**For a few weeks now I have been inclined to do a devotion regarding social media and the Christian. It is a broader issue than I could cover here, but we need to start somewhere. Consider first this phenomenon:**

**Never before has the world been so privy to our thoughts – *because never before have people felt so open to share them!* Isn’t this ironic: The majority of people still find speaking in front of a crowd (even a few) to be one of their worst fears, and yet they don’t bat an eye at telling the world their fleeting thoughts, reactions, or day to day activities. You do realize that you are engaging in public communication with every share, like, and upload?**

**Imagine that every single one of your Facebook contacts has gathered in person to hear your thoughts. What is it that you have to tell them? Would you say *out loud* to this crowd what you have been thinking to type out alone? Most people won’t even share these things over the phone! I imagine that our list of post ideas would suddenly get very short and to the point if such a crowd were gathered. We wouldn’t want to waste their time and neither would we want to look the fool by saying or backing unnecessary things. So why do we do this so carelessly online?**

**Could we adopt our sobering fear of public speaking into the realm of social media?**

**Notice the prayer of the psalmist in Psalm 141:3**

*Post a guard at my mouth, God, set a watch at the door of my lips.*

**The psalmist is aware that his mouth is a gateway, and this gateway needs an active guard! It’s not so much about watching what goes into the mouth (though that does matter too!) – the guard is for filtering all that is coming out! You see, all of the inner thought life, if it to be clearly expressed, must formulate on the tongue and pass through the lips. The trouble is, not all that happens in these minds and hearts of ours ought to be shared: “*For from within, out of the heart of man*,” Jesus said, “*come evil thoughts… coveting, envy, slander, pride, foolishness* (just to name a few).” The Psalmist is right – He needs, as it were, a guard to stand ready over what his heart is thinking to express.**

**Many Christians *may* post a guard over the spoken word – but what about the *typed* word? “*Who cares, right*? *Everyone else shares freely!*” But the Christian should care – social media is a reflection of who we are. We may even have indicated in our profiles that we consider ourselves “Christian”. The reason it matters so much is that you represent none other than Jesus Christ – not just in person, but everywhere, all the time. We are not just Christians on Sunday. Is what I am posting something that will bring Jesus glory? The love of Jesus’ name should be our supreme goal. This takes some wisdom, caution, and careful reading of all that is written or shared. But the effort is worth it:**

*There is a story of a woman in a village who maliciously gossiped about another lady and her family. One day she found out that she was wrong about this lady and her family and had a change of heart. She went to the village’s wise man and asked how she could take back all the wrong she had done. The wise man told her to go home and kill her chickens and pluck their feathers and put them into a bag. After this she was to go back and see the wise man again, but on her way back she was to scatter all the feathers she had plucked from the chickens.*

*The lady did as she was told. When she got back to the man, he told her, “now go back and pick up all the feathers that you have scattered.” The woman was astonished at such a command and said, “By now the wind has carried the feathers through-out the village and beyond.” The wise man then told Her, “And so it is with your careless words. They are like the feathers scattered in the wind. You cannot retrieve them.” With that the woman went her way, broken hearted. But she determined from that day forward to watch her words.*

**So, before you type whatever you’re feeling compelled to say – pray for God’s watchful guard to check your words. Post a guard before you post a thought! Let Eph. 4:29 be one of your guiding principles:**

*29Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.*