

SPEECH THAT CANNOT BE CONDEMNED

We all know that words are the primary means of how we communicate with one another. It would probably amaze us all of how many words each one of us say in a twenty-four hour period. In the whirlwind of words that we hear each day, have we ever stopped and listened to the speech among those we associate with? Even more importantly, have we ever slowed down long enough to listen to ourselves? People talk about many things throughout the day; sports, weather, the news, work, and what they do in their spare time, but it's sad to say that the number one topic with most people is everybody else. They huddle up, and dish the dirt on everyone who usually isn't present, never taking into consideration that when they aren't present, they will be the one in the spotlight by those that they huddle up with to tear other people down. They gossip, fault find, make fun of, put down, and complain about, and criticize almost everyone it seems.

Jesus made a powerful statement that all would do well to consider in Matthew 12:34-37. Jesus said:

34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

What this should impress upon us is that the words which we employ in this life, we will see again one day and not only that but have to explain why we said what we did. This puts a new light on the old phrase "having to eat your words." We impress upon our children "be careful little mouth what you say" but sometimes we don't follow through with it ourselves as adults. Jesus points out the heart of the problem in verse 34 by saying that the heart is the problem. Just three chapters later in Matthew 15 Jesus capitalizes upon how that the words we say reveal who we really are.

18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:

20 These are the things which defile a man

Also notice what Wise King Solomon said in Proverbs 23:7 "For as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." It's no wonder that he said

earlier in the book “keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life.”(Proverbs 4:23)

We need to **STOP** and ask ourselves some serious questions. How do we fix this age old problem, or can it even be fixed? The Bible declares that it can! Here are some suggestions:

1. **Think before we speak:** Before we open our mouth we need to stop and ask ourselves “Are the words I am about to say, words that I wouldn’t be ashamed for anyone to hear?” Are the words I am about to say words that I would say if the Lord was present? We cannot afford spiritually to engage the mouth, and disengage the brain. The Lord said in Matthew 7:12 “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the Law and the prophets.” When we speak, let’s try to say the things of others that we would want others to say of us. Remember: once we say words and let them out, we can’t put them back in.
2. **Let your speech be seasoned with “salt”:** This may seem like a funny saying to many, but it is what the Apostle Paul admonished the Colossian brethren to do(4:6). What did he mean by this? We know that Jesus said that those who would follow Him would be the “salt of the earth”. (Matt: 5:13) What Paul and Jesus were referring to was “influence”. When we speak to people, can they tell that we are a Christian? Do we speak of spiritual things to others; are we like David who said “Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul.” (Psalms 66:16) The only way many people might enquire of the faith in Christ is by the words we speak daily.”
3. **Don’t be a good listener to bad talk:** When the crowd gathers round to run down other people, tell dirty jokes, and gossip, we might not necessarily be the one’s engaging in the bad talk, but we might be a real good listener, giving audience to what’s being said. Remember the words of the Psalmist who said “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the council of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful....”(Psalms 1:1) Many times when we listen to the things that Christians shouldn’t it can be a poison to our spiritual health. 1st Corinthians 15:33 says “Be not deceived, evil companionships corrupt good morals.”
4. **Be an encourager:** It really doesn’t cost much to say kind words. Really, that’s what people need. There is enough negative in the world to go around. Purpose in your heart this week to direct peoples thoughts to the good things, and remember; Barnabas was an encourager, and you can be to.