



THINK BEFORE YOU ACT

Do not trust every word that you hear or every impulse of your heart. Rather, consider things carefully and in the light of God's will. It is a sad reality, but we are so weak that we are more ready to believe bad things about people—and then speak evil of them ourselves—than we are to believe or say good things about them. Those of us who strive for holiness, though, do not quickly believe tales about others, because we understand human sinfulness, which is prone to evil and often comes out in our words.

It is great wisdom not to be rash in our actions or stubborn in our own opinions. What's more, it is wise not to believe other people's gossip or to spread around rumors. Instead of following your own ideas and notions, seek the counsel of wise and conscientious Christians. Indeed, allow yourself to be led by those better than yourself.

A good life makes a person wise according to God and experienced in many things. The more humble and obedient one is to God, the wiser and more at peace he or she will be in all things.

For further thought...

Do you find yourself often saying things without thinking? Do your words build up and encourage others, or tear them down and make them feel bad? Being honest, you like a little gossip, don't you?

Do you tend to act before you think? Are you stubborn and opinionated? Do you seek advice before you make major decisions? Do you pray for God's will to be revealed, or do you just plow ahead in your own will?

What do you think it means to view things through the lenses of Scripture? How can you be sure that you are seeing things as Christ sees them? Can we grow to think and act spiritually, and do things as Christ would do them?

Let us heed these words of Wisdom from Proverbs:

*"I, wisdom, dwell together with prudence;
I possess knowledge and discretion." (8:12)*

*"Reckless words pierce like a sword,
but the tongue of the wise brings healing." (12:18)*

*"One who is wise is cautious and turns away from evil,
but a fool is reckless and careless." (14:16)*

*"The wise in heart are called discerning,
and pleasant words promote instruction." (16:21)*

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(Adapted from *The Imitation of Christ*, Book 1:4)