

CURSING

The vile practice of cursing and swearing is becoming increasingly popular both in public and private. Many men and women are now using language formerly used only by the vilest of persons freely. In the entertainment world, for instance, words are used which were not permitted in our homes when we were children. It is a sad commentary on society when speech so deteriorates that profanity, vulgarity, and blasphemy become commonplace.

In view of this, we were impressed by a quotation from a "General Order to the Continental Army" which was issued in July, 1766 by General George Washington. He wrote:

"The general is sorry to be informed that the foolish and wicked practice of profane cursing and swearing, a vice heretofore little known in the American Army, is growing into fashion. He hopes the officers will, by example as well as by influence, endeavor to check it, and that both they and the men will reflect that we can have little hope of the blessing of Heaven on our arms if we insult God by our impiety and folly. Added to this, it is a vice so mean and low, without any temptation, that every man of sense and character detests and despises it." Thus the great general made clear how he felt about cursing.

To say the least, the habit of cursing is an indication of limited education and poor taste. Certainly it betrays an absence of character education and a void of spirituality. The man or woman who must describe things and other people in vulgar terms, describes himself by the words he chooses. Jesus said: "Those things which proceed out of the mouth COME FORTH FROM THE HEART; and they DEFILE the man." (Matthew 15:18) Rotten words come from a rotten heart.

The third commandment warned: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." George Washington was right in thinking the blessing of Heaven could not be expected by those who vainly used the name of the Lord. Have you considered that the mouth which speaks God's name IN VAIN forfeits the right to speak it IN PRAYER? This was the inspired thought of James when he wrote: "But the tongue can no man tame, it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?" James 3:8-11

Still there are people who, in idle and foolish talk, utter expressions like "My God," "Good Lord," "Jesus," and so on without the slightest reverence. Add to this the practice of vulgar and suggestive speech, and we see how greatly men need to heed our Lord's warning when He said, "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Matthew 12:36-37