

“OOOPS, DID I SAY THAT OUT LOUD?”

By Donna R. Jensen

Much is being done today to rid our environment of pollution and most would agree with how important that is. However, I have been troubled by pollution of another kind for an even longer time. Those are the words that bombard and pollute my thoughts from all sides. I can determine to some degree what I hear in my home but going out on the street, to a restaurant, riding a bus, attending a public event, standing in line, lyrics blaring from vehicles, that's another story.

Freedom is the cry every where you turn, but folks, Ralph Waldo Emerson said, “My freedom to swing my arm stops at my neighbor's nose.” Where does your freedom to pollute my thoughts with your words end? How much thought do you give to who is overhearing what you say? If people around you who overhear know you, are they surprised at what you just said about someone they also know? The joke you told? The language you used? The comment you made about a disabled person, one of another race, another sex, your political views? I overheard a conversation in a lunchroom at work forty-five years ago that changed my life for the better.

James Allen said, “As a man thinketh in his heart so is he.” If we are to change the words we speak we must change the thoughts we hold in our minds. Thoughts pop into our minds from many sources but we choose which ones we will entertain. “You can't keep birds from flying over your head but you can keep them from making a nest!”

Please start to listen to yourself. If you are not pleased with the image the words you speak create for those you know are listening as well as all the others overhearing you, for the sake of us all, make some changes.

“Whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.” Phil. 4:8 Don't settle for less than the mind of Christ, knowing that His thoughts can be your thoughts.