
Words of Truth

Remember That People Jump To Conclusions

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The word of God teaches us that carnally minded people judge things based on how they appear (I Samuel 16:7; cf. John 7:24). The way that man thinks and the way that God thinks is not the same (Isaiah 55:8-9). We have to keep these things in mind when we are communicating with people of the world as well as spiritually weak Christians.

Proper communication requires thought on our part. Wisdom teaches us this: *"He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction... The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things... The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips... Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles... A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards"* (Proverbs 13:3, Proverbs 15:28, Proverbs 16:23, Proverbs 21:23, and Proverbs 29:11).

We know that people are going to judge our words incorrectly. We know that we should guard our words. We know that we should think before we speak. Knowing these things is great. However, if we don't apply that knowledge, it is useless to us (James 1:21-25). In regard to having knowledge, the Lord says this: *"The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness"* (Proverbs 15:2). What good is it for us to have the knowledge and wisdom to be good communicators when we are not using that knowledge with our words? Application of these things will help us in many ways.

Knowing That People Jump To Conclusions Helps Us

We are in a spiritual war (Ephesians 6:10-17, I Timothy 1:18, I Timothy 6:12, II Timothy 2:1-4, and Jude 3). Satan has no advantage over us when we are not ignorant of his devices (II Corinthians 2:11). People of the world are in Satan's camp (I John 3:8-10). Thus, the same rule applies to them. People of the world have no advantage over us when we know their tactics ahead of time.

When we look at the Scriptures we can find that people will twist words (Psalms 56:5). In fact, people even twist the words of God (II Peter 3:15-17). When Jesus was on earth, notice what those opposed to Him did to Him: *"And they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people: for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and they left him, and went their way. And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in his words. And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, or not? Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see it. And they brought it. And he saith unto them,*

Whose is this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Cæsar's. And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him" (Mark 12:12-17).

Now, consider where we are in our knowledge pool. We know that people judge based on appearances. We know to guard our words. We now know that there are even some people looking to make us slip up in some way to make accusations against us. This helps us to know that people will not be listening to what we are actually saying. Instead, they will be listening to hear us say what they think we are saying.

Applying These Realities

When someone jumps to conclusions without facts, they don't hear or see things the way they really are. In fact, they are looking so hard to jump on something that they will hear things you didn't even say. Notice how this happened to Jesus: *"But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death" (Matthew 26:63-66).*

I have seen Christians, who are really honest people as they should be (Romans 12:17), accused of lying because someone jumped to conclusions. Let's say I tell you a story of something that happened in my life. Let's say that I honestly, unintentionally, left out a detail in that story. Later, you overhear me telling someone else that same story. There is one variation now though, I remembered that detail and told it to this person. You hear it and have concluded that I lied to you. Why jump to that conclusion? Doesn't the Scriptures tell us not to do such things (Proverbs 18:13)?

Knowing what we know from the Scriptures on the subject at hand, I try my best to be detailed when communicating. However, wherein I know my memory is not the greatest, I often STRESS this phrase, "to the best of my recollection". Knowing that people jump to conclusions, we almost always have to STRESS that we may not be 100% sure of what we are saying when such is the case. I know it is a shame we have to do that, but it is a fact.

Applying the reality is that we do not want our reputations damaged (Proverbs 22:1 and Ecclesiastes 7:1). Thus, when talking to people of the world and even weak Christians, we have to guard what we say. I know that stinks! Yet, souls are at stake.

Conclusion

Carnal minds won't give you the benefit of the doubt. They jump on those doubts. Thus, when you are around people that could jump to conclusions, follow this RULE particularly close: *"I said, 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" (Psalms 39:1).*