

## Thursday Thought 2/5/09 - Just Words

**"Just words? .... Don't tell me words don't matter!"** - President Barack Obama

During the campaign President Obama insisted that words matter. He said "Don't tell me words don't matter!" He then reminded people of some of the most memorable lines from our nation's greatest speeches to make the point that words can, matter and make a difference: "I have a dream!" "We hold these truths to be self evident that all men are created equal!". "We have nothing to fear but fear itself!" There was quite the controversy after he made said these memorable and notable words. Today I want to deal with another subject that it appears many people to not find controversial yet it seems to be stirring up some controversy.

McKay Hatch, a South Pasadena, California 15 year old has received over 60,000 negative emails and some death threats. Why, was it because he was writing derogatory remarks about people? Was it because he was threatening to go shoot up his school? No, it was because he started a No Cussing Club.<sup>1</sup> Yes that's right. I applaud this young man for his creativity and willingness to take a stand!

Many people do not think cussing is a big deal. I've been told that they are just man made words and it doesn't really matter what a person says. I disagree with this statement and I'm glad that my President does as well. I echo President Obama's words, **"Don't tell me words don't matter!"** Words do matter. On his web site<sup>2</sup> McKay says "In the real world, everyone knows which words and expressions to avoid at a job interview or first date, or when speaking to their boss or a police officer." Word's matter! That's why we are selective with them. The third commandment that God gave was, "You shall not misuse the *name* of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses His *name*." Deuteronomy 5:11 His name is a word and it's not a "man made word." If words didn't matter then God wouldn't care how we used His name. If words didn't matter then Paul wouldn't have said, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, **"Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them."** Ephesians 4:29 (NLT).

Words matter! Let me encourage you this week, this day, to think twice about what you say in casual conversation, when you are behind an annoying person on the road, when you are upset or in any situation. Your words do matter, they can build up or they can tear down. Be a person that builds others up!

1. <http://newsbusters.org/blogs/tim-graham/2009/01/31/bozell-no-cussing-club-kid-gets-death-threats>
2. <http://www.nocussing.com/home.html>

### **The No Cussing Challenge by McKay Hatch**

"I won't cuss, swear, use bad language, or tell dirty jokes. Clean language is a sign of intelligence and always demands respect. I will use my language to uplift, encourage and motivate. I will Leave People Better Than I Found Them!"