

Show me your faith

James 2:18

5. By Taming the Tongue

1. Evaluate the tongue

James 3:2-12

² We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check.

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.

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 person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

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

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

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

▲ *The tongue is defiant and disobedient and disorderly*

James 3:2 We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check. — ⁷ All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, ⁸ but no man can tame the tongue.

- ▶ *The tongue is restless and rowdy and rambunctious*
- ▶ *The tongue is rebellious and recalcitrant*

▲ *The tongue drives and dominates*

James 3:3 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. 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.

- ▶ *Illustration #1— horse handling*
- ▶ *Illustration #2— sailing ships*
- ▶ *Illustration #3— forest fires*

Proverbs 18:21 The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.

Revelation 12:10 For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. ¹¹ They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony;

▲ *The tongue is destructive and degrading*

James 3:6 The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. — ⁸ It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

- ▶ *The tongue creates drama and disturbance*
- ▶ *The tongue creates division and dissension*
- ▶ *The tongue creates devastation and death*
- ▶ *The tongue creates devil-designed destinies*

▲ *The tongue is duplicitous and deceptive*

James 3:9 With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. ¹⁰ Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. ¹¹ Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? ¹² My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

- ▶ *The tongue produces both praise and profanity – but this should not be*
- ▶ *The tongue produces both pleasantries and poisons – but this should not be*

2. Eliminate the trash

▲ *Eliminate degrading and deflating talk*

Ephesians 4:29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

▲ *Eliminate damaging and destructive talk*

James 4:11 Brothers, do not slander one another.

▲ *Eliminate divisive and discordant talk*

Proverbs 15:1 A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. — ^{16:28} A perverse man stirs up dissension, and a gossip separates close friends. — ^{21:19} Better to live in a desert than with a quarrelsome and ill-tempered wife.

Philippians 2:14 Do everything without complaining or arguing,

▲ *Eliminate dirty and defiling talk*

Ephesians 5:3 these are improper for God's holy people. ⁴ Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place,

Colossians 3:8 But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.

▲ *Eliminate deceptive and duplicitous talk*

Ephesians 4:25 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.

3. Elevate the talk...and the typing and texting

▲ *Slow up the speaking*

James 1:19 My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,

▲ *Surrender to the Spirit and stay sanctified*

Luke 6:45 The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.

Romans 8:13 For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, ¹⁴ because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control.

▲ *Speak as a smart saint and not as a savage sinner*

Psalms 141:3 Set a guard over my mouth, O LORD; keep watch over the door of my lips.

Psalms 19:14 May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

Proverbs 12:18 Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

Proverbs 25:11 A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.

▲ *Sermonizers, speak strongly and straightly but sweetly*

2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.

Isaiah 50:4 The Sovereign LORD has given me an instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary.

Action Assignments 1. Examine every word — 2. Eliminate evil words — 3. Employ excellent words

Consider the highest standard

Colossians 3:17 And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

1 Peter 4:11 If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God.