

The Devil Behind the Pearly Gates!

By Keith Greer

"Even so the tongue is a little member and boasteth great things. Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" (James 3:5) Yes, my tongue is a small member of my body, but it can have a powerful impact for good, or bad, depending on how it is used.

God, in His infinite wisdom, understood the power that the tongue can have in our lives. It can be a source of weakness, discouragement, and hate. Yet, the key to the right application in our lives is how we use it.

When Job endured terrible hardships and suffering, "... then said his wife unto him, dost thou still retain thy integrity? Curse God and die." (Job 2:9) Instead of offering comfort, strength, and encouragement, Job's wife wanted him to blame God! How often when others are going through some "hard" times do we use our tongues to be a source of encouragement to them?

Often we may be guilty of talking out of "both sides of our mouths". "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessings and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so." (James 3:10) Many profess to be Christians. Yet, by their speech this claim could easily be disputed. "A doubleminded man is unstable in all his ways". (James 1:8) It is hard to live one way among Christians and another way in the world. Sooner or later it will hurt your influence not only in the world but also among Christians. Above all, it will hurt your relationship with God.

"Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles." (Proverbs 23:21) "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." (James 1:26) Brethren, we need to think before we speak! Many heartaches, broken spirits, and souls have been led away by not controlling our tongues. Yes, we can ask for forgiveness when we say something unkind or hurtful to another. Still, can we take away the hurt that comes when we talk ABOUT another or the discouragement that comes to those that heard what we said?

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9) The tongue can demonstrate the true expression of a contrite heart-not to make excuses, but to admit sin and ask for forgiveness.

We are told in Romans 10:10 that "... with the mouth confession is made unto salvation", and before he was baptized, the Ethiopian eunuch said, "... I believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God." (Acts 8:37) No words that we will ever speak will mean so much.

Yes, the tongue can be a "devil" behind our teeth (pearly gates), or it can be used to glorify and honor God. He has left that choice up to each of us. We need to be careful what we speak. Why? God is listening!