

# Day Six

Chapter 3:1-18



1 Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you **know** that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. 2 For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he **says**, he is a **perfect** man, able also to **bridle** his whole body. 3 If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. 4 Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. 5 So also the **tongue** is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! 6 And the **tongue** is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The **tongue** is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by **hell**. 7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, 8 but no human being can tame the **tongue**. It is a restless **evil**, full of **deadly poison**. 9 With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. 10 From the same **mouth** come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so. 11 Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water? 12 Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water.

- I. The \_\_\_\_\_
  - A. It's not wise for there to be many teachers. (3:1)
  - B. Teachers are judged more harshly. (3:1) — Matthew 18:5-6, “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, 6 but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.”
  
- II. The \_\_\_\_\_
  - A. Maturity/steadfastness/perfection yields communication that does not fail (stumble). (3:2) — James 2:10, “For whoever keeps the whole law but **fails** in one point has become accountable for all of it.”
  - B. A person with the ability to control his tongue will have enough self-control to bridle his whole body. This tells us that controlling our speech is more difficult than controlling our actions. (3:2)
    1. Bits control horses. (3:3)
    2. Rudders control ships. (3:4)
    3. Sparks start forest \_\_\_\_\_. (3:5)
  - C. The tongue is a consuming fire (3:5-6, “Fire” is used four times in two verses and “ablaze” is used once.)
  - D. The tongue is given a place of control in our bodies. (3:6)
  - E. The tongue stains our bodies and ruins \_\_\_\_\_. (3:6)

1. This truth can be applied to each individual and his tongue.
  2. But it can also be applied to the teacher in verse one. His wicked tongue will stain the body of Christ whom he's been entrusted to teach.
- F. The tongue is untamable. (3:8)
1. All creatures can be tamed (3:7)
  2. Mark 5:3-4 *"He lived among the tombs. And no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain, 4 for he had often been bound with shackles and chains, but he wrenched the chains apart, and he broke the shackles in pieces. No one had the strength to **subdue** him."*
- G. The tongue is unrighteous, inspired by hell, a restless evil, and full of deadly poison. (3:6, 8)
1. We boast. (3:5)
  2. We bless the Lord on one hand and curse men on the other. (3:9)
  3. We bless and we curse. (3:10)
    - a) The curse refers to calling down ultimate judgement.
    - b) Cursing is sinful because we're usurping God's authority.
  4. Wickedness and evil + blessings = hypocrisy

III. The \_\_\_\_\_

- A. Given everything that's been learned up until now, we should realize that our communication must not be so capricious. (3:10)
- B. We know that faith produces works, therefore a believer's tongue must speak accordingly.
1. Fresh and salt water can't come from the same spring. (3:11)
  2. Fruit trees bear only one fruit. (3:12)
  3. Salt ponds can't yield fresh water. (3:12)
  4. Luke 6:43-45, *"43 For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, 44 for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thornbushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. 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."*
- C. So, what's the answer for the untamable tongue? James paints such a dismal picture, it almost seems impossible that the previous passage about faith and works could apply to the tongue. And yet it must. So, how do we do the impossible?
- D. LifeWork — Read James 3:13-18 and figure out the only thing that can help us tame the tongue.**