

**James: Lesson #76 – What Comes From the Mouth**  
**Notes for Parents to Study With Their Children**  
**For Wednesday, Feb. 18<sup>th</sup>**

Read James 3:1-18 (a simplified explanation of the text will be supplied at the end of these notes).

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

**Talking Can Get Us Into Trouble**

- God has blessed human beings with the ability to speak. Being able to talk to each other is a wonderful thing. Being able to talk about the Bible is a really good thing. But to truly serve God, we need to learn to be careful about what we say. Our words can sure cause us to get into trouble. If a person can be careful about what they say, they really are good Christians.
- Your tongue that helps you say your words is really just a small thing compared to your whole body. But it influences your whole life. James compares the tongue to several other little things that have a big effect on much larger things.
  - A small bridle in a horse’s mouth can turn can be used by someone riding the horse to turn that great big animal around and make it obey.
  - A large ship sailing out in the water is turned around by a little thing called a rudder.
  - A small campfire can burn up a large forest.
  - The tongue may be small but like the small bit in a horses mouth it can control you, like the small rudder, the tongue can send your life a certain direction, and like a small fire it can destroy a lot of things.
- Speaking of fire, James goes a little bit further explaining that. The tongue is very much like a fire. Our whole life can be affected, burned up, by using our words the wrong way. James says that the tongue gets set on fire by Hell. I think that might be another way of saying that the Devil can sure use our words to do a lot of bad things.
- All kind of animals can be trained to do things. Dogs, lions, bears, horses, elephants, dolphins, whales, birds, and even more can be taught to do tricks or help do something for man. A lot of animals can be tamed (made not so wild). But James says it’s very hard to tame the tongue. It’s hard to get our words under control. They can be like a poisonous snake that can bite and kill.
- It just isn’t right when our mouth quotes a Bible passage or sings praises to God on Sunday and then tells lies or says bad words or talks ugly about other people the rest of the week. Something needs to change in our hearts if we are guilty of that.

**Teachers Need to Live God’s Wisdom**

- We may think its good to talk about the Bible, and it is. But we have to live what the Bible teaches and not just talk about it.
- For someone to truly be wise enough to teach others, they need to live the right way.

- A teacher that really lives by God's heavenly wisdom will be pure, peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, not showing partiality and without being hypocrites.
- A teacher that lives by the Devil's earthly wisdom will be envious, will promote themselves, will end up only causing confusion, and that will promote evil things.
- Teachers have to show a good example if they are going to teach God's Word. They should realize that they will have to answer to God for how and what they taught.

## **Simplified Explanation of the Text**

### **Teacher Will Be Judged for Their Teaching**

1 My brethren, not many of you should become teachers because we know that they will receive a judgment greater than others.

### **How a Small Thing Like the Tongue Can Cause Big Troubles**

2 There are many different things that cause us all to stumble, but if anyone can keep from stumbling in their words, that person is perfect. They should be able to bridle the whole body.

3 Look how we put a bridle in a horse's mouth to get them to obey us. When a horse is bridled you can turn around their whole body.

4 And also look at the great ships which are driven by the fierce wind. They are turned around with a very small rudder whatever direction the pilot pushes it.

5 And it's this same way with the tongue, which is a little member of the body, but what big things it boasts. Look at how just a little bit of fire can burn up a large forest.

6 The tongue is a fire.

The tongue is its own little world of unrighteous behavior. It is set among the other parts of our body in such a way that it stains all of what we are. The wheel of life gets set on fire by the tongue and the source of that fire is from hell.

7-8 Now all kinds of animals, including birds and serpents and even sea creatures, can be tamed and have been tamed by mankind, but no one can tame the tongue. It is an evil that cannot be held back, full of deadly poison.

9 With the tongue, we bless God, our Father; and then turn around and curse people – people who have been made after God's likeness.

10 From out of the same mouth can come blessings and curses. My brethren, that is not the way things should be.

11 Can a spring gush out sweet water and bitter water in the same opening?

12 My brethren, can a fig tree bear olives? Can a vine bear figs? And obviously no spring can make both salt water and fresh water.

### **If Your Teach God's Wisdom, You Should Live It**

13 Whoever is wise and skilled among you, demonstrate your excellent behavior in your works with the gentle spirit of wisdom.

14 But if your hearts are filled with bitterness because you are jealous of what others have that you don't have, and if you are trying to promote yourself so you can get your own following, then don't claim to be qualified to teach because that would be a lie against the Truth.

15 That kind of wisdom does not come from above (from heaven), but it comes from earthly ways. It is what men think of as wise in the natural world. It is demon-like.

16 Because wherever jealousy and selfish ambitions exist there is disorder and all kind of wicked things.

17 Now the wisdom that is from above, first of all, produces purity – pure hearts, pure motives and purity of life.

Next, heavenly wisdom produces a desire for peace accompanied by the actions it takes to have that peace.

Then heavenly wisdom produces then a gentle and meek spirit.

And heavenly wisdom also produces a reasonable person who is willing to listen to others and if need be to sacrifice their own ways to work together.

Heavenly wisdom will produce someone who is filled with mercy; one who shows compassion for those who are going through difficulties.

When heavenly wisdom is being practiced, you will see the good fruits it yields in their life.

Heavenly wisdom won't make distinctions in people, drawing apart from some people contentiously, but will treat all equally.

Heavenly wisdom doesn't produce hypocrites.

18 Righteous fruit is grown when those who plant in peace make peace.