

## Be Careful What You Say

### Scripture

“He who has knowledge spares his words, [And] a man of understanding is of a calm spirit. Even a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace; [When] he shuts his lips, [he is considered] perceptive.” (Pr 17:27-28 NKJV)

### Devotion

How many times have I been sorry for what I have said? I tell you many more times than for what I have not said. The Scriptures agree that the one with knowledge will spare his words.

The tongue is such a difficult thing to manage. James calls it a fire, a world of iniquity. He even says that no man can tame it (James 3:8). However, this is no excuse only an explanation of its operation because the tongue must be controlled. “Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring send forth fresh [water] and bitter from the same opening? Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.” (Jas 3:10-12 NKJV)

The point is that God must control the tongue by the Holy Spirit that lives within every true believer. Our inability to control our tongue raises questions about our relationship with Christ. This is true because “. . . those things which proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.” (Mt 15:18-19 NKJV)

Even when no malice is intended, we sometimes put ourselves in harm’s way by not choosing our words carefully. “In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, But he who restrains his lips [is] wise.” (Pr 10:19 NKJV)

Where a great deal is said, without care and forethought, there will not only be many weak things uttered, but much falsehood, and at least many idle things, which cannot be excused from sin; not but that much and long speaking may be to great profit and advantage, when it is with care and judgment, and founded on close meditation and study—John Gill.

Now, in keeping with the subject, let me risk an abrupt ending by repeating another proverbial statement. A word to the wise is sufficient.