



The Voice Of Truth

A weekly publication of the

Hillcrest church of Christ

1621 Hillcrest Drive
Green Bay, WI 54313
(920) 499-5677

www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com

December 2nd, 2007

The Power of the Tongue

By Jimmy Pettigrew

The Bible teaches "*Death and life are in the power of the tongue*" (Prov. 18:21). "*He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction*" (Prov. 13:3). The tongue is capable of great good. "*A wholesome tongue is a tree of life... and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!*" (Prov. 15:4, 23). It is also capable of great harm. Therefore David resolved, "*...I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me*" (Psa. 39:1). The tongue is powerful to destroy as to edify; the poison, or antidote, depending on how it is used. A thoughtful and kind tongue can encourage the weak and exhort the wayward. It can give life! A foolish tongue can destroy personalities and reputations. It can kill! Every one of us carries this powerful instrument every day!

In James, chapter 3, there is a general warning to all Christians about the need for controlling the tongue. Let us look at some improper uses of the tongue.

1). Profanity is certainly the exercise of an uncontrolled tongue. The name of God is sacred and is never to be used with irreverence or disrespect. (Psa. 111:9) Yet, most Christians use a number of euphemisms which profane the name of God. Surely this is done out of ignorance and not out of a conscious

desire to take the name of God in vain. The words "*gosh*" and "*golly*" are euphemisms for the name of God. "*Gee*" or "*gee whiz*" is a euphemism for the name of Jesus. Webster's Third New International Dictionary so defines these words. The child of God must take care to keep his tongue free from all profanity.

2). Hypocrisy with ones tongue is also a woeful danger facing Christians. One may sing "*Take time to be holy*" and then never read his Bible or pray. One may sing "*More about Jesus*" and then forsake the services of the church. This is hypocrisy in that an individual professes one thing and practices another.

Let us now consider some commendable uses of the tongue.

1). The Christian should use his tongue for Prayer. Paul exhorts Christians to "*pray without ceasing*" (1 Thess. 5:17). Pray for the people who need salvation. Pray for the weak and wayward brethren. Pray for the sick.

2). The Christian should use his tongue for Praise and Thanksgiving (Heb. 13:15; Jam. 1:17). Every good gift is from God and he is to be praised and thanked for his goodness.

3). The Christian should use his tongue to Teach

the Gospel to the lost It is the responsibility of every Christian to teach people to believe and obey the gospel of Christ. We must try to restore the erring brethren. If a child of God really believes the gospel is able to save men from the terrors of eternal hell and secure them a heavenly inheritance, he will be searching constantly for opportunities to teach it!

"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 " (Jam. 1:26). *"Death and life are in the power of the tongue, "* (Prov. 18:21).

ABSTAIN FROM THE APPEARANCE OF EVIL: THE DANCE BRIAN YEAGER

(I Thessalonians 5:22) "Abstain from all appearance of evil." I Thessalonians 5:22 is one of the most important passages for us to remember in our Christian lives. To voluntarily remove ourselves from just the appearance of all evil is to make ourselves remote from a lot of things. We see the kids taking hold of the latest fashion in WWJD jewelry. The WWJD abbreviation stands for "what would Jesus do". We know what Jesus would do in a lot of cases because we have scriptures to show us. For instance when Satan tempted Jesus in Matthew chapter four. (Matthew 4:1-10) "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and

sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Notice that Jesus told Satan to depart and if you'll read on in verse 11 Satan did just that. So what would Jesus do? He would not follow temptation.

To abstain from all evil gives us some thought. There has always been a great discussion on dancing and whether or not the scriptures condemn such an act. There was once a young lady who stated that she wants book, chapter, and verse for these issues instead of the traditions of the Church. Well, to the true Christian at heart they realize that I Thessalonians 5:22 covers this subject fully. Yet there are still those that remain in doubt that God condemns such an act. Let us look at some further proof. (Galatians 5:19-21) "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." To some this passage may not be clear so let me make it clearer. By inspiration Paul writes that lasciviousness will keep us from inheriting the kingdom of God. Lasciviousness is by definition tending to excite lustful desires. Have you ever been to a dance that has those whom are not beautiful in a physical sense dancing with the popular crowd? I bet not. As a matter of fact, for those parents that allow their children to go to dances and say that dancing is not lustful, would you let your spouse dance with another woman? I am not suggesting that all dancing is wrong, yet those dances that parents allow children to attend surely are tempting them. (I Peter 2:11) "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." If the passages mentioned in this article are not enough to show that dancing is dangerous and sinful then the problem is not with the proof in the scriptures, it is with the person who is not leading a faithful Christian life.

Some say that dances are fine, and the teachers are there to moderate. Let me suggest that the teachers that parents are so trusting in are normally not Christians and they teach such things as Homosexuality being a valid lifestyle. Does this teacher sound like someone who has enough morals to attend to the safe keeping of a Christian child? "Abstain from all appearance of evil."