

‘Bridle the tongue’

“The tongue,” states James 3:8, “not one of mankind can get it tamed.” It is an injurious thing that is loaded with death dealing poison. However according to Bible principles just as a rider bridles a horse to control its movements, so must we do our best to control our tongue. “If any man seems to himself to be a formal worshipper and yet does not bridle his tongue, but goes on deceiving his own heart, this man’s form of worship is futile” (James 1:26). James 3: 2,3 also stresses how the bridle put in the mouths of horses makes their whole body able to be controlled. This is a perfect analogy for helping us to understand how we should accomplish control over what we say and how we say it. Similarly we too need to bridle our unruly tongues to make our actions in tune with Bible principles. These very strong Bible verses warns that how you use your tongue is a very serious matter in the eyes of God and yet there is seldom very few among us who take it seriously. It strongly affects our relationships with other people and our relationship with our creator, God. It takes a lot of maturity and wisdom to have control over ones utterances.

Restraining the tongue from speaking what is injurious and undesirable is particularly challenging for some. Our words are a product of the heart rather than of the mouth. What effect our words have on others is an important issue for a true Christian. The Bible says that a good man speaks from the abundant goodness stored within him and the wicked speaks from the abundance of wickedness. To control our tongue we therefore need to pray as did David “ Create in me even a pure heart, O God, and put within me a new spirit, a steadfast one”. Through prayer we can overcome these temptations to hurt others with our hurtful words. God will give us self-control, control over our innate urge to hurt and use the tongue wisely and diligently. The battle of controlling our emotions and our tongue must be fought and it can only be won with God’s help. We often think that these issues are trivial, not so serious and develop a callous attitude to some of the basic standards by which people all around gauge us. It has become a way of life for us to compromise on a lot of things which the Bible teaches as important for true and meaningful Christian life. It is not merely the abiding of the Holy sacraments that brings blessings from God, but indeed it is the following of these simple virtues that make us unique as followers of Christ.

An unruly tongue can ruin a marriage too. Conversation that is laced with insulting speech puts a strain on a marriage, and this too can have dire consequences. Over time cutting words from either mate will erode a relationship, perhaps causing a husband or a wife to feel unloved, even unlovable.

If we are to call ourselves Christians we need to strip off this old personality rampant with these practices and clothe ourselves with a new personality based on the guidelines mentioned in the Word of God. Easily said than done! Identifying this weakness in us is itself a big struggle, it demands a lot of humility and open mindedness in us. We lack these virtues also and we go about leading passive Christian lives. The Bible strongly reminds us to pursue the things making peace and the things that are up building to one another. Few of us take heed of these instructions 'Bridling the tongue' is difficult so is controlling our actions.

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