

JAMES

James 3:1-12

Theme: ▶ **Taming the Tongue**



A

1 Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.

- Teachers were important in the early church and are important in churches today. (John 21:15-19)
- Teachers will be judged with greater strictness, because they are accountable for more. (Heb. 13:17)

2 We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.

- All Christians will continue to stumble (sin) but take heart and strive toward growing in holiness because Jesus died for and has overcome our sin.

▶ **Q: Why do Christians continue in sin?** (2 Corinthians 3:18) (1 John 3:2)

- The way a person speaks reveals their character and consequently who they are and where their heart is. (Luke 6:45)
- The tongue is a revelation of the heart. (Proverbs 18:2)

3 When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal.

4 Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go.

- A horse's bit and a ship's rudder are examples of very small things that control large objects.
- ▶ • The tongue directs and affects everything a person is and does.

5 Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. 6 The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

- Pride is a major cause of the misuse of the tongue.
- Evil speech destroys because it comes from satan himself. (1 John 2:16) (Ephesians 4:29)

7 All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, 8 but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

- A sinful human tongue is a tool for death and destruction.
- We cannot tame our tongue on our own.

9 With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. 10 Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be.

- A tongue that blesses and curses is both foolish and hypocritical. (Philippians 2:14-16)
- ▶ • The greatest use of the tongue is to bless God.

11 Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? 12 My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

- True believers will not speak both blessings of God and curses toward others.

Q: What kind of fruit are we producing?

- Christians should produce the fruit that God has created us to produce. The fruit of the Spirit - Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Gentleness, Faithfulness and Self-Control (Galatians 5:22)

Q: If “out of the mouth the heart speaks” is true, how do we bridle our tongue?

A; Our tongues are bridled and used for life instead of death when God creates in us a clean heart. (Psalm 51:10)

• “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” - Matthew 6:21

Q: Where is our treasure?

- ▶ • Pleasure is the measure of your treasure. (Your treasure is what you love.)
- We Christians should take pleasure in our God. (Psalm 16:11)
- ▶ • Our treasure controls our hearts, and our hearts control our tongues.
- If we make God our treasure and bless Him with our speech, He will direct our hearts and tame our tongues.

Q: How do we bless others with our speech?

- If we love Jesus we will use our speech as an example of the love Jesus.
- We should apply the fruit of the Spirit in all our relationships, friend or enemy. (Matthew 5:43-48)
- Our faith, hope and love should be in God’s will for us and the people around us.

Q: How do we bless the Lord with our speech?

- Worship » Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name! - Psalm 103:1
- Prayer » Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18
- ▶ • Live, Love and become more like Jesus everyday.

» **If we want to change our community we must start with ourselves.**

GROUP READING

John 21:15

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.”

Hebrews 13:17

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

2 Corinthians 3:18

And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

1 John 3:2

Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.

Luke 6:45

The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

1 John 2:16

For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life[a]—is not from the Father but is from the world.

Ephesians 4:29

Let 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.

Philippians 2:14-16

Do all things without grumbling or disputing, 15 that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, 16 holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.

JAMES

James 3:13-18

Theme: ▶ **Earthly Wisdom vs Godly Wisdom**



Group Reading: Proverbs 8:22-31

Q: Who is “me” in the context of Proverbs 8:22-31? A: wisdom

- God is omniscient (all wise or all knowing). (Romans 11:33-34)

Group Reading: Proverbs 1:7, Proverbs 9:10, Psalm 111:10, Psalm 14:1

- “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom”

Q: 1) What is wisdom? 2) Is wisdom knowledge? 3) Where does wisdom come from? ◀ Knowledge vs Wisdom

- ▶ • Knowledge is truthful information and wisdom is applying that truth in our lives.
- Wisdom is more profitable than silver and gold. (Proverbs 3:13-17)
- God is the only source for wisdom. (Proverbs 2:6)
- True wisdom isn't achieved; it's received from God.
- God gives wisdom generously. (James 1:5)

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom.

- Meekness is a humble and submissive heart that relies on the strength of God.
- Meekness is not weakness or passivity but rather sets us free from anxious self-promotion.
- Christians are to show their faith by their works with humble wisdom from God.

14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth.

- Earthly wisdom (“Bitter jealousy and selfish ambition”) is the opposite of Godly wisdom.
- Earthly wisdom is motivated by self-centered ambition.
- Earthly wisdom craves personal power, prestige and exalts “self”.
- Earthly wisdom only considers me, myself and I.

15 This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.

- Earthly wisdom is unspiritual, demonic and evil.
- Earthly wisdom is envious.
- Earthly wisdom leads to conflict, division, disorder and sin.
- ▶ • Earthly wisdom embraces “self”, Godly wisdom denies “self”. (Matthew 16:24-26)
- ▶ • Earthly wisdom produces pride, Godly wisdom produces humility.

17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. 18 And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

- Godly wisdom comes from heaven.
- Godly wisdom leads us to do good works. (v13)
- Godly wisdom will produce Godly fruit. (purity and peace) (Galatians 5:9)
- Peace is one of the critical attributes of a pure believer. (Matthew 5:9)
- Peacemaking is righteous conduct that God will bless.
- Godly wisdom is allowing the Holy Spirit to lead you into all truth. (John 16:13)

James 3:17 ◀

- “wisdom from above is first pure”
- “then peaceable”
- “gentle”
- “open to reason”
- “full of mercy”
- (full of) “good fruits, impartial and sincere.”

Jesus’ Beatitudes - Matthew 5

- “Blessed are the pure in heart”
- “Blessed are the peacemakers”
- “Blessed are the meek”
- “Blessed are the poor in spirit”
- “Blessed are the merciful”
- “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness”

- Godly wisdom is a blessing from God.
- God desires for us to use Godly wisdom in our relationship with Him and others.

» We should ask God daily to fill us with Godly wisdom from above and lead us by the power of His Holy Spirit into all truth. ◀

GROUP READING

Proverbs 8:22-31

“The Lord possessed me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old. Ages ago I was set up, at the first, before the beginning of the earth. When there were no depths I was brought forth, when there were no springs abounding with water. Before the mountains had been shaped, before the hills, I was brought forth, before he had made the earth with its fields, or the first of the dust of the world. When he established the heavens, I was there; when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside him, like a master workman, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the children of man.

Proverbs 1:7

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

Proverbs 9:10

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight.

Psalms 111:10

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!

Psalms 14:1

The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.”

Proverbs 3:13-17

Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who gets understanding, for the gain from her is better than gain from silver and her profit better than gold. She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.

Proverbs 2:6

For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding;

Romans 11:33-34

Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! “For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?”

Matthew 16:24-26

Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul?