

James  
Chapter 3:1-12

**Chapter 1:** Spiritual maturity is born in suffering

**Chapter 2:** Spiritual maturity is evidenced in action

**Chapter 3:** Spiritual maturity is heard and spoken in word

**Chapter 4:** Spiritual maturity resist the devil and draws near to God

**Chapter 5:** Spiritual maturity prays and gathers

James has addressed the congregation up til now, here he addresses teachers and leaders

**The tongue is critical**

- Teacher/ Rabbi - one who studies the law and its application in life
- Do not exploit, mislead or lord over others, in fact only a few should try
- Judgment, James includes himself with the word we. We all stumble
- Again James speaks to the repeated action over and over, not a singular act
- Says/words were how everything happened in their day. Writings were rare
- Contracts and communication were almost always verbal
- He gives illustrations on how such a small part but huge impact
- The bridle is a small piece of a bit that directs the actions of a large beast
- The rudders were small like an oar on the bottom of boats unseen
- So small but a hinge point of control for life and death

**The tongue comparisons**

- *Fire* - a spark that can burn a whole forest, it can grow til it is out of control
- *World of unrighteousness* - course of life (wheel/cycle/circle) destructive to lives
- Hell is henna or ghenna here, the dump outside Jerusalem
- Taming is the subject in comparison to humans ability to tame wild beast
- *Evil* - the human tongue is least tamable, restless, not quiet
- *Deadly poison* - it has the ability to kill or take life

**The tongue can bless and curse**

- It is necessary to be bridled because it can also carry life or blessing
- It is locked into a constant battle
- The same mouth can be blessing and a curse
- Springs were the center of survival, a spring could be fresh and cold
- That same spring could mix with certain rocks at the top and turn salty, ruined
- James point is that it is extremely difficult but an amazing tool
- One minute it can carry the gold of heaven and the next it will contradict heaven