



“A fool utters all *that is on* his mind, but a wise man keeps it in till afterwards.” Proverbs 29:11

We have all played the fool – spoken out of turn; gave someone a “piece of our mind”; found we were talking without really having anything to say. Maybe we discovered that after our much spouting off we cited the wrong facts, the wrong places, or the wrong names; or maybe even worse, we were rambling on about something totally different than what everybody else was talking about!

It’s best to listen twice and then, just maybe, speak once. “Therefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger...” (James 1:19). When we are over eager to talk, sin is lurking somewhere in those several words. “Where there is much talk there will be no end to sin, but he who keeps his mouth shut does wisely.” (Proverbs 10:19 Bas).

Practice the discipline of silence. Never be rude, but set aside some time when the demands of family and job are minimal. Now, close your mouth – no singing, no praying *aloud* – just close your mouth. For some, it may be terrifying to be left alone with their thoughts. For others who love the sound of their own voices this exercise may prove very difficult. As one would fast their meals one day a week, holding your tongue for a set period of time may be the necessary prescription to a more self-controlled lifestyle of the wise.

“Holy Spirit, help me to speak only when there is something to say! Help me to have a disciplined tongue under Your control. Teach me to listen in silence of thought and mind. May I learn the discipline of holding my tongue. In Jesus’ name, amen.”

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