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A Weekly Devotional from the
South Green Street Church of Christ

The Tongue Is A Fire

by Steve Higginbotham

I remember an event that occurred a number of years ago that has taught me a lesson. A friend of mine and myself went to a Little League Baseball game together. We were watching a team play that we had both formerly played for just a year earlier. As we sat in the bleachers, we began to critique their "young" pitcher. We sat there and said things like, "If that's all the harder that kid can throw, we'd destroy him if we were still playing," and "He's terrible! I wonder if he's won any games this year." All of a sudden, a lady sitting in the bleachers behind us, tapped both of us on our shoulders and said, "Boys, that's my son out there that you're criticizing and I think he's pretty good."

Well, if there was a hole to crawl in, we would have crawled in it. There was no way to take back what we had said. There was no way to make it any better. The words had been spoken. The damage was done. And we regretted it.

Though thirty years have past since that incident, I still remember the sting of our loose speech. And I dare say that while you may not have been at a little league ball game, you too can recall a similar situation in which it was your tongue that offended.

Friends, we would do ourselves a favor if we would be slow to speak (James 1:19), and choose our words wisely. And remember, "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned" (Matthew 12:37).