

## LOOSE LIVING

### TEXT:

***2 Samuel 20:8: When they were at the great stone which is in Gibeon, Amasa went before them. And Joab's garment that he had put on was girded unto him, and upon it a girdle with a sword fastened upon his loins in the sheath thereof; and as he went forth it fell out.***

Amasa had been made Commander-in-Chief of David's armies because Joab had disobeyed his orders not to do violence to Absalom. Joab had disregarded the king's warning to "deal gently with the young man, Absalom, for my sake," as Joab was putting down a rebellion. Now, Amasa was in command. He had taken upon him the armor of Joab to pursue another revolter named Sheba.



Joab kills Absalom

As he went forth, his sword fell out by the way, his girdle being loose. When Joab saw the carelessness of Amasa, he realized he was not qualified for the position. So he took Amasa by the beard and slew him, then took command in his stead.

God gave this narrative with all its shocking severity as a striking spiritual lesson to every follower of Jesus Christ.

Paul tells us in:

***1 Corinthians 10:11: Now all these things happened unto them for examples; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.***

I would like to take this incident and put before you the danger of have a loose spiritual girdle. The girdle was a very important part of oriental armor. When off duty, the girdle hangs loose; when in combat, it must be snugly tight.

Paul often uses this figure in commanding the children of God.

***Ephesians 6:14a: Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with Truth,***

Peter says,

***1 Peter 1:13-15***

***13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;***

***14 As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance:***

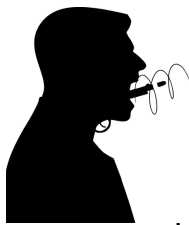
***15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;***

Peter declared that the looseness of the girdle robs the saints of holiness, and holy living is directly affected by holy conversation. If we are loose girdled with our tongues, we are loose everywhere else. A loose tongue is positive proof of an unholy life.

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***Matthew 12:37: For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.***

The place of the greatest leaking out, and the place where the greatest battles are fought, is the tongue.



Once our spirit is angered, envious, or jealous, then comes the belching forth of evil speaking, vile surmising, and unkind words until the atmosphere is poisonously blue and foul. There is a demon power behind all loose-speaking words, reckless railing, gossiping, nagging, complaining, slander, or murmuring.

James tells us the tongue is:

***James 3:6: And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.***

Do we realize that our bodies are defiled by our tongue?

Miriam found out her tongue had laid a curse of leprosy upon her body for speaking against the Lord's anointed.

Cruel words of evil speaking are fostered by an evil heart of ill will, harboring an unforgiving spirit. It requires no talent, no culture, or intellect to tear others down with malicious words. Satan is the companion of him who speaks evil of his foes. A tale-bearer should be hanged over a pole with the same rope – one with it tied to his tongue and the other with it tied to his ears. Remember – the dog that brings a bone will carry one away. A person who tells you the faults of others will tell others about yours.



I would rather play with forked lightning than to speak a reckless word against my brother or sister in Christ.

*He thinks too small, who talks too much,  
A spendthrift of his tongue.  
Like a parrot, lavish with his words,  
Like water from a cistern sprung.*

*A wise man reflects before he speaks,  
The fool, on what he has said,  
The one is missed because he lives,  
The other happily when he is dead.*

*A wise man guards his thoughts with care;  
A fool his tongue rattles dry.  
We need to learn to guard one language well,  
Than to prattle much in two.*

The tongue, when unbridled, is the most vicious public enemy that ever preyed upon society. It is a partner in crime to every evil that afflicts the human race. Even vice is dependent upon it for propagation. It inflames evil passions of men and women, and overthrows democracies. By it the righteous are slain and brought into disgrace. The tongue is the serpent that crawls into every Eden of human joy and kills its peace, harmony, unity, and the love that God has established to be the atmosphere wherein he dwells.



***Proverbs 6:16: These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:***

Three deal with the tongue. The last one is:

***Proverbs 6:19b: and he that soweth discord among brethren.***

James boldly denies that anyone is a Christian if cannot control the tongue.

***James 1:26: If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.***

Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, puts whisperers and backbiters in the same class with fornicators, murderers, and haters of God.

***Romans 1:28-32:***

**28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;**

**29 Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,**

**30 Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,**

**31 Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:**

**32 Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.**

It cost Amasa his life to have a loose girdle, and it will destroy us to have a loose tongue.

**There is looseness in our garment of separation.**

The Church cannot play fast and loose with the world. Lines of demarcation have largely disappeared. The church has compromised with the worst enemy it has. God's last call in these last days is one of separation.



**Revelation 18:4: And I heard another voice from Heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.**

**There is looseness in our girdle of consecration.**

This brings inconsistency into daily living. It is a great hinderance to bringing souls to Christ. We become stumbling blocks to the lost, and we send them to Hell when we lose the keen edge of consecration and the fire of the Holy Spirit zeal from our souls.



**There is looseness in our robe of prayer.**

Powerless prayers are the effects of the looseness of others. Looseness in our prayer life will certainly wreck our spiritual life. The curse on America today is: there are too many Pharisees saying long prayers that do not rise even to hit the ceiling.

The last loose garment we have space to speak about is:

**The loose garment of Holiness.**

The earmarks of a decaying church is a lost sense of the sinfulness of sin, and of willful disobedience to the commandments of The Lord Jesus Christ — a disloyal disregard for the Lord's Day, and a robbing of the Lord of our substance and of the first fruits of all our increase.

This is a life-size picture taken by God's camera, of actual conditions in the last days.

**2 Timothy 3:1-5:**

***1 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.***

***2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,***

***3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,***

***4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;***

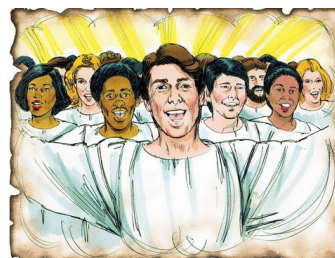
***5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.***

Our sins of inconsistency are eating away at the vital life of the Church.

Thank God, there are a few God-fearing, Bible-loving, holy-living, and Spirit-filled folk left who have not bowed their knees to Baal. Are you in the remnant?

The white garment is the righteousness of saints.

***Isaiah 61:10: I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of Salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.***



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