

The Words We Use: Honest Speech

Proverbs 24:23-29

- 1) Read some different translations (for example: ESV, NLT, NIV, CEV) of Proverbs 24:26. What stands out to you? What does it mean within this context to 'kiss the lips'?
- 2) In the time and culture when this proverb was written (1,000 B.C.) as well as during the period when Jesus lived, a distinguishing mark of friendship was this proverb. Is this still the same today? What cultural differences exist?
- 3) Why might we struggle to give an honest answer to a friend? (Hint: Proverbs 29:25 could be one reason).
- 4) Read Ephesians 4:15. What does it mean to 'speak the truth in love'? What does Jesus say love is? (Hint: John 15:12). The Biblical understanding of love is that it is self-sacrificial. We have the other person's best interests at heart. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Paul also tells us that love isn't self-seeking, but is patient and kind, it rejoices with the truth. What might this practically begin to look like?
- 5) Read Luke 6:45 and Luke 8:4-15. What is the characteristic of the person who is the good soil? Out of our hearts we speak, and so if we want to honour our friends by giving them honest answers, we must cultivate a good and honest heart. How might we do that?
- 6) One way we can grow in honesty is by being honest in our prayers. Why might it be difficult to pray honestly?
- 7) Read Psalm 88:18. Verses like this show this that God can take our honesty. He wants us to cast all of our cares on Him (Psalm 55:22). Can you think of any other examples in the Bible where the psalmist or a Biblical character demonstrates honesty? (Hint: Matthew 26:38). This should encourage us to be honest in prayer.

Have an extended time of prayer, praying for one another that God might help us to truly open up to Him and live out Psalm 55:22.