

## JAMES Chapter 3

Taming the Tongue – A Matter of the Heart...



Teachers	INIQUITY	Deadly	ABLAZE	Cursing
Judgment	Ships	Poison	Stain	Fresh
Stumble	Horses	TAME	BLESS	Bitter
Bridle	Obey	Blessing	CURSE	Salt
TONGUE	Bits	Stain	LORD	Grapevine
FIRE	Rudder	Pilot	FATHER	
World	EVIL	Forest	Mouth	

### READ JAMES 3:1-12 TAMING THE TONGUE

- Why does James say that *“not many of you should become teachers”*?
- What does James say about mistakes in speaking?
- If a person is able to be perfect in speaking, what else is he/she able to do?

The writer of James likens the “tongue” to what “small” devices?

- \_\_\_\_\_ on Horses
- \_\_\_\_\_ on Ships

James also states that a forest is set ablaze by a small fire - and the tongue is a fire.

**List all the other descriptions that James uses for the tongue**

- |    |     |
|----|-----|
| 1. | 7.  |
| 2. | 8.  |
| 3. | 9.  |
| 4. | 10. |
| 5. | 11. |
| 6. | 12. |

What thoughts come to your mind after writing this list?

Is there a prayer of thankfulness or repentance in your heart? If so, take a moment and lift it up to God now in faith.

One of the points that we must not miss is the connection between the mouth and the heart. As painful as it is to acknowledge, what often comes out of our mouths is a strong indication of the condition of our hearts. When we profess faith and love in God, our actions must be consistent with our profession of faith. The things that we speak are an indicator of the condition of our hearts.

In the Gospels, Jesus uses the metaphor or analogy of a Tree and its Fruit to get His disciples to more deeply consider the power of the tongue to reveal the truth of one's heart:

*<sup>43</sup> "No good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit; <sup>44</sup> for each tree is known by its own fruit. Figs are not gathered from thorns, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. <sup>45</sup> The good person out of the good treasure of the heart produces good, and the evil person out of evil treasure produces evil; for it is out of the abundance of the heart that the mouth speaks. Luke 6:43-45 NRSV*

*<sup>33</sup> "Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit. <sup>34</sup> You brood of vipers! How can you speak good things, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. <sup>35</sup> The good person brings good things out of a good treasure, and the evil person brings evil things out of an evil treasure. <sup>36</sup> I tell you, on the day of judgment you will have to give an account for every careless word you utter; <sup>37</sup> for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned." Matthew 12:33-37*

- How do these words of Scripture help you to understand the connection between the heart and the mouth?
  
- What do the following scriptures say about Blessing and Cursing?
  - Matthew 5:44
  
  - Romans 12:4

## READ JAMES 3:13-18 WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE

James says that our works of faith should be done with gentleness and “born of wisdom” (vs 13b).

**Wisdom** has to do with the application of knowledge and the quality of our decisions. Are they sound? Are they Right? Are they Fair?

**Wisdom** is the ability to discern and judge right responses, words, or actions related to knowledge.

**Knowledge** relates to facts, ideas, and information gained through observation, research, study, or experience.

Living a life of obedience to God’s Word requires not only a knowledge of Scripture but the Wisdom of God to speak truth with love and to make right decisions.

If words of truth are proceeding from a wounded or tainted heart, those words will only hurt and not heal.

**WHAT IS ENVY?** a feeling of discontented or resentful longing aroused by someone else's possessions, qualities, or luck.

- When envy is present in our hearts, what kinds of things can it produce in our lives?
- What types of actions does James refer to as earthly wisdom? List them here:
- What are the marks of Godly Wisdom according to James?
- How does one obtain Godly Wisdom? See James 1:5

# WISDOM FROM THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

## Psalm 37:30 - RIGHTEOUSNESS & WISDOM

The mouths of the righteous utter wisdom, and their tongues speak justice.

## Proverbs 1:7 - KNOWLEDGE & WISDOM

The fear of the Lord *is* the beginning of knowledge,  
*But* fools despise wisdom and instruction.

## Proverbs 3:13 - WISDOM & UNDERSTANDING

Happy *is* the man *who* finds wisdom,  
And the man *who* gains understanding;

## Proverbs 4:10-19 WISDOM FROM THE MESSAGE BIBLE

10-15 Dear friend, take my advice;  
it will add years to your life.

I'm writing out clear directions to Wisdom Way,  
I'm drawing a map to Righteous Road.

I don't want you ending up in blind alleys,  
or wasting time making wrong turns.

Hold tight to good advice; don't relax your grip.  
Guard it well—your life is at stake!

Don't take Wicked Bypass;  
don't so much as set foot on that road.

Stay clear of it; give it a wide berth.  
Make a detour and be on your way.

16-17 Evil people are restless  
unless they're making trouble;  
They can't get a good night's sleep  
unless they've made life miserable for somebody.

Perversity is their food and drink,  
violence their drug of choice.

18-19 The ways of right-living people glow with light;  
the longer they live, the brighter they shine.  
But the road of wrongdoing gets darker and darker—  
travelers can't see a thing; they fall flat on their faces.