

Aug 19, 2012



Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church

Grand Prairie, Texas



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Maturing in the Faith

A Study in James

Date	Lesson	Text
07/08	Introduction to James	
07/15	Trials and Temptations	1:1-17
07/22	Faith and God's Word	1:18-27
07/29	Faith and Impartiality	2:1-13
08/05	Faith and Actions	2:14-17
08/12	Saving Faith	2:18-26
08/19	Controlling our Tongues	3:1-12
08/26	Faith and Wisdom	3:13-18
09/02	Godly Behavior	4:1-17
09/09	Faith and Money	5:1-6
09/16	Patient Faith	5:7-11
09/23	Faith and Prayer	5:12-20
09/30	Review and Summary	

Food for Thought

Words, Do They Matter?

What we say reveals who we are
The tongue can be a blessing
And the tongue can be a curse;
Say, friend, how are you using
yours: For better or for worse?

*If anyone among you thinks he is
religious, and does not bridle his
tongue but deceives his own heart,
this one's religion is useless.*

(James 1:26 NKJV)

From "Our Daily Bread", May 03, 2010)

Faith and Controlling Our Tongue

James 3:1-12

Some Native Americans believe that **when a word is spoken it begins to live that day, and that no word spoken will ever die.** There is a ring of truth to this. Careless, thoughtless remarks and their effects seem to live on and on, don't they? All of us have experienced the lingering pain caused by unkind words. We'd like to take back some of the words we've spoken. Though we apologize, we know that damage has already been done. **Each day we have an opportunity to glorify Christ with our tongues or give victory to the devil.** We don't control our tongues as well as we should—none of us do. This lesson will help all of us do better in this regard. Talk fills our lives. Family, friends, coworkers, neighbors, salespeople, teachers, politicians, and preachers knit together the fabric of life with talk. Talk has tremendous impact that often goes unnoticed. We believed in the power of words when we were little but as we grew older and cast aside a "magical" view of words, we seem to forget that words still have a lot of power. Most of us utter harmful, dangerous words every day. Our desire to be right, to get ahead, to gain control, to be heard, or to defend ourselves can motivate us to say all kinds of things at the expense of others. Fortunately, with sincere words we can also apologize. However, catching ourselves before we sin with our speech is tough. Still, we can do better, as this lesson will teach. Speech habits are one of the most predominant themes of wisdom. Proverbs 18:21 says, "The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit." Jesus said, "But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned" (Matthew 12:36, 37). After offering a brief warning to be "slow to speak" in James 1:19 and then reinforcing this with the advice in 1:26, James unleashes in chapter 3 his entire arsenal of reasons why the tongue must be controlled. Though it begins as a mandate to teachers in the church, it applies to everyone.

(From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

It is very important to be wise in what we say. This is especially true of the Lord's people. James spoke of the tongue and the tremendous damage it can cause. After being unwise in what he says, a person can always say he is sorry. Once the damaging words are spoken, however, the hurt is done. It is impossible to capture the words and return them to where they originated. Marriages have been destroyed, families have been broken, friendships have ended, and terrible, irreparable damage has been done because of unwise words spoken. Church congregations have split because unkind words have been said. Once a person accepts Christ as Savior, that individual is a new creation. The child of God has the Holy Spirit dwelling within him. If anyone should have control over what he says, it should be the person who is saved and is therefore a new creation. **There is really no excuse for a Christian to cause damage between others and himself with the words he speaks.** All of us have witnessed both sides of this problem among believers. It is totally out of character for a child of God to speak bitter words that can cause hurt and sometimes permanent damage to a fellow Christian. Hurtful words have a long life span and often leave irreparable damage in a life. We should be wise in our speech, knowing the damage the tongue can easily cause. May we apply what the psalmist wrote: "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer" (Ps 19:14).

(From the Bible Expositor and Illuminator)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT THE TONGUE AND TEACHING (JAMES 3:1)

Consider the decision of being a teacher

Because there is only one true Teacher and that is Jesus (Matt 23:8)

Because as a teacher we should speak what we know and have seen from God (John 3:10-12)

Because to be a teacher, one must have first been taught himself (Rom 2:17-21)

Because God appoints true teachers (1 Cor 12:28)

Consider the accountability of being a teacher

Accountability to warn and tell others about God's requirements (Ezek 3:18-19)

Accountability of doing God's will when we know it (Luke 12:47-48)

Accountability of faithfulness (1 Cor 4:2)

Accountability of having to give account of those we teach (Heb 13:17)

Consider the judgment of being a teacher

Judgment of pride (Luke 20:45-47)

Judgment of not understanding what we say or teach (1 Tim 1:5-7)

Judgment of not teaching sound doctrine (2 Tim 4:3-4)

Judgment of not maturing in the Word (Heb 5:12)

Judgment of being a false teacher (2 Peter 2:1)

Judgment of being a stumbling block (Matt 23:15)

CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT TAMING THE TONGUE (JAMES 3:2-10)

Don't let the tongue make us stumble

Stumble into condemnation (Matt 12:37)

It is better to lose our tongue than to let it make us stumble (Matt 5:29)

Stumble by living according to the flesh (Rom 8:13)

Stumble by not disciplining our body and bringing it into subjection to God (1 Cor 9:27)

Power of the tongue

Power to be like a sword (Prov 12:18-19)

Power of life and death (Prov 18:21)

Power to take advantage (Jude 16)

Power to defile oneself (Matt 15:11)

Power of poison and deceit (Rom 3:13)

Taming the tongue

Tame by keeping our tongues from evil (Ps 34:13)

Tame by guarding our tongues and ways (Ps 39:1)

Tame by ensuring our tongues are guided by God (Prov 16:1)

Tame by guarding our mouth (Prov 21:23)

Tame by bridling our tongues (James 1:26)