



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

What's something someone said to you that you've never forgotten—good or bad?

Words don't seem like a big deal in the moment, but they can stick with people for a long time. One sentence can build someone up—or tear them down. This verse shows just how powerful our words really are.

Today we'll learn that our words have the power to help or hurt and we choose which one.

SCRIPTURE

Read **Proverbs 18:21** together:

Ask students to listen for:

- The contrast (death vs. life)
- What words can do
What happens as a result

PASSAGE SUMMARY

This verse says our words have real power.

- “Life” = words that encourage, help, and build up
- “Death” = words that hurt, tear down, or damage
- “Eat its fruits” means we experience the results of what we say over time

What you say doesn’t just affect others, it shapes your life too.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

What do you think it means that words can bring “life” or “death”?

Words can either encourage and help people—or hurt and damage them deeply.

Why do words have such a strong impact on people?

Because they affect how people see themselves and how they feel. Words stick longer than we expect.

What are some examples of “life-giving” words students can use?

Encouragement, kindness, including others, standing up for someone, speaking truth in a caring way.

What are some examples of “hurtful” or “destructive” words?

Gossip, making fun of someone, harsh comments, spreading rumors, negative talk.

How does social media make this even more important?

Words spread faster, reach more people, and can cause bigger impact—even without seeing the person face-to-face.

What does it mean that we “eat the fruit” of our words?

Our words come back to affect our relationships, reputation, and influence.

Why is it sometimes hard to control what we say?

Emotions (anger, frustration), trying to fit in, speaking without thinking, reacting quickly

APPLICATION

Who is one person you can intentionally encourage with your words this week?
(Specific name—friend, teammate, classmate, sibling.)

What is one situation where you need to be more careful with your words?
(At school, online, with friends, at home.)

What is one habit you can start this week to help you think before you speak?

Examples:

- Pause before responding
- Ask: “Is this helpful?”
- Pray for self-control
- Choose silence instead of reacting

DIG DEEPER

Why do our words often show what’s really going on in our hearts?

How can you speak truth without being harsh?

What would change if you saw your words as something God wants to use?

CLOSING THOUGHT

Words are powerful—and once they’re said, you can’t take them back. But you *can* choose what kind of words you use. You can be someone who brings life into every room you walk into.

Challenge students to use their words this week to build people up, not tear them down.

Give a moment of quiet reflection:

“God, help me use my words the right way.”

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

Pray together:

- Thank God for the gift of communication.
- Ask Him to help students use their words wisely.
- Pray for self-control and kindness in speech.

- 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).