

Education Is Power

By Thomas E. Wilson

"A penny saved is a penny earned." How often have you heard or said this familiar phrase? Countless times, no doubt. Yet, chances are you don't even know how or where the saying originated, or

who was the first person to make the statement. Examples such as this clearly demonstrate the power of the spoken word.

The potency, effectiveness, and long-range results of spoken

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words are often underestimated. The actual results and ramifications of the words we so carelessly and thoughtlessly speak are perhaps far beyond what most of us suspect. In fact, when one stops to think about it, who can say where his influence actually ends?

How many times have you heard someone say, "My grandmother always said..." and then goes on to relate a favorite or often-repeated saying of a relative or friend from years back. "Nothing ventured, nothing gained." That's one I recall from my own youth, having heard it repeated often by a favorite close relative.

For better or for worse, words reverberate down through the ages. Long after many material objects of the same age have disintegrated into dust, some spoken words are still very much alive. Wise and powerful phrases of deep wisdom have survived and flourished hundreds of years after the person who

originally spoke them has died.

Some words and phrases linger on and on — growing, thriving, and gaining in strength and popularity as the years go by, and perhaps even eventually becoming known as "words to live by." Think of it! Think of the tremendous and powerful influence of some certain words that they can be truthfully labeled "words to live by!"

What does all of this tell us? Of what practical importance in our everyday lives is this knowledge and influence of the spoken word? What practical application can we make of this information in our personal, daily living?

Apparently one lesson to be learned is that we ought to be more careful in our everyday speech. We should be more discriminating in the words we speak.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could make it a habit to see that every single sentence we uttered was pleasant and uplifting? Wouldn't

it be wonderful if we made it a practice never to utter a word of negativity? It could be done — with practice and a little effort.

If you are an adult who was subjected to verbal put-downs in your youth, all is not lost. Even if you have negative phrases — "You'll never amount to anything!" or "You're lazy!" — echoing in your head from your childhood, you can still do something about them. The method you can use is known as replacement.

In the physical confines of space, two things cannot occupy the same location. It is the same in your head. Two thoughts cannot exist simultaneously in your mind. If you don't like what you hear about yourself in your own head — "I'm scared!" or "I'm too stupid!" — then replace those thoughts with positive statements: "I'm a very brave person. I'm an intelligent person."

Instead of wasting words on complaints and

recriminations, why not use them for some high purpose such as praising, approving, and encouraging yourself and others? Why not try to speak only to appreciate and compliment?

People soon learn to turn out those who are forever condemning, belittling, and ridiculing. These practices usually repulse high-minded people. Instead of judging others, why not go to work on your own self-improvement?

If you must correct others, learn to do so in a gentle manner. Spoken words of appreciation bring out the best in everyone. Encouragement feeds worthy ambitions. One of the greatest gifts you can give a person is verbal recognition of his or her efforts.

Words may be intangible, but they are very real and alive. Spoken, repeated, whispered, shouted, copied, meditated upon, and used as guidelines for the building of lives — all of these things are done with the spoken word.

ROLE

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Many federal education programs are "federal" only in the sense that the money comes from Washington. They provide local school districts with funds for extra educational effort in areas with large numbers of poor children, who need extra help.

Mr. Reagan will be missing a great opportunity if he fails to come up with creative conservative solutions to national problems and instead retreats to conventional reactionary solutions, which largely consist of subjecting poor people and minorities to the whims of local power structures.

He comes to office at a time when many blacks themselves are beginning to question conventional liberal solutions. Mr. Reagan should seize the opportunities presented by this spirit to fashion new ideas that will bring fresh opportunities to poor people and minorities.

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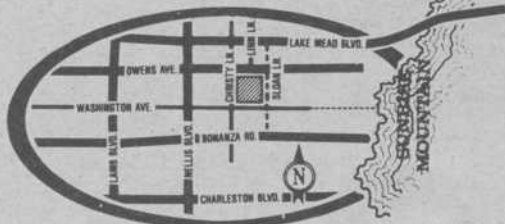


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