

Joseph's life and interaction with his family teach us several lessons on how to talk to people

Part VI

Today we learn a lesson on using our words correctly when in the company of others. Here is part six of our study.

5. Watch your words

Words are powerful whether they are spoken, written, or simply the words we use in our minds. Words are singularly the most powerful force available to humanity. We can choose to use this force constructively with words of encouragement, or destructively using words of despair. Words have energy and power with the ability to help, to heal, to hinder, to hurt, to harm, to humiliate, and to humble.

Beyond our immediate family members, perhaps the people we spend the most time with are our coworkers or co-laborers in church, community, or school committees. We spend so much time with these people they are almost like family, so it's easy to let down our guard with what comes out of our mouths. But Joseph watched his words when he was around his working buddies. Whether in service at his master's house or in the cold dark prison, he watched his words. He knew that how he behaved and what he said reflected on the God he served. This is something we must also keep in mind as we work alongside others who are watching, absorbing, and then determining just what our God is like.

James, the half-brother of Jesus, lets us know that control/use of our words speaks for our level of spiritual growth. Listen to what he says in James 1:26: "Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless." According to this scripture, the one thing proving our level of spiritual maturity isn't how religious we are, whether we can quote Scripture or the good works we do, it is the words from our mouths. Bridle means "to restrain or control." If we aren't controlling our words, we are not operating in the level of maturity God wants us to have.

No matter how religious you think you are, the true test of proving your spirituality is whether you control your words or not.