

Reflection & Discussion Questions
The Power of Words
Proverbs 18:21

1. According to *The Complete Word Study Dictionary Old Testament*, the word *death* used in Proverbs 18:21, “signifies death occurring to both natural and violent means. Figuratively, the term expresses the idea of ruin and destruction, especially when contrasted with the desirable notions of life, prosperity and happiness.”

- Why do you think death is mentioned before life in Proverbs 18:21?
- How can words bring death through *natural* means?
- How can they bring death through *violent* means?
- Without using names, give examples of how you have seen words bring about death.

2. In contrast to death, according to *The Complete Word Study Dictionary Old Testament*, the Hebrew word for *life* means “a living thing.”

- How can words be living things?
- List ways that words can bring life.
- Give examples of how your words to others or their words to you have brought life.

3. Several of the proverbs contrast the positive and negative use of the tongue. Fill in the chart below, indicating how words can bring death or life.

	the power of death	the power of life
Proverbs 10:19		

Proverbs 11:13		
Proverbs 12:18		
Proverbs 12:19		
Proverbs 13:3		
Proverbs 14:25		
Proverbs 15:1		

4. Define the words *gossip*, *slander*, and *rumors*.

5. Look up the following verses and write what you learn.

Proverbs 16:28

Proverbs 17:9

Proverbs 18:8

Proverbs 20:19

Proverbs 26:20

6. How can you stop someone who is gossiping, slandering, or spreading rumors when he/she is speaking to you?

7. List examples of damage that can be the result of gossip, slander, and rumors.

8. Read James 3:2-18 slowly, several times, using different translations, if you have access to them. How does this section of Scripture add to what you have studied and learned from Proverbs?
 - List three important truths you have learned as you read these verses.

9. Is it important to have someone in your life with whom you can discuss your feelings in a manner that is “uncensored”, knowing they will never repeat what you have said to anyone else? Why or why not? If so, what qualities does this person need to have? How does this type of a conversation differ from gossip, slander, or rumors, or does it?

10. The tongue is very powerful!! Take some time to sit with the Lord and meditate on the first part of Proverbs 18:21; ask Him to show you how your words are bringing death and how they are bringing life to others.

11. How do the lessons you have learned about the tongue this week inspire and challenge you?

12. What can you do to begin applying these lessons to your life today?