

TAMING THE TONGUE

JAMES 3:1—12

Introduction:

1. Ever get your mouth washed out with soap for something you said? Ever get slapped or spanked because you said a word you shouldn't?
2. Samantha and holy crap!!
3. Another theme of James: our **words**—slow to speak—keep a tight rein on tongue—words to rich and poor—speak and act as those who are going to be judged—the claims we all make.
4. In verse 1 James issues a warning/caution to people who were aspiring to be teachers **v.1** you will be judged more strictly
5. A teachers work is to use words—to instruct—inform—persuade--correct--discipline. A teacher uses words to instruct in truth/error.
6. How important is truth/error/doctrine in the church today? VERY-- “words shape our world”.
7. This passage is an illustration of Pr. 18:21—the tongue has the power of life and death.
8. Jesus gave the Pharisees some very sobering thoughts when he said: **Matt. 12: 33—37** Words are powerful. Words reveal what's inside us.
9. My goal in speaking has always been to rightfully divide the word of truth—my goal once was to speak so I was understood, but now my goal is to speak so I am never misunderstood. And such is never easy!! I have stumbled many times and in many ways.
10. In v. 2 James says that very thing: “We all stumble in many ways”. Yet he holds up the ideal of the **perfect man—the mature man** who is never at fault in what he says—the man who can keep his tongue in check is a man who is able to keep his whole body in check. **v. 2** First of all, lets consider this mature man

I. THE MATURE MAN . . .

1. A. Controls Himself and Therefore His Speech

1. To be faultless in what you say is not easy/quick to come

by . . . the reason being, we are speaking about self control.

2. Self-control—is one fruit of the H.S.
The mature man—the Spirit controlled man will keep a tight rein on our tongue. The mature man is able to control his

speech because he is able to control himself—his heart—
his mind—his will—his emotions.
3. He is able to keep his body in check—under control.

1. James says in vs. 3—5

Notice then what

4. Bits, rudders and tongues—what is similar about them
all? They r small in comparison to what they control.

3. help control/guide

5. What do bits and rudders do? They horses/ships.

6. Who controls the bits/rudders? The rider and the pilot—
the implication? It is possible to keep ourselves under control by the H.S. Power. “If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man[a mature man who is . . .] able to keep his whole body in check.

7. Transition: James also vividly describes in **much more detail** the man who doesn't have internal controls and therefore isn't able to control himself **verbally.**

Here is the out of control man who will find himself in lots of danger!

II. THE “OUT OF CONTROL” MAN OR WOMAN . . .

2. 1. himself and he doesn't

A. Is A Man Who Boasts v. 5

1. The man who boasts is full of know it. When I was in college I met a young man—a star quarterback in high school—a good speaker—a personable young man who said to me one time—in his immaturity-- “stick with and you'll go a long

ways.” In my humble opinion, he was
full of but one
himself. (Roy Mays' comment to me)
2. Ac. 5:36—Theudas “claiming to be
somebody”
3. Ac. 8:9—Simon the sorcerer-
-”boasted he was
someone great.”
4. Pr. 27:2—Let another praise you, and
not your own
mouth; someone else, and not your
own lips.”

B. Is A man Who Can Spark A Forest Fire

1. Words can do major damage—many
a husband
demeans his wife and treats her like
a doormat and
vice versa—a wife by her words can
disrespect her
husband. Words can burn up a
marriage.
2. False teaching in a church can lead
many astray
—Nick Elliot at Ben's church.
3. The political rhetoric that is going on
in our country
is inflammatory. It's not helpful to
civil discourse.
People are losing control of
themselves and saying
things that should never be said.
4. Many today are pushing an
economic theory called
socialism which will destroy the
republic in which
we live, if it takes hold. Listen—it
is true-- “words
shape our world”.
5. Wrong words out of mouths can
damage others
severely. Just like a forest fire.
Therefore—be slow
to speak!!

The “out of control” man . . .

**C. Is A Man On Fire v. 6 a “The tongue
also is a fire . . .”**

going on inside a
and pleasant on the
angry person
where elders have
shouldn't have and
individuals who
check. Their tongue
damage. If you have
settings you say--

1. It's difficult to always tell what's
person. They may be pleasing
outside but on the inside be an
—ready to erupt like a volcano.
2. I've been in board meetings
blown up—said things they
left the meeting. They were
did not have themselves in
was like a fire—set to do
ever been in one of those
“What just happened?”

3. The “out of control” man . . .

D. Is A Man of Evil v. 6

tongue
in vain
words—vulgar
backbiting
a critical mouth.

1. What he says is never good.
2. Think about all the sins of the
—swearing--using God's name
—murmur--complain--idle
words—lying—slander--
--unwholesome--foolish talk—

E. Is A Corrupt Man v. 6

of staining
who is unable to
we are leaving a
not wholesome.
has a vulgar mouth
remember about

1. The word corrupt has the idea
something. If we are a person
keep his tongue under control
stain in peoples minds that is
2. If you meet a Christian who
—that may well be what you

that person. It stains how you view him/her.

F. Is A Man Whose Whole Life Is On Fire v. 6

“whole course of suggests that James' use of this phrase intimates the circulation of our blood and illustrates it this way.

has an astounding of the blood; the the blood is the veins . . . of heat is at the eyes become more [and] the face is happen.

1. Difficult phrase to translate-- his life"--Adam Clarke of this phrase intimates the blood and illustrates it this
2. Angry or irritating language influence on the circulation heart beats high and frequent; hurried through the arteries to and an extraordinary degree same time engendered; the prominent in their sockets . . . flushed. We have all seen this

3. The “out of control” man . .

G. Is A Man Whose Speech Is Set On Fire By Hell

by our words we Satan?—Jesus and words we are wants done and not dreadful thought!

of control man....

1. Have we ever thought that become a mouthpiece for Peter—(Mt. 16:23) by our accomplishing what Satan what God wants. What a

2. Transition: **3:7, 8** The out

H. Is Untamed v. 7, 8

1. Sea World experiences of

putting bird on
—taming of
some things never
Taming animals is
tongue—and yet
their trainer.

also blow up—we
is too great and
always keep
and especially so
excuse—it's just

back and throwing him up
whales and dolphins—
change in 2000 yrs.
easier than taming the
even wild animals return
to the wild and maim/kill

2. The point being that we
lose control—the pressure
we explode. It's hard to
yourself under control
with our words. It's not an
the reality!

I. Is A Restless Evil

“looking for ways”
find themselves
spirited.

other peoples
or gossip, giving

1. Describes one who is
to create problems. They
being critical and mean
2. Sticking their nose into
business; starting rumors
off certain innuendos.

J. Is A Deadly Poison

words of a lonely

1. The sweet seductive
lover—Pr. 7:10ff

1.

2. Trans: **3:9—12** What's the point(s)
James is

making? James is describing...

III. THE MAN WHO MAKES US WONDER

A. The Proper/Improper Use of the

Tongue

1. The proper use is to praise and worship our Lord. The improper use is to curse men—to curse another individual made in the image of God. That seems to be pretty serious. To look down on another person that God has made and let's say you use terminology that condemns them to hell. This would not be right.

2. My experiences in a church bowling league with people who swore—what about their witness to non-Christians?

3. As we would imagine—James says this isn't right—this should not be. **Our words should be measured.** And in reality we, as Christians, should have our minds/will/emotions/habits under His Control.

4. I have struggled with how verse 11, 12 tie into the context—here is what I would suggest—as suggested to me by others.

5. The three questions he asks are rhetorical with a “no” answer intended. “nature has no confusion in her plans. . .” springs are either good or bad—fig trees bears figs—not olives, just like a grapevine bears grapes and not figs—just like a salt spring can't produce fresh water.

6. Nature for the most part is orderly—Genesis-- “after its kind” If a raccoon gave birth to a mountain lion it would be absurd—

