

# The Messenger



“... How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!” Romans 10:15

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## Like a Ring of Gold in a Swine's Snout

*Proverbs 11:22*

Have you ever met a woman you thought was beautiful until she opened her big mouth? You did not even know it was big until she told you. Her hair and makeup, clothing and jewelry, were most complimentary to her. But when she started talking, you forgot everything else about her...

Ladies, regardless of age, have you ever stopped to consider the amount of time you spend on your physical appearance? No one will deny that such personal care is important and necessary. Shining hair, neat clothing, and clean skin may all be part of the King James word “fair” used to describe many Bible heroines. But beauty may be marred by one small part of the body: your tongue.

King Solomon, in all his wisdom, says “*As a ring of gold in a swine's snout so is a fair woman without discretion*” (Prov. 11:22). The pig's appearance is not particularly enhanced by the gold, especially since it is covered with all the muck and filth of the hog lot...

Discretion is speaking that which is proper and is appropriate. When a lovely woman curses, or tells a filthy story, gossips or lashes out, or speaks when she should be quiet, or is quiet when speaking up is in order, she is showing a lack of discretion. In the eyes of the Lord she is covering herself with a most horrible and stinking mess.

The next time you (and it applies to the handsome man, as well) are tempted (and I mean that literally as it is from the Devil) remember the picture of the swine and the gold ring. We are all admonished to keep ourselves unspotted from the world (Jas. 1:27) and right speaking is part of it, an important part.



## They Lingered Too Long!

Over the holidays I was in the home of a dear friend who is in the publishing business. He showed me a beautiful volume on Pompeii that his firm was responsible for bringing into being. I marveled at its magnificent color photographs depicting the city's ruins and fantasized over what the city must have been before that dreadful day in the summer of A.D. 79. What was once a showplace of culture was buried beneath tons of hot, wet ashes and cinders that were sprayed over it by the eruption of Vesuvius. For almost seventeen hundred years it was forgotten and its actual existence was questioned by many. Having been discovered, its testimonies to grandeur are ours to behold. The most important thing about Pompeii's ruins is what they tell us about the people of that day. It is a fact that numerous individuals lost their lives in the destruction who needed not to have lost their lives.

THE SAME THINGS THAT CAUSED MANY TO PERISH IN POMPEII. . . ARE CAUSING PEOPLE TODAY TO LINGER IN DISOBEDIENCE TO GOD'S COMMANDS.

Archeologists found that most who lost their lives at Pompeii did so because they lingered too long, trying to prolong enjoyment of what they were doing or trying to salvage their valuables. One publication tells us, "The excavator's shovels revealed all manner of family tragedies, scenes of mothers, fathers and children caught in absolute extremity. Mothers were found still holding their children in their arms, protecting them with the last bit of veil as they both suffocated. Men and women were dug up who had gathered their valuables together, got as far as the city gate and there collapsed under the stony hail, still clinging to their gold and precious things. At the threshold of one house two young women were found who had hesitated until it was too late, intending to go back into the house and salvage some of their treasures. Body after body was found at the Gate of Hercules, bodies all heaped together and still encumbered with the household gear that had grown too heavy to drag any further" (Gods, Graves, and Scholars). What a lesson to learn!

God's Word reveals a far greater destruction to come than that experienced by Pompeii, a destruction involving those who obey not the gospel (II Thess. 1:7-9). The certainty of this destruction cannot be denied, yet rather than flee to the arms of safety, people linger in sin. The same things that caused many to perish in Pompeii, devotion to loved ones and earthly possessions, are causing people today to linger in disobedience to God's commands. They will die in the destruction of the world because they are outside of Christ (II Pet. 3; Rom. 6:1-6, 17). Nothing should keep us from obeying the gospel (Matt. 10:37-38; 6:19-20; 16:24-26).

Learn a lesson from the destruction of the beautiful, proud city of Pompeii. Flee from a life of sin that you might escape the wrath of God upon the disobedient. *"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation?"* (Heb. 2:3); *"Watch therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come"* (Matt. 24:42).

CARELESS SOUL, WHY WILL YOU LINGER, WANDERING FROM THE FOLD OF GOD? WHY SO THOUGHTLESS ARE YOU STANDING, WHILE THE FLEETING YEARS GO BY." (Jimmy Tuten)

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Remember to check the prayer list for those with ongoing spiritual weaknesses and physical illnesses.

*"...Pray for one another...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."* James 5:16