
Words of Truth



“That’s One Smart Dog”

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When a dog does something impressive the phrase “that’s one smart dog” gets used. We get impressed when obedient dogs do tricks. We get impressed when they know exactly what to do without verbal commands. That being said, have you ever had a conversation, in the English language, wherein a dog has verbally answered your questions? Have you ever sat with your Bible open studying and have the dog walk on over and begin to explain the text to you? Have you ever been in a Bible discussion where the dog chimes in and uses some Scriptures to show their Bible knowledge? Of course we have not. Dogs show their intelligence through various actions.

Seeing that dogs can show that they’re intelligent by never speaking a word is a lesson for us to consider. If a dog can be seen as wise, understanding, and smart without speaking one word; why can’t people understand that they don’t have to talk all of the time to seem intelligent? There are some lessons we can learn from dogs. We’re going to do so in this study.

Smart Dogs Don’t Try To Act Like Know-It-Alls

There are people, no matter what the subject of discussion is, that feel they have to chime in with a comment when others are talking. These individuals have something to say about everything. They act like they’re never wrong. They’ll argue with you about something they’ve never seen or heard of just because they are talkers. In Bible classes, these individuals always have a comment. When they actually do know a Scripture for something, they’re going to fire it off like a firework on the fourth of July. Smart dogs know better. Smart dogs know they’re not the master, but the servant.

We’d do well to all remember that we’re not know-it-alls even when we know something. For, in reality, we’re rather ignorant compared to our Master. Please consider these Scriptures when you begin to think you know something and get a little arrogant with that knowledge: *“I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy. Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell... For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts... O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever... Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own*

craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours" (Proverbs 30:3-4, Isaiah 55:8-9, Romans 11:33-36, and I Corinthians 3:18-21). Now, do we really want to talk to show that we think we're know-it-alls?

The Smart Dog Isn't One Of Any Words, Let Alone Many Words

I am not aware of any dog that has ever naturally spoken a word in English. Yet, we can see a smart dog from what they do. The same is true of people. You can know more about a person by what they do rather than what they say (Isaiah 29:13, Matthew 7:15-20, and Titus 1:16). Thus, we should all understand that wise people are going to look more at what we do rather than what we say when they are wanting to learn about us. We should prefer people to look at our actions. We are commanded to live as examples to others (Matthew 5:14-16, I Timothy 4:12, and Titus 2:7-8) rather than just talking the talk.

When we study the Scriptures we find that we shouldn't be the people who desire to talk all of the time. The following Scriptures make the point much better than I can: *"In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise... He that hath knowledge spareth his words: and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit. Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding... Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil. Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few. For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice is known by multitude of words"* (Proverbs 10:19, Proverbs 17:27-28, and Ecclesiastes 5:1-3). Like a smart dog, maybe we can learn to stay away from dangerous things.

If A Smart Dog Gets Trapped He or She Won't Repeat That Mistake

Likely, we've all said something stupid at some time in the past. Well, maybe we could be wise like a smart dog and learn that words can hurt others and us. Words are often like traps (Proverbs 6:2 and Proverbs 12:13). The word of God tells us to guard our mouths to keep our souls from troubles (Proverbs 21:23). Death and life are in the power of the tongue (Proverbs 18:21). Let's not allow our tongues to become traps we get caught in. Remember, our words have to be right in the sight of the Lord as well as our actions (Colossians 3:17). Every word we speak will be brought into judgment (Matthew 12:34-37).

Conclusion

I once sat in a Bible class as a "visiting preacher". After the class the teacher wanted to know why I didn't have much to say in the class. He thought it would have been good for me to speak up some more and share my knowledge with the brethren there. Folks, I learned long ago to be more like a smart dog. Any time I teach (whether from a pew or a pulpit) I want to spend much time in measuring my words and being cautious about what I am going to teach (cf. James 3:1). Let me conclude with the verse I gave this teacher: *"A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards"* (Proverbs 29:11).