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The Tongue is Powerful

Robert Buchanon

According to legend many years ago, there were an eagle and a turtle who became very good friends. They always traveled together on long trips. However, one day the turtle became very tired and informed the eagle that he could not make the return trip. They sat and tried to think of some way for the turtle to make the return journey.

Finally, the turtle had a bright idea. He said to the eagle, "You can fly and carry a stick in your claws and let me hold to the stick with my mouth." They tried it and it worked fine.

As they flew over a farm, two of the farmhands looked up and saw the unusual sight. One of the men said to the other, "That's a clever idea. I wonder if the eagle or the turtle thought of it?" The turtle, desiring to receive the praise, opened his mouth to say, "I did." You can figure out the rest of the story. Unable to bridle his tongue, the turtle met his death.

The Tongue's Power

The tongue is the cause of the spiritual death of many Christians. Have you ever really considered the power that the tongue possesses? Freedom of speech is a blessing. The gift of speech is a gift of God, but it is the will of God that a Christian bridle his tongue. James said, "If any man thinketh himself to be religious, while he bridlETH not his tongue but deceiveth his heart, this man's religion is vain" (Jas. 1:26). Jesus tells us if we use the tongue in an unsuitable fashion it can destroy us: "But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment" (Matt. 12:36).

David wrote, "I said, I will take heed to my ways that I sin not with my tongue" (Psa. 39:1). There are many ways in which Christians can sin with the tongue.

Talks Too Much

One misuse of the tongue is the fellow who talks too much. We say he "runs off at the mouth." The tongue is the only part of the human body that can run from morning till late hours of the night and never get tired. A writer in the Atlanta Constitution once put it: "We think too little, and talk too much, and often get ourselves in 'dutch.' And to quote the words of my old grandpa, 'You don't catch much till you close your trap!'"

Talks Too Hastily

Also, many times in anger or disappointment we "fly off the handle." This is the fellow that talks too hastily. Many harsh words are often spoken that do not manifest the spirit of a true Christian. James said, "But let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak..." (Jas. 1:19). We need to be reminded of the cliché "Think twice before you speak." We often feel we need to "put in our two cents worth" and really speak our mind. If we do, God says we are a fool: "A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards" (Prov. 29:11).

Unbridled Tongues

Preaching on gossip, false witness, and lying steps on the toes of some Christians concerning unbridled tongues. The apostle Paul said, "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor..." (Eph. 4:25). Lying is from Satan. John 8:44 tells us "for he is a liar and the father of it." The ninth commandment stated, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." Solomon tells us that the Lord hates "a lying tongue" and "a false witness that speaketh lies" (Prov. 6:17, 19). These verses should guard the reputation of man from false testimony in court, Over-the-fence gossip, slander of a neighbor, or out and out lying.

Four good questions we need to ask ourselves before we say anything about another person is:

- (1) Is it true?
- (2) Even if it is true, will it do any good to tell it?
- (3) Is it necessary?
- (4) Would I say it in the presence of that person?

By truthfully answering these questions we might apply that all should be "swift to hear, and slow to speak." Bearing false witness robs one of his most valuable possessions, his good reputation. In Rev. 21:8 liars are included in the list that "shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone ..."

Profanity

Finally, and possibly one of the worst ways of sinning with the tongue is taking "the name of Jehovah thy God in vain." The Bible forbids us to use God's name in any way except with love and reverence for our Maker and Creator. Many Christians who would not dare think of cursing plainly use words that are euphemisms for curses. Such expressions are:

- (1) GOLLY--This is a euphemism for God.
- (2) GOSH--This, too, is a substitute for God.
- (3) GEE--This is a euphemistic contraction of Jesus.
- (4) DARN--This is a euphemism for the curse, damn.
- (5) The expression "MY LORDY" is repeating the name of the Lord in vain.
- (6) And Christians cover their ears in shame when they hear "HELL" used in an oath. They show great concern but then turn right around and say "For heaven's sake." If anything, this is even worse. Jesus said, "And he that sweareth by the heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon" (Matt. 23:22).

If you, dear reader, have been guilty of using such slang words, consider carefully before using them again. Have respect for the name of God.

Conclusion

The gift of speech is wonderful and a gift of God, but it can be abused. The tongue is certainly powerful. "He that would love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile" (1 Peter 3:10).

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The Human Foot

As most of you are well aware, I am having trouble with my left foot. Here are some incredible facts about the feet God creates in the womb for you.

- 25% of human bones are in the feet - 26 bones in each foot (total bones in the body 206)
- There are 33 joints in each foot.
- 19 muscles and 10 tendons
- 107 ligaments
- There are 250,000 sweat glands able to produce a pint of sweat a day.

Did this just happen? I will praise You, for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And *that* my soul knows very well. Psalms 139:14

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