

Influence

Directing our attention to the subject of influence we should always be aware of the fact that what we say and do will influence those around us. The apostle Paul encouraged the brethren in Corinth with these words: “Be ye imitators of me, even as I also am of Christ” (1 Corinthians 11:1). In the same book, he said, “Be not deceived: Evil companionships corrupt good morals” (15:33).

With these two passages in mind, we can readily see that what we say and do will be imitated by someone, or we will be imitating someone. One good example of this is with children. If you want to know what the parents think, and what they say behind closed doors, just listen to their children. Children like to imitate their parents, and adults like to imitate those they hold in high esteem. Each day we have the opportunity to be a positive influence in someone’s life, and a good way to do so is by watching what we say.

In the writing of James, we are told, “For in many things we all stumble. If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also” (3:2). We are aware that the term “perfect” does not have reference to sinlessness, but rather a man who is so completely in control of his tongue that he will be able to control his whole body also, and in so doing, will be a man worthy of imitating, and thus a positive influence on those about him or her.

Such being the case, approach your conversations with the understanding that the seeds you plant, via your speech, will either give life or death to the hearer. Solomon put it this way: “Death and life are in the power of the tongue; And they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof” (Proverbs 18:21), and again, “Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles” (Proverbs 21:23).

So, as you start your day, and throughout the day, keep in mind that what you say, and what you do is being observed by someone: be a godly influence on them.

Remember words of the apostle Peter, who said, “For, he that would love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: and let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace, and pursue it” (1 Peter 3:10-11). Ross Triplett, Sr.