

# Daily View

*"But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called 'today'" Hebrews 3:13*

August 14, 2020



Nuremberg, Germany. October 2018. I think they sell Birkenstock in that store. How did I know that?

## Words are Sticky

We were in the car, looking for a street and my mom and dad were having no luck. I must have been about 8 years old. I saw the street sign and said, "there it is!" My mom said, "good job; you have sharp eyes, David." To this day, though I wear glasses to see better, I still think I have "sharp eyes."

Later, while in middle school, I was sitting in a barber's chair in Coalinga. The barber, George, was a member of the church there and my dad came to visit with him while he cut my hair. As he was barbering he said, "wow, David's hair grows at least 7 different ways." Since I often heard a commercial about how Wonder Bread built the body 8 ways, I thought it was a good thing to have hair that grows 7 ways. It became apparent, a few minutes later, though, that he wasn't complimenting me, he was complaining. That made me self-conscious about my hair for awhile.

Words are powerful. With them we praise and criticize, soothe and ruffle, heal and hurt. Words carry our thoughts, unless they don't — sometimes, words are not honest, but shaped to gain an advantage or to curry favor. Words can expose pride or humility, hypocrisy or authenticity.

Words can be spoken too soon but unspoken words can be just as hurtful. What we don't say, sometimes, speaks most loudly. I've always loved the Proverb that tells us that "a word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a

setting of silver" *Proverbs 25:11*. The challenge is in that little word, "fitly," isn't it? If you have never been on all ends of the word spectrum, you don't get out much.

Of course, we can *hear* words in a variety of ways, too. We can misinterpret, misunderstand and misappropriate words. We can hear selectively, "hear only what we want to hear," or stop listening and make a judgment before the speaker has made his point.

Among Christians, hearing sermons and reading essays about words is so common that it is almost impossible to say anything that hasn't been said a hundred times before. But there is a good reason for a reminder. James says it this way:

...the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, [a] and set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water? Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water.

*James 3:6-12*