what they say and how they say it; analyze their words, and note the impact on others. We can learn much from watching those who have mastered this skill.

But the biggest improvements will come only by experience, as we gradually develop the ability to "read" others and evaluate the impact of our words — and learn from our mistakes. The result will be a person who speaks carefully, and is respected for it.