

James 3

Jesus

Matthew 12:36 ... every idle word men may speak they will give account of it in the day of judgment.

I. Untamable Tongue Weaponized

1 My **brethren**, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a **stricter judgment**.

- **Brethren:** Many seeking to be teachers at this time

Consider the cost before becoming a teacher of God's Word

Teachers are called out by God for...

- **Pride:** Desire to be recognized...

Matthew 23:6 [Religious Teachers] ... love the **best places** at feasts, the best **seats** in the synagogues, 7 greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Teacher, teacher.'

- **Hypocrisy:** Not practicing what they preach...

Romans 2:21 You... who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal?

- **Incompetence:** Not knowing what they are talking about...

1 Timothy 1:7 [Some desire] ... to be teachers of the law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm.

- **Greater Judgement:** Assume they are teachers/but not called

Their case is awful; they shall receive greater condemnation than common sinners; they have not only sinned in thrusting themselves into that office to which God has never called them, but through their insufficiency the flocks over whom they have assumed [leadership] perish for lack of knowledge, and their blood will God require at the watchman's hand. [Clarke]

- **For those that *are called* know this...**

Every Word/Every Cross Reference/Every Application/Every Motivation will be Scrutinized

Let not many of you become teachers: IOW...teach only if you are called by God to do so...but hit the ground running if you are. It is both a great privilege responsibility to teach... and must be taken very seriously. [NJC]

Know for sure you're called to teach...or don't.

- Potential danger of the tongue for those who teach
- **Potential danger of the tongue for all of us...**

2 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.

- **Stumble** Ourselves and others
- **Perfection** Every Word motivated by Love?

1 Corinthians 13 [Paraphrase] Every word I speak is spoken patiently and kindly to everyone I meet and in every situation. My words are never motivated by jealousy or pride. My speech is never ever rude or intimidating. I am never provoked to lash out in anger or with evil intent. I never gossip or lie but rejoice in speaking only encouragement and truth to others. [NJC]

- **If this is you...Congratulations, you are Perfect!**

**If we could control our tongues...the rest would be easy
Our entire body follows the direction of our tongue**

3 Indeed, [lit. you've seen this...] we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. **4** Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires.

- **Huge horse** Directed by a little bit in its mouth
- **Huge ship** Directed by a little rudder

Tiny Bit/Rudder might brag...

"Hey...I can make this big thing turn whatever way I want"

5 Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles!

- **Tongues power w/regard to...**

1. **Direction** Like a bit in a Horse's Mouth/Rudder on a Boat
2. **Devastation** Like a small spark eventually destroying a huge forest

6 And the tongue is a fire, a **world of iniquity**. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets [ignites] on fire the course of nature; and it is set **[ignited] on fire by hell**.

James 3:6 [NIV] The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

- Tongue defiles the whole body...Direction/Devastation

Matthew 15:18 ... those things which **proceed out of the mouth** come from the heart, and they **defile a man**.

- Evil w/in escapes through the mouth
 1. Sarcasm/Mocking
 2. Belittling/Humiliating
 3. Boasting/Prideful
 4. Gossiping/Slanderous

Proverbs 16:27 An ungodly man digs up evil, And it is on his lips **like a burning fire**.

Proverbs 18:8 The words of a talebearer are like tasty trifles, And they go down into the inmost body.

5. Outbursts of Wrath
6. Passive Aggressive...

A pattern of indirectly expressing negative feelings instead of openly addressing them.

7. Lying
8. Filthy
9. Intimidating

Psalm 42:10 As with a breaking of my bones, My enemies reproach me, While they say to me all day long, "Where is your God?"

- **Natural Carnal Tongue** is out of control...**Weaponized by hell**

Hell: lit. "Gehenna" or "Gehenna of fire". This was originally the valley of Hinnom south of Jerusalem, where the filth and dead animals of the city were cast out and burned; a fit symbol of the wicked and their future destruction.

7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. 8 But **no man can tame the tongue**. It is an **unruly** evil, full of deadly poison.

We can tame Pigeons, Alligators, Dolphins...No man can tame his own tongue

- **Unruly** Unable to be tamed/keep from evil
- **Poisonous** Snake ready to attack/ready to hurt

Psalm 140:3 They sharpen their tongues like a serpent. The poison of asps under their lips.

Ecclesiastes 10:11 A serpent may bite when it is not charmed; The **babblers** is no different.

- **James to believers...** Tongue is a wild poisonous snake no man can control

9 With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the **similitude of God**.

- Bless God while at Church for an hour
- Curse men **in God's image** 10 minutes after we leave

10 Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. 11 Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? 12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? **Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.**

- **Peter:** Confessed Jesus as Messiah/Allowed Satan to Speak/Cursed Jesus to others

Do our words betray our witness for Jesus Christ?
What is in our hearts will come out and reveal our true identity

Matthew 7:16 You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? 17 Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

No man can tame the tongue...but the Holy Spirit of God Can

Matthew 19:26b... With men this is impossible, but with God **all things are possible**

...the tongue can be brought under the power and the control of the Holy Spirit. We might say that only God Himself is mightier than the human tongue! [Guzik]

- Our words set the tone/direction of our day...

Proverbs 18:20 A man's stomach shall be satisfied from the **fruit of his mouth**; From the produce of his lips **he shall be filled.**

- Lord... take away our duplicity/hypocrisy that people are healed not hurt

Proverbs 12:18 There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, But the tongue of the wise **promotes health.**

Proverbs 16:24 Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, **Sweetness to the soul** and health to the bones.

Do we love Jesus enough to sacrifice our tongues to the Holy Spirit's control?

SUMMARY Untamable Weaponized Tongue Little Bridal/Rudder. **Q.** Who's holding the reigns/Steering our ship today?

II. Heavenly vs Demonic Wisdom

13 Who is wise and understanding among you?

- **James** c.f. v 1 Who now desires to teach?

13b... Let him show by **good conduct** that his works are done in the **meekness of wisdom.**

Godly Wisdom: Demonstrated by **Good Conduct** and **Meekness**

- **Good Conduct** Discretion in Speech/Action
- **Meekness** Mild Disposition/Gentleness of spirit

14 But if you have **bitter envy** and **self-seeking** in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. **15** This **wisdom does not descend from above**, but is earthly, sensual, demonic.

Demonic Wisdom: Motivated by **Bitter Envy** and **Self-Seeking**

- **Bitter Envy** Jealousy One upping
- **Self-Seeking** Self-Gain Striving to be right [not righteous]

Don't boast in that "wisdom"

I just speak my mind...It's just who I am?

- **Ungodly Wisdom:** World/friends might be impressed... God is not
 1. **Earthly** View of this life alone/under the sun
 2. **Sensual** Seeking to gratify passions like animals

3. **Demonic** Inspired/Incited/Sustained by Demons

16 For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.

How do I recognize Demonic Wisdom? **Q.** Does it bring confusion to the situation?

God is not confused...ever. God is a God of order...always

- Result of Demonic Wisdom is Confusion/Chaos

1 Corinthians 3:3 [Fighting over the best pastor] ... you are still carnal. For where there are **envy, strife, and divisions** among you, are you not carnal and **behaving like mere men?**

- **Confusion:** lit. Instability, State of disorder, Disturbance

1 Corinthians 14:33 ... God is not the **author of confusion** but of peace..

2 Timothy 1:7 ... God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a **sound mind.**

Is what you do/say birthed from the Spirit of God or Demons?

IOWs Is it causing **Soundness** or **Confusion**?

- **Planning to embark a "ministry"?** When is the last time you **mentioned Jesus?**
- Demonic Wisdom *always brings confusion and every evil thing*

17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.

So, If Demonic Wisdom brings Confusion/Chaos/Evil...

What is the result of Godly Wisdom?

- **Godly Wisdom is...**

1. **Pure** Absence of sinful attitude
2. **Peaceable** Kindness even with reason to be unkind
3. **Gentle...** gr. *epee-I-case*

This word speaks of the man who knows when it is actually wrong to apply the strict letter of the law. He knows how to forgive when strict justice gives him a perfect right to condemn.... It is impossible to find an English word to translate this quality. [It is a] 'sweet reasonableness' and it is the ability to extend to others the kindly consideration we would wish to receive ourselves." [Barclay]

4. **Willing to Yield** Not stubborn/obstinate but teachable/convincible
5. **Full of Mercy** Not vengeful
6. **Bears Good Fruit** Good change in us/others in contact with us
7. **Impartial** No favorites but God's choices
8. **No Hypocrisy** W/out pretense/Without mask

18 Now the fruit of righteousness is **sown in peace** by those who make peace.

Proverbs 11:18 ... he who **sows righteousness** will have a **sure reward.**

Isaiah 32:17 The **work of righteousness will be peace**, And the effect of righteousness, **quietness and assurance forever.**

Hosea 10:12 Sow for yourselves **righteousness**; Reap in mercy; Break up your fallow ground, **For it is time to seek the Lord**, Till He comes and rains righteousness on you.

As we bear the fruit of righteousness [good change through right words] we then peaceably sow/show that fruit to the world that they might desire the peace with God that they see in us.

- **They see us living James 1-3**

1. Rejoicing in Trials
2. Slow to speak/Quick to hear
3. Doers not just hearers of the Word
4. Serving those who can't repay
5. Not showing favoritism
6. Proving our saving faith by Spirit led sacrificial deeds
7. Relinquishing Control of our tongues to the Holy Spirit leading to **good fruit...**

Matthew 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and **glorify your Father in heaven.**

Philippians 1:9 ... [May] your love.. abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, 10 that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, 11 being **filled with the fruits of righteousness** which are by Jesus Christ, to the **glory and praise of God.**