

Be Careful

Franklin Church of Christ
Edwin Crozier
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PM Assembly

Introduction:

I love the children's songs we sing. Most often, they contain the most simple and yet profound messages of all our songs. However, because we label them children's songs, we often forget their powerful insight into living for the Lord. Consider one such song by which we need to live even though we are now grown up: "Oh Be Careful..." Examine this song's meaning with us and let us make sure not to forget it just because we are older.

Discussion:

- I. Oh, be careful little eyes what you see.
 - A. In **Psalm 101:3**, David said he would put no worthless thing before his eyes, because he hated those works. He knew that looking at those things would allow them to fasten their grip on him and he refused to let that happen.
 - B. Are you careful regarding what you see? Are you careful when you are online? Are you careful when you watch TV? Are you careful when you see a movie? Obviously, each of us must make our own decisions regarding what we may watch. I cannot make a list of approved shows and movies for you. However, please allow me to provoke your thinking regarding what you see.
 1. What would you think if it were your spouse or child participating in what you are watching?
 2. Would you allow the activity to take place in your home for your kids to watch?
 3. Would you invite Jesus to watch this activity with you?
 4. If there wasn't a TV screen between you and the activity, would it be a sin for you to be there?
 5. Does nudity become acceptable just because it is a short part of a great story?
 - C. We will give account for the things we see, especially for those things we seek out in entertainment. Therefore, we need to set limits. We need to follow Job's example in **Job 31:1**, making a covenant with our eyes not to look on things which cross these limits.
- II. Oh, be careful little ears what you hear.
 - A. The scripture is full of advice regarding things we should hear and those we should not. At one time I counted at least 31 references to things we should or should not hear in **Proverbs** alone.
 - B. What do we hear in our music? At first, I was going to find and read some lyrics from songs. But I quickly realized, I could in no way preserve the respect and decency of this pulpit while reading these lyrics. We could find lyrics from counter-cultural groups to mainstream artists in every genre. We would find lyrics explicitly describing sexual acts, describing acts of extreme violence or blatantly blaspheming and mocking God. The concerning thing about music is, we are often deceived into listening to music with a sinful message because we don't consciously listen to the words. Regrettably, those messages are planted in our minds and affect our outlook.
 - C. What types of conversations do we listen to? What things do we allow others to say around us? Many of us would not be caught dead listening to the music I have described, but do we listen to gossip, factious speech, backbiting and other sins of the tongue. It is important to be careful what we hear because our hearing contributes to others sinning with their tongues. The fact is, most sins of the tongue could not be committed if the tongue could not find a listening ear.
 - D. **I Corinthians 15:33** demonstrates why it is important to be careful what you hear and see. "Be not deceived, evil communications corrupt good morals" (KJV). What we hear and see shapes our thoughts. Our thoughts shape our actions. Our actions shape our habits. Our habits shape our character. Our character shapes our eternal destiny. As **Galatians 6:7-8** teaches, we will reap what we sow. If we sow to the flesh through what we hear, we will reap sin in our lives. It cannot be helped, it is the natural progression.
- III. Oh, be careful little mouth what you say.
 - A. We all know that cursing and taking God's or Jesus' name in vain is sinful. Most of us wouldn't dare tell a dirty joke, because we know it is unwholesome speech. But, this advice doesn't just apply to obvious sins of the tongue. It also applies to more subtle forms of sinful communication.

- B. Time doesn't permit us to look at every verse which describes what we may or may not say. However, **Ephesians 4:29** provides the guideline for proper speech. "Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear." We must speak those things that build and abstain from those which tear down.
 - C. This building up may be spiritually, mentally, emotionally. Can you think of things which tear others down? (Lying, gossip, backing, discord and discouragement, hypercriticism, hypocritical judgment, etc.) Can you think of things which build others up? (Truth, the gospel, encouraging words, praise, honor, a good joke, constructive criticism from a desire to help, etc.) Learn this verse and apply it to your every day life. Be careful what you say. And as the old adage says, "If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all."
- IV. Oh be careful little hands what you do.
- A. This is the most general of the lessons in this song, encompassing every action we perform. Jesus stresses how important it is to be careful what we do in **Matthew 15:19-20**. He says the things we do cause us to be defiled. Therefore, we must be careful what we do. The guidelines for careful action are expressed in Jesus' response to the question from the scribe, "What commandment is the foremost of all" (**Mark 12:28-31**). Love God and others.
 - B. **John 14:21-24** explains that loving God means keeping His commandments. It is not a warm fuzzy feeling in our heart at the mention of God's name. It is not simply being religious. It is getting into Christ's word and doing what He says.
 - C. Loving our neighbor is explained in the parable of the Good Samaritan in **Luke 10:30-37**. It means to do good to others, no matter who they are, providing their needs, showing mercy to them. This is not about doing good to those we like, but doing good to those we can.
 - D. Finally, don't serve God or man half-heartedly. **Ecclesiastes 9:10** says, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might."
- V. Oh be careful little feet where you go.
- A. **Proverbs 4:25-27** says our ways will be established if we watch where we walk. The easiest way to be careful what we see, hear, say and do is to first be careful where we go. If our feet carry us to places which lend themselves to sin, we are more likely to sin.
 - B. Paul instructed Timothy to flee youthful lusts and pursue righteousness (**II Timothy 2:22**). That is something we do with our feet, we flee sin. We steer clear of places which will encourage us to sin. We follow the example of Joseph when Potiphar's wife attempted to seduce him in **Genesis 39:7-12**. **Vs. 10** says Joseph not only refused to lie with her but to even be with her. He knew that if he was with her, he would eventually lie with her so he used his feet to avoid her. When he found himself in her presence by her design, not his. He did not stick around to demonstrate his will-power. He ran for it.
 - C. Proverbs is filled with admonitions regarding where our feet take us. **Proverbs 1:15** says we should not walk in the way with sinners. **Proverbs 2:20** says we should walk in paths of righteousness. If being in a certain place, with a certain group or around a certain activity gives temptation to sin, don't hang around to show how strong your. Flee!

Conclusion:

This song stresses that we must be careful. It may be a children's song. But it is not a children's message. We must be careful. If we are not, we will fall. Are you careful with you eyes, ears, mouth, hands and feet?