

"THE TONGUE"

(An all Scripture Article)

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. 25:11). "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven...a time to keep silence, and a time to speak" (Ecc. 3:1, 7). "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise" (Prov. 10:19).

"A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger" (Prov. 15:1). "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit" (Prov. 15:4). "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). "For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be" (Jam. 3:2-10).

"Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth. As coals are to burning coals, and wood to fire; so is a contentious man to kindle strife. The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly" (Prov. 26:20-22). "Seest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him? (Prov. 29:20). "The words of a wise man's mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself" (Ecc. 10:12).

"But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by they words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. 12:36-37). "Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man? (Colossians 4:6). "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath? (Jam. 1:19). "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another? (Eph. 4:25). "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" (Eph. 4:29). "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you" (Tit. 2:7-8).

Compiled by Malcolm Hill

NO WAY TO HIDE IT FROM GOD

There was a case in the newspapers, on the radio and all over the television news a year or so ago about a man who held a woman as a prisoner in his home for a number of years. Interestingly as is often the case, his neighbors couldn't even believe that the man would do such a thing. They saw him as a friendly, hard working man and a good neighbor. He even attended cook-outs in their back yards. The point in case is this: people can often put on a facade of respectability while hiding a dark side. Christians, and those who call themselves "Christians" can be guilty of this as well as the unbelievers of the world. Some put on their Christianity like they do their clothes, a different set for different circumstances. Needless to say, in many cases, even those close to them may not be able to see anything but the facade.

However, God does not see man as man sees man. The Lord told Samuel after He had passed over Eliab, David's oldest brother, to replace Saul as king, "Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (I Sam. 16:7). "The Lord looketh down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God" (Psalm 14:2). From His viewpoint, there is nothing hidden. "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Proverbs 15:3).

The word, "omnipresent" is often used to describe God. It means that He is present everywhere. Jeremiah stated, "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord" (Jer. 23:24). The writer of Hebrews said, "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:13).

When Jonah fled from God and hid in the bottom of a ship, God knew exactly where he was and what he was doing (Jonah 1). When Ananias and Sapphira sold property and then lied about the amount that it was sold for, God knew to the penny how much they had received (Acts 5). No one else knew, but God knew about the garment, silver and gold that Achan hid in his tent (Josh. 7). Serve God faithfully, God knows the truth!

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