

Things Are Not Always What They Seem

Introduction

Read the following or relate it in your own words.

Wisdom has many aspects, and keeping our thoughts to ourselves is an important one. Only fools utter all they know, utter what they don't know, and are responsible for much sin and hurt in this world.

The Scripture

Read the Scripture to the group.

“A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.” —Proverbs 29:11

A Real Life Example

Read the following or relate it in your own words.

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Ned was having a great time. He was on an all-day outing at the park with a group of his friends. Several parents had brought them, and were spending the day with them. As they all stopped for lunch, Ned walked over to the picnic table where he and some others had set their lunches. He opened his lunch bag and, to his surprise, his cookies and half of his sandwich were gone. He gasped quietly, “Someone ate half of my lunch!”

Joey was standing next to Ned and heard what he said. “I saw Brad looking through the lunch bags when I came back from the slides earlier. I think he did it. I'd let him have it!”

Ned thought Joey might be right. He had seen Brad too, and wondered what he was doing. But just then Ned remembered the verse he read in the book of Proverbs that morning. He knew it went something like: *“A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.”*

Ned thought, “It would not be wise to act on what I do not know. If Joey is wrong, I will be sinning against God and Brad.”

Ned ate what was left of his lunch. He was still a little hungry, but it did not prevent him from enjoying the rest of the afternoon at the park. Later that evening at dinner, his little sister Trudy said, “Oh, Ned, I got so hungry right after we got to the park that I just had to eat something. I could not find my lunch bag, but I found the one with your name on it. So, I ate your cookies and one of the halves of your sandwich. I'm sorry.”

“That's okay, Trudy,” said Ned. Then he thanked God for letting him remember the verse in the book of Proverbs, and he was glad that he had not questioned Brad about the matter.

Questions for Discussion

1. When Ned stopped for lunch, what did he learn?
2. What did Ned learn from Joey?
3. What did Ned decide to do about what he had learned? Why?
4. How did wisdom help Ned make his decision?
5. How do you think things might have turned out if Ned had listened to Joey?
6. Based on your answers to the other questions, why do you think Ned made the right decision?
7. How can you apply this Scripture to your life?

Conclusion and Resolution

Read the Scripture again. Read or explain the conclusion in your own words. Ask the group to suggest what specific changes that they can resolve to make in their daily lives that will help them to implement needed changes in this area. Ask them to especially consider things they have learned in the Bible to use as scriptural guideposts to a more competent and productive life.

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A wise person does not believe everything he hears. A wise person does not jump to conclusions. A wise person waits before he speaks, and waits to pass judgement. A wise person has a quiet mouth!

Teacher’s Notes
