

Control Your Tongue

“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. (James 3:2)

Everyone knows the pain and destruction that result from hurtful words. How do we keep from causing such pain and destruction? James says that we should control our tongue so that only blessings come from it.

The book of James doesn't deal with doctrine or deep theological issues. Rather, the practical aspects of ministry are what are important to James. From the very beginning of his book, James addressed the ministry of Christian conduct and behavior.

Chapter three deals with the issue of an uncontrolled tongue and unchristian speech, which negatively affected the ministry of the church. Three things are important in chapter three of James. First, James warns teachers of the great responsibility they have to teach. They will be judged more critically because of their position of responsibility. Second, he compares and contrasts the size and influence of the tongue with small devices and their ability to control large powerful animals and ships. Also, James compares the tongue with fire and its ability to destroy and contrasts its ability to resist being tamed with wild beasts that can be brought in-to subjection. For James the tongue used inappropriately was a pot of evil and destruction. Third, James discouraged the use of it to praise God, the Creator of a;; people, while cursing the very people He made. He refuted being double-tongue and expressed sorrow and regret at its existence.

At the heart of this periscope of Scripture is uncontrolled and unchristian speech which James deplored and felt as devoid of true religion. His prohibition is designed to convince the Chris-tian of folly of being double-minded or double-mouthed.

The Christian talk must fit the Christian walk. Praising God and cursing others He has made is inconsistent and incompatible with authentic worship.

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