

The Epistle Of James

James 3:5 (NKJV)

“ Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! ”

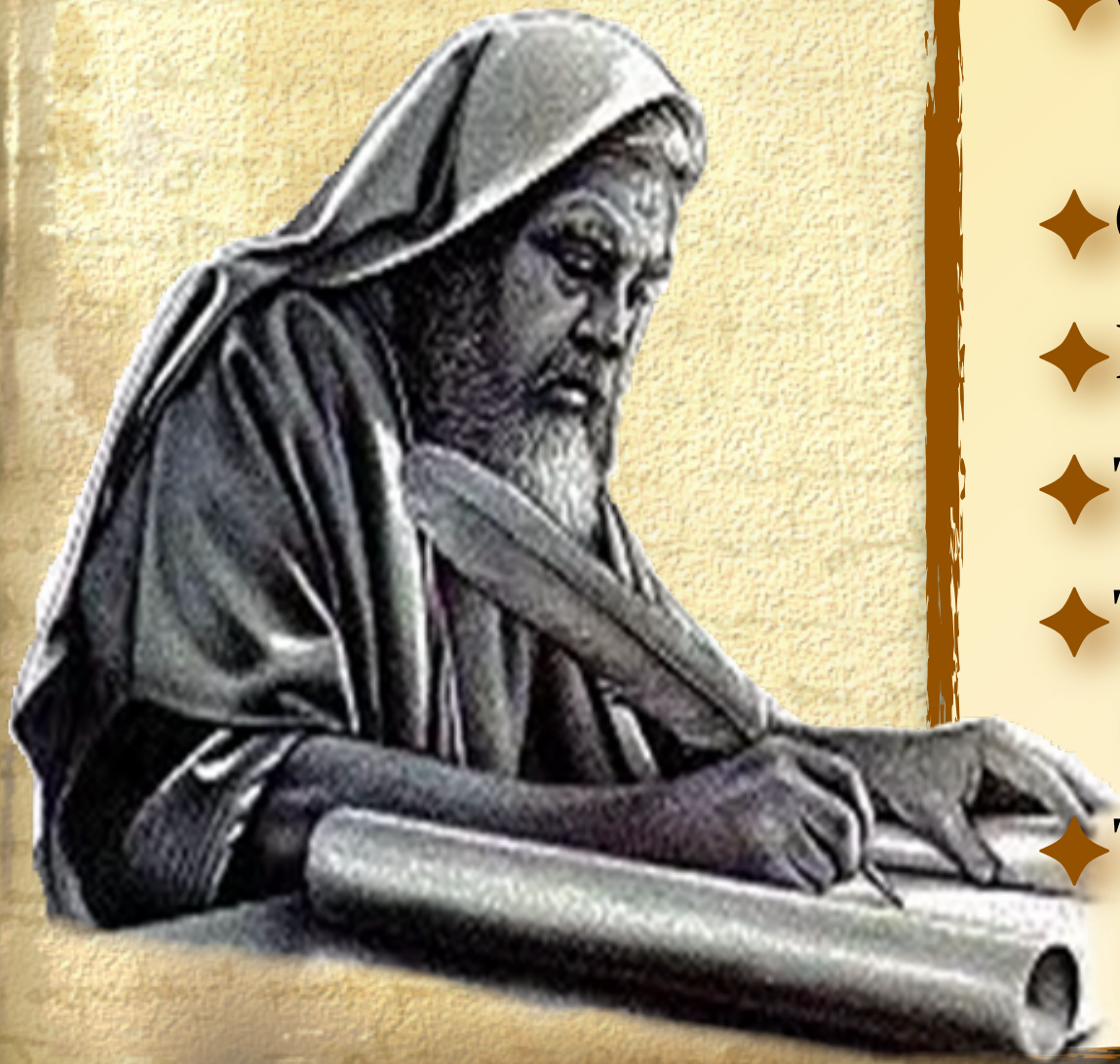


“The Power of Our Tongue”

James 3:1-12

"The Power of Our Tongue"

“ Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! ” James 3:5



- ◆ Enduring trials through faith - 1:1-12
- ◆ Overcoming temptation to do evil through faith - 1:13-16
- ◆ Overcoming anger through faith - 1:17-19
- ◆ Being doers of the word by faith - 1:20-27
- ◆ The sin of favoritism / prejudice - 2:1-13
- ◆ The faith that does not save and the ONLY kind of faith that does - 2:14-26
- ◆ The power of the tongue and our need to control it - 3:1-12

"The Power of Our Tongue"

"Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles!" James 3:5



- ◆ It is such a small member, yet we should NEVER underestimate the role it plays, either for good or evil, in one's ability to effect the lives of others.
- ◆ The greater part of what James says is given to describe the evils the tongue is capable of doing, and will do, unless proper control is exercised.
- ◆ Evidently James saw a greater need to warn against the misuse of the tongue than to extol its potential for good.

"The Power of Our Tongue"

James 3:1-12 (NKJV)

¹ My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. ² For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. ³ Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body.

"The Power of Our Tongue"

James 3:1-12 (NKJV)

⁴ Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. ⁵ Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! ⁶ And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.

"The Power of Our Tongue"

James 3:1-12 (NKJV)

7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. 8 But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God.

"The Power of Our Tongue"

James 3:1-12 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. ¹¹ Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? ¹² Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

"The Power of Our Tongue"

A Warning To Teachers

James 3:1 (NKJV)

My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.

- ◆ Not everyone should teach. - 3:1-2 (*As important as teaching the truth is, since it involves the use of the tongue, it can lead to sin.*)
- ◆ It was characteristic of Jewish Christians to want to become teachers. - Rom 2:17-20; 1 Timothy 1:7;
- ◆ Some wanted to teach for the wrong reasons. - Matthew 23:5-7; Acts 20:33; 2 Pet 2:1-22

"The Power of Our Tongue"

A Warning To Teachers

James 3:1 (NKJV)

My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.

- ◆ Not everyone is qualified to teach. - Romans 12:4-7; 2 Timothy 2:2
- ◆ All should strive to become qualified to teach. - 1 Peter 3:15; Hebrews 5:12
- ◆ The Lord placed within the church the function of teachers - Acts 13:1; Eph. 4:11
- ◆ It is the function or work of teaching that James speaks of here - cf. 1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:3-7

"The Power of Our Tongue"

A Warning To Teachers

James 3:1 (NKJV)

My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.

- ◆ No one should become a teacher without realizing what an awesome responsibility it is to be a teacher of the word of God. - (*Precious souls are involved*). Acts 20:30
- ◆ Greater responsibility demands greater accountability - Luke 12:48
- ◆ All who become teachers must do so "knowing that as such we shall incur a stricter judgment" (vs. 1).

"The Power of Our Tongue"

A Warning To Teachers

James 3:1 (NKJV)

My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment.

- ◆ **Needs to realize the great responsibility!**
- ◆ **Must exercise caution and restraint in what he says!**
- ◆ **Must be genuine in motive!**
- ◆ **Must be properly prepared!**
 - ✳ *This is a HUGE problem in the religious world today!!! Far too many - "Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm." 1 Timothy 1:7*

"The Power of Our Tongue"

A Warning To Teachers

James 3:2 (NKJV)

For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.

- ◆ We all sin - (*even teachers*) - He is not stating sin as a necessity, or as unavoidable - Rom 6:11-12; 1 Corinthians 15:34; 1 John 2:1; 3:8
- ◆ The tongue is the hardest member of the body to control. - 3:2
- ◆ A man who controls his tongue is "perfect." - *ibid* ("Perfect in the sense in which James immediately explains himself; that he is able to keep every other member of the body in subjection" (Barnes).

"The Power of Our Tongue"

A Warning To Teachers

James 3:2 (NKJV)

For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.

- ◆ This does not excuse the misuse of the tongue. - Mat 12:36-37; Jam 1:26
- ◆ It does show we can control the bodily passions and avoid sin.
 - ✳ If we can control the tongue we can control the whole body. - 3:2
 - ✳ We can control the tongue. - 1:26
 - ✳ Therefore, we can control the whole body. - cf. 1 Cor. 10:13

"The Power of Our Tongue"

The Tongue Is Small But Powerful - 3:3-5



◆ **The tongue is like:**

- ✧ A small bit that turns a large horse. - 3:3
- ✧ A small rudder that turns a large ship. - 3:4
- ✧ A small fire that ignites an inferno. - 3:5

"The Power of Our Tongue"

The Tongue Is Small But Powerful - 3:3-5



◆ **Even so the tongue has great power:**

Proverbs 10:11 (NKJV)
The mouth of the
righteous is a well of life,
But violence covers the
mouth of the wicked.

"The Power of Our Tongue"

The Tongue Is Small But Powerful - 3:3-5



◆ **Even so the tongue has great power:**

- ✳ To do great good - Mark 16:15-16; Eph 4:29; Prov 25:11
- ✳ But FAR too often it is used to do great harm - Prov 26:20; Eph 4:25; 5:4

"The Power of Our Tongue"

The Tongue Is Small But Powerful - 3:3-5



- ✦ **Destroy neighbor -**
(Prov. 11:9)
- ✦ **Reveal secrets -**
(Prov. 11:13; 20:19)
- ✦ **Sows strife -** (Prov. 16:28)
- ✦ **Separates friends -**
(Prov. 16:28; 17:9)
- ✦ **Destroy a church -**
(Gal. 5:15)

"The Power of Our Tongue"

The Tongue Is Untamable - 3:6-8

James 3:6 (NKJV)

And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.

◆ **The tongue has incredible power to harm - 3:6:**

- ✳️ **"World of iniquity"** - The tongue utters and leads to all the evil in the world. - e.g., Prov 26:21
- ✳️ **Defiles (stains) the whole body.** - Matthew 12:34-35
- ✳️ **"Sets on fire the course (wheel) of nature"** - inflames the whole round of one's life
- ✳️ **"Is set on fire of hell"** - the source of the deadly fire is hell itself (lit., "Gehenna,")

"The Power of Our Tongue"

The Tongue Is Untamable - 3:6-8

James 3:7 (NKJV)

For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind.

An untamable beast must be caged

- ✳ Generally speaking, man is able to tame beasts (*A tamed beast needs no restraints - dogs, cats, horses, etc*).
-3:7; cf. Gen 1:27-28; 9:22
- ✳ There are beast that cannot be domesticated - they must be kept in a cage! (why do they put lions, tigers, poisonous reptiles, etc. in cages?)

"The Power of Our Tongue"

The Tongue Is Untamable - 3:6-8



An untamable beast must be caged

- ✳ The tongue, being untamable, must be restrained. - 3:8; Proverbs 10:19
- ✳ As an untamable beast is kept caged - God has given us pearly white bars to cage the tongue, - (*Clench the teeth, close the lips, and restrain the tongue*) - Ps 141:3
- ✳ The unrestrained tongue can do more harm than a room full of rattle snakes! - Ps 140:3

James 3:8 (NKJV)

But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

"The Power of Our Tongue"

The Tongue Is Untamable - 3:6-8



An untamable beast must be caged

- ✳ Psa. 34:13 "Keep your tongue from evil, And your lips from speaking deceit"
- ✳ Ep 4:29 "Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers."
- ✳ Co 4:6 "Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one."

James 3:8 (NKJV)

But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

"The Power of Our Tongue"

The Tongue Is Untamable - 3:6-8



- ◆ The Lying Tongue
- ◆ The Flattering Tongue
- ◆ The Proud Tongue
- ◆ The Overused Tongue
- ◆ The Swift Tongue
- ◆ The Backbiting Tongue
- ◆ The Tale bearing (*Gossiping*) Tongue
- ◆ The Cursing Tongue
- ◆ The Filthy Tongue
- ◆ The Complaining Tongue
- ◆ The Silent Tongue

"The Power of Our Tongue"

Foolish Inconsistencies Regarding The Tongue - (9-12)

James 3:9,10 (NKJV)

⁹ With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God.

¹⁰ Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.

Should one and the same tongue:

✳ **Bless** (praise, thank) God - cf. Psalm 145:21; 1 Cor. 10:16

✳ **And curse** (*petition God to destroy*) men who are made in God's likeness? - 3:9-10; cf. Gen 1:27; 1 John 4:20; Rom 12:14

"The Power of Our Tongue"

Foolish Inconsistencies Regarding The Tongue - (9-12)

James 3:11,12 (NKJV)

¹¹ Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening?

¹² Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

- ✳ Does The same spring send out fresh and salty water - 3:11
- ✳ Does A fig tree produce olives. - 3:12;
- ✳ Then how can a good heart send out wholesome words and evil, hurtful, destructive words?

"The Power of Our Tongue"

Foolish Inconsistencies Regarding The Tongue - (9-12)

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¹¹ Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening?

¹² Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

Matthew 12:33-37 (NKJV)

³³ "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by *its* fruit. ³⁴ Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

"The Power of Our Tongue"

Foolish Inconsistencies Regarding The Tongue - (9-12)

James 3:11,12 (NKJV)

¹¹ Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening?

¹² Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

Matthew 12:33-37 (NKJV)

³⁵ A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.

"The Power of Our Tongue"

Foolish Inconsistencies Regarding The Tongue - (9-12)

James 3:11,12 (NKJV)

¹¹ Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening?


¹² Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

Matthew 12:33-37 (NKJV)

³⁶ But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. ³⁷ For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

"The Power of Our Tongue"

How Can We Restrain The Tongue?

- 
- * **Acknowledge the need** -
Psalm 39:1; Prov 10:19; 29:11
 - * **Careful what you say to & about others** -
Jam 1:19; Prov 11:13
 - * **Genuine love** - 1 Cor 13:4-8
 - * **Purify Your Mind** - Mat 23:25-26;
12:33; Rom 12:1-2

"The Power of Our Tongue"



- ◆ **Tremendous Power For Both Good & Evil** – *(But Most Often Is The Cause of Big Problems)* – James 3:1-6
- ◆ **Is Never Fully Tamed** – James 3:7-8
- ◆ **Reflects What Is In The Heart** – James 3:9-12

“Be Careful Little Mouth What You Say . . .”

James 3:1-12

Matthew 12:33-37





The Epistle Of James

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Prepared May 19,20, 2012

Preached May 20, 2012

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Proverbs 10:13-21 (NKJV)

¹³ Wisdom is found on the lips of him who has understanding, But a rod *is* for the back of him who is devoid of understanding. ¹⁴

Wise *people* store up knowledge, But the mouth of the foolish *is* near destruction. ¹⁵

The rich man's wealth *is* his strong city; The destruction of the poor *is* their poverty. ¹⁶

The labor of the righteous *leads* to life, The wages of the wicked to sin.

Proverbs 10:13-21 (NKJV)

- ¹⁷ He who keeps instruction *is in* the way of life, But he who refuses correction goes astray. ¹⁸ Whoever hides hatred *has* lying lips, And whoever spreads slander *is* a fool.
- ¹⁹ In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, But he who restrains his lips *is* wise.
- ²⁰ The tongue of the righteous *is* choice silver; The heart of the wicked *is worth* little.
- ²¹ The lips of the righteous feed many, But fools die for lack of wisdom.