
James 3:1-12

Shoe-leather Christianity

For May 11, 2008 **LESSON 6** Dr. Jerry Nelson

Questions are to be completed the week of May 4 leading up to the sermon on May 11.

Taming the Tongue

Read James 3:1-12 and answer the following questions:

1. (3:1) Why should not many presume to be teachers?

Think about it: What might stricter judgment mean?

2. (3:2) In context, what does “stumble” mean? Also compare James 2:10.

What is the primary characteristic describing a “perfect” man? For the word “perfect” see also James 1:4 and Ephesians 4:13.

What does this characteristic enable a man to also do?

3. (3:3) For what purpose is a bit used in a horse’s mouth?

What can the small “bit” accomplish in the large horse?

What does this analogy prove from verse 2?

4. (3:4) In this second analogy, what two points does James make about the ship and the conditions under which it is sailing?

What two points does he make about the steering of the ship?

5. (3:5) What two comparisons does James draw from the tongue to the ship?

Mixing his analogies (ship and forest fire), James makes what similar point?

6. (3:6) What metaphor does James use to describe the tongue?

What three ways does he describe the tongue?

What is the instigator of the tongue's evil? How does this fit, or not, with 1:14?

7. (3:7) What is James' main point in verses 7 and 8?

In verse 9, what is James' illustration of how evil the tongue can be?

From verse 9, why is cursing a man with our tongue wholly improper?

What are the three illustrations James gives of the incongruity of one tongue both praising and cursing?

What conclusion is implied?



Memory Verse: James 2:8-9

If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, "Love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing right. But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers.

For VerseMinder go to <http://soundliving.org/verseminder.shtml>

Personal Reflection

Think about your use of words in light of the following questions:

- What do you talk about most often?
- Are your words encouraging to those around you?
- Do you find yourself speaking against others?
- Do you speak words of life, or words of death?

Cursing is "wishing evil" on someone else. Since we are made in the image of God, to curse a human being is to show contempt for God. How are you tempted to "curse" those around you? What impact does it have on those who hear your words?

"No one can tame the tongue." It takes a work of the Spirit to change our hearts and ultimately our words. How are you cooperating with this work within you? Why do you resist? What is your response to God's call to love one another selflessly as expressed in our words?

Thoughts/Questions/Prayer Response
