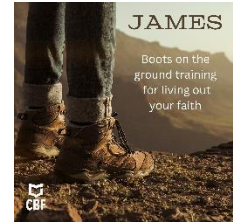


James 3:1-14 – Caution About our Tongue



1. Main principle on the tongue (v.1:1-2)

- a. Warning for teaching: You will be held accountable for what you teach!
 - The more words you say, the more you can be judged by!
 - The responsibility of teaching God's Word correctly comes with great accountability!
- b. If I can tame my tongue, I am perfect.
- c. "Perfect" (same as 1:4) – complete, fully mature
 - Compare to 3:8 (no one can accomplish this!)

2. Analogies for the power of the tongue

- a. The horse/bit or the ship/rudder (v. 3-4)
 - Both the bit and rudder are small, but control the direction of a greater whole.
 - What we say with our tongue will influence our lives!
- b. The forest fire and match (v. 5)
 - The tiny flame can easily destroy hundreds of thousands of acres of forest.
 - How can words ruin lives?
- c. We have the ability to tame animals but not the tongue. (v.7-8)

3. What does your tongue reveal about you? (v.9-12)

- a. Bless God, curse those made in God's image (v.9-10)
 - We should not have one vocabulary for believers and another for when we are out in the world!
- b. Fresh/salt water from a spring, fig and olive tree, grapevine/figs (v.11-12)
 - These are examples of what is not natural; nor should our speech be mixed!

4. What does the rest of the Bible say about a believer's speech?

- a. Psalm 141:3 – Only God can help us tame the tongue!
- b. Colossians 4:6 – Draw others to Jesus
- c. Ephesians 4:29 – Encouragement
- d. Colossians 3:17 – God focused
- e. Proverbs 21:23 – Tact
- f. Ephesians 4:15 – Truthful
- g. Matthew 12:34 – What we say reveals who we really are.

Thoughts to Ponder:

1. One way we can "see" someone's faith (James 2:14-26) is in how they talk.
2. Is your speech consistent with who you claim to be?
3. What may need to change this week in order to have your speech be consistent with what you have learned in this lesson? (Psalm 141:3)