

Thoughts, Words, and Deeds

Ponder: The importance of guarding your heart.

Scripture: “Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life” (Proverbs 4:23, NKJV).

What we do in life can be summed up in three categories: thoughts, words, and deeds. These three are interdependent.

Thoughts lead to words. Jesus said, “out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks (Matthew 12:34b). Those words may be good or evil. For example, when one’s heart has faith in Christ, it leads to confession of that faith with the mouth (Romans 10:9, 10; see also Acts 8:36, 37). Obviously, that’s good! But thoughts from the heart may also result in evil words. “Out of the heart proceed . . . false witness, blasphemies . . .” (Matthew 15:19).

Thoughts also lead to deeds, both good and evil. Paul urged the Philippian Christians to think about things that were true, noble, just, lovely, of good report, virtuous, and praise-worthy. In the very next sentence, he told them to do the things they had seen him do and teach (Philippians 4:7, 8). Good thoughts would result in good deeds.

However, evil deeds also come about from evil thoughts. Hear again the words of Jesus: “Out of the heart proceed . . . murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts . . .” (Matthew 15:19). No wonder Solomon admonished us, “Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life” (Proverbs 4:23).

Thoughts produce both words and deeds, but words and deeds also relate to each other. Ideally, our words ought to be consistent with our deeds. God Himself has set the example by keeping His promises (i.e. doing what He said He would do). Solomon blessed the Lord because of all He had promised, not one word had failed (1 Kings 8:56).

Let us imitate God by behaving consistently with our words. “Let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth” (1 John 3:18). The Pharisees talked a good game, but their deeds didn’t match their words. Jesus called them hypocrites because “they say and do not” (Matthew 23:3).

Bottom line: Having control over your mind/thoughts will result in having control over your words and deeds.

Song: “Purer In Heart, O God”

Prayer: Father, please help us to guard our hearts, for unless we do, our words and deeds can never be what You desire from us. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Joe Slater (Justin, TX)

jaslater1954@gmail.com