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WALKING ON EGGSHELLS

Life is hard enough, but when you feel as if you have to walk on eggshells around certain people it makes it all that much more difficult. We know that the scriptures remind us that we will have to give an account *“for every careless word”* (Matthew 12:36). Conversely we are also aware of the fact that we are to speak no *“unwholesome word”*, rather a *“word fit for edification”* (see Ephesians 4:29). Nevertheless, we are not naïve, and we know that at times each one of us falls woefully short in this respect. Sometimes we are the one who makes the faux pas; while other times we are on the receiving end.

Some years back there was a great Garfield cartoon, that brought this point home. Garfield holding a oversized envelope walks up to a growling behemoth of a dog and says *“Hey, dog your x-rays are back”*. The next part of the cartoon shows the pudgy cat holding up an x-ray for the dog to see and says, *“See that tiny dot? That’s your brain”*. In the final section of the comic strip, Garfield is mangled, beaten and laying on the ground while holding up his finger as if to emphasize a point and says, *“Why can’t we all just learn to laugh at ourselves?”* A lesson can be extracted from that old cartoon, that being we need to grant some leeway with respect to dealing with others.

No, there can be no compromising about truth; rather when dealing with people we have to keep in mind various idiosyncrasies each one of us. Let us learn to inner act with one another in such a way so as to not make one feel as if they have to *“walk on eggshells”* when in our presence. In Ephesians 4:32 Paul notes, *“be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other...”* Sound

advice to be sure. Solomon on his part brought forth the following in the book of Ecclesiastes, chapter seven and verses twenty-one and twenty-two. *“Also, do not take seriously all words which are spoken, lest you hear your servant cursing you. For you also have realized that you likewise have many times cursed others.”*



The natural inclination to the passage noted above is to say something akin to, *“well, I never have cursed anyone!”* One would be extremely wise to take care before saying anything, for the word

“curse” as it is used in Ecclesiastes seven is the Hebrews word *qalal* and means *“trifling, with negative connotations; make little or contemptable”*. (W.E. Vine) Like it or not, we’ve all been there and done that as the saying goes.

Wouldn’t we be far better off if we could just see ourselves as others see us and in so doing grant to all an attitude of seeking only the best for them? The answer is obvious. We are reminded that we should be *“...ready for every good deed, to malign no one, to be uncontentious, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.”* (Titus 3:1-2) Clearly it is a mind set that is *“doable”*, isn’t it?

There is absolutely no need for anyone to be hypersensitive. Moreover, there should be a prevailing attitude among children of God that we will ardently look for anything positive rather than dissecting every little statement looking for something to seize upon. Go back and reacquaint yourself with Philippians 4:5-8 and fully appreciate what Paul is advocating. Which might be summarized in a few words, look up and lighten up... (wbe)

THE BULWARK

