Taming the Tongue

Greg Kline · James 3:1–12

INTRODUCTION

- One Greek sage said, I have often regretted my speech, never my silence.
- We have said things we dearly want to take back, want to never have happened.
- But no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

1 Powerful Comparisons of Such a Little Member

James 3:3–5

- If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well.
- If you compared the steering engine of the ship to the size of the ship in its entirety, it is just a very small percentage makeup.
- A horse and a ship can come under control. Consider if you let one spark out into a forest. What control do you have over that? Nothing.
- The tongue over time has destroyed countless families. Countless marriages.
- If you have evil in your mind, how long does it take to say that, to spread that spark of evil? It takes the minute for your tongue to move.
- This is a serious issue for serious Christians.

2 The Tongue Reveals Our Allegiance

James 3:9–11; Matthew 26:73; Ephesians 4:29

- With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God.
- The bystanders came up and said to Peter, certainly you two are one of them. For your accent betrays you.
- We would be foolish to say that we are not identified the same way. Not only by our accent, but much more by the content of our words.
- Because the tongue reveals our allegiance. Do you see that?
- We need to be Christians always. We need to control our tongue. We need to tame it.
- Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up.

3 We Need to Be Guarding the Gate

Matthew 12:33–37; Romans 12:9; James 1:19

- For out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.
- On the day of judgment, people will give account for every careless word they speak. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.
- We need to be storing up this good treasure.
- That means limiting what we expose ourselves to in the realm of negativity, in the realm of gossip.

- Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil, cling to what is good.
- Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.

4 Realize the Impacts and the Reality

James 3:12

- Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water.
- This type of talking out of both ends of our mouth cannot happen. When we do that, whose side are we on? Because it is not the Lord's.
- It is a restless evil. What does restless mean? It does not rest. It doesn't stop. We must continue fighting this.

> THE CHALLENGE
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> **But I would do eternally well if I would remember that to have a religion that's worth something, I will bridle my tongue and not deceive my heart.**

MY NOTES