

WORDS OF MY MOUTH ACCEPTABLE

THERE ARE MANY INSTANCES THROUGHOUT THE BIBLE OF PASSAGES THAT SPEAK TO WORDS AND HOW WE USE THEM AND THEIR "POWER" ALONG WITH WHAT THEY SAY ABOUT US. EVERY WEEK I BEGIN THE MESSAGE WITH A PRAYER USING THE WORDS OF PSALM 19:14 *"Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight"*. ANOTHER VERSE FROM THE PSALMS SPEAKS THE SAME TYPE PRAYER IN PSALM 51:10 *"Create a clean heart in me, O God, and renew a faithful spirit within me."* JUST LIKE JESUS SAID IN MATTHEW 12:36-37 *And I tell you this, you must give an account on judgment day for every idle word you speak. The words you say will either acquit you or condemn you."*

THE WORDS, AND THE FEELINGS THAT COME FROM OUR HEART, OUR SPIRIT DEFINE US AND HAVE A EITHER A POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE AFFECT ON OTHERS WE COME IN CONTACT WITH. HOWEVER, FROM THESE TWO PASSAGES FROM THE PSALMS WE ARE GIVEN CLEAR DIRECTION OF WHAT TO ASK GOD FOR. WHAT WE THINK ABOUT IN HERE IS ACCEPTABLE IN GOD'S SIGHT AND TO RENEW US THAT OUR SPIRIT MAY BE FAITHFUL. THAT IMPLIES A STEADY AND UNWAVERING COURSE IN LOVE OR CONVICTION. I ASK YOU ALL, ME INCLUDED, DO WE HAVE A FAITHFUL SPIRIT OR IS IT IN NEED OF RENEWING?

'FAITH' IS SOMETHING THAT GROWS OUTWARDLY FROM WITHIN. JUST STOP A MOMENT AND THINK HOW MANY OTHER PROCESSES FOLLOW THE SAME PATH. A SEED IS THROWN IN THE GROUND AND GROWS FROM WITHIN THAT POD OUTWARD. IT IS NURTURED, RENEWED EACH DAY BY NUTRIENTS FROM THE SOIL AND WATER IT TAKES IN. IT APPEARS MUCH OF NATURE OPERATES THIS WAY – FLOWERS, FRUITS, AND TREES. FARMERS COULD DISCUSS ALL DAY WITH YOU THE GROWING PROCESSES OF THEIR CROPS. IF THE CROP DOES NOT HAVE A STRONG ROOTS SYSTEM OR WAY OF DELIVERING WHAT THE CROPS NEED THEN ITS YIELDS WILL NOT REACH FULL POTENTIAL. IT IS THE EXACT SAME FOR US. IF WE DO NOT HAVE THE RIGHT NUTRIENTS WE WILL NOT REACH THE POTENTIAL GOD INTENDED FOR US!!!

WHAT WE SAY AND HOW WE SAY IT IS IMPORTANT TO GOD. HOW MANY TIMES IN YOUR LIFE HAVE YOU WISHED YOU HAD NEVER SPOKEN THOSE WORDS OR SAID THEM IN SUCH A WAY THAT YOU DAMAGED ANOTHER SPIRIT. AND IF YOU BELIEVE THAT CAN'T HAPPEN THEN WHY DO YOUTH COMMIT SUICIDE BECAUSE OF BULLYING WHICH IS JUST WORDS? THERE IS A VERSE FROM PROVERBS 18:21 "Death and life are in the power of the tongue" YOUNG PEOPLE, OLD PEOPLE WHEN ARE WE GOING TO TAKE THE SHARPNESS OFF OUR TONGUE AND ITS WORDS? WE ALL SEE THE AFFECT OF OUR WORDS, SO WHY DO WE CONTINUE TO USE THEM LIKE PROVERBS 12:18 " *Some people make cutting remarks, but the words of the wise bring healing.*"

ARE THERE SITUATIONS , LIKE A MEETING, A FAMILY GATHERING WHEN YOU COULD HAVE "STEPPED UP" AND BROUGHT THOSE HEALING WORDS OF WISDOM? THAT IS THE EXACT THING JAMES WAS TALKING ABOUT WHEN HE TOLD US NOT TO BE JUST HEARERS OF THE WORD BUT DOERS!!!! IF WE ARE DAILY CALLING ON GOD WITH THOSE TWO PRAYERS OF THE PSALMS, WE WILL KNOW WHAT TO SAY AND IT WILL BE RECEIVED WELL. HOWEVER, IT ALL BEGINS WITH THAT RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LORD, RENEWING AND KNOWING

THE WAYS OF GOD, THAT WHICH IS ACCEPTABLE IN HIS SIGHT. PERFECTION, BY NO MEANS, BUT HIS DESIRE FOR US IS TO WALK IN THE LIGHT AND HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH HIM. IT IS ONLY THEN WE WILL KNOW HOW TO HAVE THAT CLEAN HEART AND RIGHT SPIRIT WITHIN. REMEMBER IT IS NOT SOMETHING YOU CAN DO NO MATTER HOW STRONG AN INDIVIDUAL YOU ARE YOU CAN DO BY YOURSELF, AND MAYBE THAT'S WHAT MAKES IT SO HARD FOR ALL OF US – TO GIVE UP THAT CONTROL. WHEN I WAS IN THE HOSPITAL I KNEW I HAD GREAT DOCTORS, THE BEST, BUT YOU KNOW IT WAS STILL VERY HARD TO HAND ME OVER TO THEM AND YOU KNOW EACH DAY IT IS NOT AN EASY THING TO HAND IT ALL OVER TO GOD EITHER!!! THAT IS THE VERY REASON THESE TWO SIMPLE PRAYERS ARE SO IMPORTANT FOR OUR SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING.

OUR WORDS ARE POWERFUL BECAUSE SOMETHING OR SOMEONE GIVES THEM POWER. HERE'S AN EXAMPLE TO GET A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPT OF THE POWER BEHIND OUR WORDS. *IMAGINE A STEAM LOCOMOTIVE TRAIN GOING FULL SPEED DOWN THE TRACKS, WITH ALL THAT HEAVY METAL, AND TRAIN PARTS MOVING WITH INCREDIBLE SPEED. NOW IMAGINE THERE WAS AN OBSTACLE STANDING RIGHT ON THE TRACKS, AND THE CONDUCTOR DIDN'T SWITCH TRACKS. WITH THE WEIGHT AND SPEED OF THE TRAIN, THE FORCE WOULD LITERALLY DESTROY THE OBSTACLE. EVEN THOUGH THE TRAIN PHYSICALLY DESTROYED THE OBSTACLE, IT WAS THE STEAM THAT POWERED THE TRAIN TO DO THE DAMAGE, AND THE CONDUCTOR WHO DROVE THE TRAIN INTO THE OBSTACLE.*

NOW IMAGINE THAT SAME TRAIN WAS YOU AND YOUR WORDS, AND YOU ARE BARRELING DOWN THE TRACKS OF LIFE AT FULL SPEED AHEAD. THERE IS AN OBSTACLE IN YOUR WAY CALLED YOUR BEST FRIEND, YOUR HUSBAND, YOUR WIFE, YOUR CHILDREN, YOUR NEIGHBOR, OR ANYONE YOU CHOOSE. THE QUESTION IS WHO IS PUTTING THE POWER IN YOUR STEAM ENGINE, AND WHO IS CONDUCTING THE TRAIN? NO WONDER THE PSALMIST SAYS IN PSALMS 51:6, "Behold, thou desires truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom." IT IS WITHIN THAT CONTROL BEGINS AND WE HAVE TO LOOK AT OUR FOUNDATION. IS IT BUILT ON THE WORD?

YOU MAY SAY "PASTOR THE WORLD IS MOVING TOO FAST, CHANGING TOO QUICKLY, I CAN'T USE ANYTHING IN THERE" JUST GO BACK TO 2 TIMOTHY 3:16 "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right." OR AS THE MESSAGE PUTS IT "Every part of Scripture is God-breathed and useful one way or another—showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God's way. Through the Word we are put together and shaped up for the tasks God has for us."

BY KNOWING THE WORD THERE ARE ANSWERS TO THE PRAYERS OF TODAY'S PSALMS AND IF WE ARE NOT HERE TO LEARN AND GROW THEN WHY ARE WE HERE – TO LIVE OUT OUR DAYS LOOKING GOOD IN GOD EYES? SORRY, GOD SEES RIGHT THROUGH US ISAIAH 29:13 "These people say they are mine. They honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. And their worship of me is nothing but man-made rules learned by rote." REMEMBER TOO THE WORDS OF JESUS IN JOHN 4:24 "For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth." **THIS IS A SPIRITUAL THING AND FOR SOME THAT MAY BE THE REASON WHY IT IS MORE DIFFICULT TO GRASP AND CARRY OUT.**

THERE IS THIS RELYING-ON-GOD THING NOT OUR OWN HUMAN DEVICES TO GET US THROUGH. THE THING IS THE SIMPLE PRAYER OF THE SINNER - "LORD HAVE MERCY ON ME" GOES A LONG WAY TO ASKING GOD TO HELP YOU. JAMES 4:8 *"Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world."* WE ALL KNOW HOW EASY IT IS ONCE WE STEP OUTSIDE THOSE DOORS TO HAVE A DIVIDED LOYALTY YET WE ARE TO IN THIS WORLD BUT NOT OF IT. IT IS NOT THAT DIFFICULT BUT FEAR AND REJECTION ARE A TWO-EDGED SWORD THAT HANGS OVER US.

WHEN I WORKED CURSILL IN THE PRISONS I FOUND THAT THE MEN WHO WOULD COME TO THE RETREATS FOR GROWTH OF THEIR FAITH WERE NOT BOTHERED BY THE OTHER PRISONERS. **EVEN IN SUCH A SYSTEM PEOPLE OF A FIRM FAITH WERE RECOGNIZED AND THEREFORE RESPECTED. MAYBE WE HAVEN'T SHOWN ENOUGH OF OUR FAITH FOR OTHERS TO RESPECT US AND OUR BELIEFS.**

GOING BACK AGAIN TO PROVERBS 6:19 *" There are six things the LORD hates, seven that are detestable to him: 17haughty eyes, a lying tongue, **hands that shed innocent blood,** 18a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, 19a false witness who pours out lies and a person who stirs up conflict in the **community.**"* IT IS THE LAST TWO THAT I FOCUS ON TODAY. BECAUSE IN THE BEGINNING VERSES IT SAYS SIX ARE AN ABOMINATION, MEANING SOMETHING THAT IS A VILE, SHAMEFUL, OR DETESTABLE ACTION, CONDITION, HABIT. LAST MENTIONED IS "ONE WHO SPREADS STRIFE AMONG BROTHER OR THE COMMUNITY".

THERE IS A POEM – WHEN YOU ARE READY TO CRITICIZE A FRIEND JUST **REMEMBER THE BEGINNINGS NOT THE END WHEN WITHIN THIS URGE YOU FIND THESE THREE QUESTIONS BRING TO MIND "IS IT TRUE? IS IT NEEDFUL? IS IT KIND? GO BACK AND PRAY THE PSALMS** *"Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight". "Create a clean heart in me, O God, and renew a faithful spirit within me. AMEN.*