

"Be Careful"

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"You be careful!" "Watch out!" "Look where you're going!" We've all heard these or similar warnings for most of our lives. Actually, there is no area of life where the proper use of care is not necessary. We exercise care regarding education, employment, families, our health. And well we should—caution is invaluable in life. We need to be careful.

Being careful in spiritual matters is especially important in that it has a bearing on our eternal destiny. You'd think we would be especially careful about that, wouldn't you? Yet people—far too many people—are not much concerned about spiritual matters. They are immersed in their own worldly endeavors—so much so that far too many spend far too little time insuring their eternal destiny. How very sad.

May I make some suggestions about the importance of the proper emphasis on care for our spiritual lives? We need to be careful.

Be careful about information. There are many things that vie for our attention, and if we are not careful we can listen to the wrong info. We can become so infatuated with entertainment and worldly utensils—things like internet activities or television—that most of our instruction comes from world views, not spiritual ones. "Take heed how ye hear" (Luke 8:18). That says as much about what we hear as how we hear, for the processing of right information is absolutely necessary to be pleasing God. The information we allow into our minds determines, to a huge extent, how we regulate our lives. Godly information makes godly lives.

Be careful about meditations. It is an absolute fact that "as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7). If you want to measure your spiritual inclinations, consider honestly what are your meditations. What do you think? What you let in to your mind is the fodder for your meditations. That information is what you re-call, what you re-member, what you re-collect, what you regard as important. Would you like to make a simple calculation about your spiritual strength? Sit down and think about what you think about—you'll soon know.

Be careful about associations. Man is a social being. He was formed for contact with others. Such being the case, it is advisable that one be aware that he both influences and is influenced by others. It should be obvious then that we be careful about whom we allow to have some power over us, but we should also guard carefully our influence over those with whom we have contact. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed" (Proverbs 13:20). Godly associations are valuable; we best be careful about the other kind.

Be careful about destinations. The places we frequent say quite a lot about us. The person who goes to a bar is likely there to drink. To be in the wrong place at the wrong time is dangerous and can be spiritually disastrous. On the other hand, the person who is seen at the hospital visiting the sick or at the place of worship on the Lord's Day is making a silent but powerful statement about who and what he is. And what is the person who is at the golf course on Sunday morning saying about what he considers to be important? He certainly is not there to teach the word or worship his Lord, do you think? "Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil" (Proverbs 4:26-27). Best be careful where you go.

Be careful about conversations. We had to come to this, right? It's easy to say the wrong things. It's easy to say something at the wrong time. It's easy to say something with the wrong attitude or motive. It's just not an easy thing to practice tongue-control. However, proper use of the tongue is always in order and will benefit any kind of situation. "He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction" (Proverbs 13:3). It is wise to watch what we say, when we say it, to whom we say it, and how it is said.

How is it that little song goes? "Be careful little hands what you do...be careful little feet where you go...be careful little eyes what you see...be careful little mouth what you say."

We best be careful.