
Faith and Family Business: How “fit” Are Your Words? (Proverbs 25:11)

By [Dr. Bill Long](#)

One of my favorite styles of painting is still life—where fruit or flowers are simply depicted in a domestic setting. The great French painter [Paul Cézanne](#) spent nearly two decades painting these, with apples as his [fruit of choice](#). He painted apples alone, apples with oranges, apples with pears, but seemingly always apples. There was something about the simplicity yet completeness of the form of the apple that attracted him.

I had Cézanne on my mind as I read this verse from Proverbs: “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver” (25:11). This is a biblical “still life” painting, likening that common fruit to well-chosen words. But note what the Scriptures do. Well-chosen and fitting words aren’t just like apples; they are like apples *of gold*. And, making it even more precious, like apples of gold *in a setting of silver*.

Thus, well-chosen or “fit” words have both an economic and aesthetic value. They bring order, beauty, clarity, and simplicity in the midst of the tumult, ambiguity, uncertainty and complexity that often characterize our family businesses. How many times have you sensed that words you speak, or words you hear, just don’t seem to “fit” with the people or situation? Perhaps they are spoken with anger or carelessness, or without due thought or knowledge. People get hurt, plans fall apart, and relationships sour due to “unfit” words.

The key, according to Proverbs, is to learn to speak “fit” words. They are so beautiful and so valuable. What are “fit” words? Stay tuned...