

# A Word on Wednesday from Pastor Tonia "When To Speak" 10/11/23

*When words are many, transgression is not lacking,  
but whoever restrains his lips is prudent. (Proverbs 10:19)*

Have you ever watched words fall off your tongue and in shock asked yourself, "Was that my mouth?" It's so easy to speak without thinking, without really noticing your audience, or to let inappropriate words pop out.

It's not just you. We all leave wisdom behind and blurt out stuff at the wrong time, in the wrong place, but that doesn't make it OK. King Solomon, known for his wisdom, told us, or was it the Byrds, doesn't matter, one of them told us, "There is a time to keep silence, and a time to speak." (Ecc 3:7)

This bit of wisdom can keep one out of trouble, can guide one as they lead, and can serve speaker and listener well. Don't rush to fill the silence - especially if you really don't have anything to say that's worth hearing. Keep your snide remarks to yourself. That's hard for many of us, the humor one often feels compelled to share - may not really be funny. If it hurts, if it doesn't help the cause, or if it will have no impact on the outcome, we should keep it to ourselves.

We all know people who have to be right. People who need to have the last word. Sometimes it's best to just let them. And sometimes you do need to speak up, you do have something to contribute, a correction needs to be made. Weighing your words and limiting your interruptions causes people to stop and listen when you do speak.

We can all recall people we have known, served with, admired, worked with, respected, who did just this. We think of them as wise. We remember what they said and how they said it. Oh, we wish we would pause and reflect and pray before we speak. As Solomon told us, "Whoever restrains their words has knowledge, and they who have a cool spirit are people of understanding." (Prov 17:27) Don't I wish someone would think this of my words, don't I wish this is how I always spoke?

Be slow to speak, practice self-control over your thoughts and words. Show wisdom instead of trying to prove how important you are. Listen to others, really listen and try to understand why they said what they did. Speak to the heart of the issue. Know when to speak and when to be silent. Turn, turn, turn, and be prudent.

## **Please pray with me:**

Listening Lord, help me to listen, to weigh my words, to think before I speak. Give me patience, understanding, and love as I share my words with others. Don't let me leave You out of my conversations. Lord, remind me there is a time to be silent, a time to speak, and give me wisdom.

**Amen.**