

Watch Those Words!

James 3:1-12

Dear brothers and sisters,^[a] not many of you should become teachers in the church, for we who teach will be judged more strictly. ²Indeed, we all make many mistakes. For if we could control our tongues, we would be perfect and could also control ourselves in every other way.

³We can make a large horse go wherever we want by means of a small bit in its mouth. ⁴And a small rudder makes a huge ship turn wherever the pilot chooses to go, even though the winds are strong. ⁵In the same way, the tongue is a small thing that makes grand speeches.

But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire. ⁶And among all the parts of the body, the tongue is a flame of fire. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself.^[b]

⁷People can tame all kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and fish, ⁸but no one can tame the tongue. It is restless and evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹Sometimes it praises our Lord and Father, and sometimes it curses those who have been made in the image of God. ¹⁰And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right! ¹¹Does a spring of water bubble out with both fresh water and bitter water? ¹²Does a fig tree produce olives, or a grapevine produce figs? No, and you can't draw fresh water from a salty spring.^[c]

In Review.....

1. Everyone will be judged by their use of words.
2. Words we use are a sign of spiritual maturity
3. Using the wrong words has devastating effects!

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4. Using hurtful words is a contradiction of our calling!

⁹Sometimes it praises our Lord and Father, and sometimes it curses those who have been made in the image of God.

I Peter 2: 22-23 He did not retaliate when he was insulted, nor threaten revenge when he suffered. He left his case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly.

5. Practical application and thoughts on James.

--What are the "wrong words"?

Proverbs 16:28 A troublemaker plants seeds of strife;
gossip separates the best of friends.

Eph 4:31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior.

--When/Where do we use the wrong words?

Politics

Personal rights

Environment

Economy

Christian beliefs

--Why do the wrong words come out?

We feel "squeezed"

Conflict

Scared

Hurting

Anger

Pride

--How to “do better” at using the “right” words as believers?

Eph 4:32 Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

-Wait (until our response is Jesus approved)

Psa 141:3_Take control of what I say, O LORD,
and guard my lips.

Prov 18:21_The tongue can bring death or life;
those who love to talk will reap the consequences.

-Ask

---WDJD?

I Peter 2:21-23 For God called you to do good, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered^[a] for you. He is your example, and you must follow in his steps.

²² He never sinned,
nor ever deceived anyone.^[b]

²³ He did not retaliate when he was insulted,
nor threaten revenge when he suffered.
He left his case in the hands of God,
who always judges fairly.

---Are my choice of words/conversation lining up with scripture?

Phi 1:90-11_pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. ¹⁰ For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ’s return. ¹¹ May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation—the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ^[a]—for this will bring much glory and praise to God.

--Ask

Will unbelievers be curious about Jesus after I choose my words?

Col 4:6 Let your conversation be gracious and attractive so that you will have the right response for everyone.

--Be humble

--Pray for wisdom

James 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you

--Is the conversation productive or best?

Galatians 5:22-23 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

Close:

"Take control of what I say, O LORD,
and guard my lips." Psa 143:3

