



# LIFE Group Discussion Guide

June 7, 2026

## *Proverbs 18:21*

---

### CONVERSATION STARTERS

What are some highs or lows you experienced this past week?

What Scripture has been shaping you recently?

Where have you seen God moving in your life this week?

What did you hear in today's sermon OR read in today's passage that you would like to discuss?

What did you learn about yourself in today's sermon/passage?

What did you learn about God in today's sermon/passage?

What convicted you as you listened to today's sermon OR read in today's passage?

---

### OPENING

**Can you remember something someone said to you that stuck with you for a long time—either positively or negatively?**

Words may seem small, but they carry incredible weight. A single sentence can encourage, heal, damage, or discourage. Proverbs 18:21 reminds us just how powerful our words really are.

Today we'll explore the power that our words have to bring life or cause harm and how we are responsible for how we use them.

---

## **SCRIPTURE READING**

Read **Proverbs 18:21** aloud together.

Ask the group to listen for:

- The contrast presented
- The responsibility implied
- The outcome connected to our words

---

## **PASSAGE SUMMARY**

This proverb highlights the immense influence of speech.

- “Death and life” - extreme outcomes showing the seriousness of our words
- “Power of the tongue” - speech has real impact, not just momentary effect
- “Eat its fruits” - we experience the results of what we say over time

The message is clear that our words are not neutral; they shape lives, relationships, and even our own future.

---

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**What do you think it means that “death and life are in the power of the tongue”?**

Words can deeply affect others—encouraging, healing, or building up (life), or hurting, discouraging, and damaging (death).

**Why do you think words have such a powerful impact on people?**

Words connect to identity, emotions, and relationships. They shape how people see themselves and others.

**What are some examples of “life-giving” words?**

Encouragement, truth spoken in love, affirmation, gratitude, kindness, and wise counsel.

**What are some examples of “death-dealing” words?**

Gossip, harsh criticism, lies, insults, negativity, and careless speech.

**How do we “eat the fruit” of our words over time?**

Our words affect relationships, reputation, and influence. What we say often comes back to shape our own lives.

**Why is it often easy to underestimate the impact of our words?**

Because words feel temporary, but their effects can be lasting. We may speak quickly without considering consequences.

### **What role does self-control play in using our words wisely?**

It requires intentional restraint, thoughtfulness, and dependence on God to speak in ways that honor Him.

---

## **APPLICATION**

**Where in your life do you need to be more intentional about speaking life rather than harm?**

Examples: family, work, church, friendships.

**What is one specific way you can use your words to encourage or build someone up this week?**

Examples: expressing gratitude, affirming someone, offering support.

**What is one habit you can develop to help you pause and think before speaking?**

Examples: slowing down, praying before responding, asking “Is this helpful?” before speaking.

---

## **DIG DEEPER**

**Why do words often reveal what is happening in our hearts?**

**How can we grow in speaking truth with both courage and kindness?**

**What does it look like to align our speech with God’s character?**

**How can consistent patterns of speech shape our long-term influence?**

---

## **CLOSING THOUGHT**

Words are powerful tools that God has entrusted to us.

**Am I using my words to bring life or harm?**

**What kind of “fruit” is my speech producing?**

Challenge your LIFE group:

This week, choose to speak with purpose—using your words to build up rather than tear down.

---

## **LOOKING AHEAD**

Next week we will discuss **Proverbs 22:1** as we continue our series, *Uncommon Sense: God’s Wisdom in a Foolish World*.

---

## PRAYER FOCUS

- Thank God for the gift and power of words.
- Ask Him to help us use our speech to bring life and encouragement.
- Pray for self-control and wisdom in how we speak.
- Pray specifically for the invitation portion of our worship services—that hearts will be open, the Spirit will move powerfully, and people will respond in obedience to Christ.

---

## COMMENTARY

### Proverbs 18:21

The tongue (Hb. *lashon*, Gk. *glossa*) is the organ of speech. In both the OT and NT the word is also used for languages spoken (Isa. 28:11–12; Acts 2:4, 11) as well as for the people who are represented by those languages (Isa. 66:18; Rev. 5:9). The word is also used of the tongues of animals, especially when humans are said to take on some animallike quality related to the tongue, such as having a poisonous tongue like an asp (Job 20:16).

Because the tongue is the instrument of speech, many passages use the word metaphorically (or metonymically) to praise or criticize the kinds of speech in which humans engage. The speech that comes from the tongue can be either good or evil (Ps. 120:2; Prov. 6:17; 10:20; James 3:7–12). Proverbs addresses these matters in picturesque language. “The tongue of the righteous is pure silver” (10:20 HCSB). “The tongue of the wise [brings] healing, ... but a lying tongue [is for] only a moment” (12:18–19). “The tongue that heals is a tree of life” (15:4). “A ruler can be persuaded through patience, and a gentle tongue can break a bone” (25:15). Finally, for the “capable wife,” “loving instruction is on her tongue” (31:26).

The tongue can be a window into the human heart. It pronounces the thoughts and intents contained in the heart, which could be good (Ps. 34:10) or evil (Pss. 34:13; 52:2; 109:2; 120:2–3; Isa. 59:3). The tongue is important in demonstrating one’s true relationship to God. For the unbeliever the tongue is an instrument of deceit, showing man’s true nature (Rom. 3:13). Jesus said that it is by men’s words that they are justified or condemned (Matt. 12:37).

Controlling the tongue is one of the keys to a successful life (Prov. 21:23; James 3:2; 1 Pet. 3:10). It is so potent that both death and life are in its power (Prov. 18:21). The tongue is sharp, even as sharp as a sword (Ps. 64:3) or an arrow (Jer. 9:3, 8).