

The Tongue

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February 9, 2025
Gray

Introduction

1. James 3:1-12
2. Someone has reported that the average person speaks 4,800 words a day.
3. This ability to speak is a great gift and with it comes responsibilities and then consequences if it is misused.
4. A New York instructor in the New York City schools Division of Safety has found that most of the violence and other trouble as school starts with talk. He went on to say the tongue is the most volatile, dangerous weapon brought into the school building.
5. Yet the tongue can be used for good, Jesus used it skillfully and helpfully. With powerful words He defeated
 - a. Disease Mark 2:5
 - b. Death John 11:43-44
 - c. Discouragement. John 21:15-17
6. Sinning with the tongue can cause a person to be just as lost for sinning any other way. Matthew 12:34-37
7. James speaks more about the tongue than any other biblical writer except Solomon.
8. James addresses the power and evil of the unrestrained tongue in order that we might have the knowledge to stop the harm cause by the unrestrained tongue.

II Discussion

1. The importance of restraint James 3:1-2
 - a. Proverbs 21:23; 10:19
 - b. Three of the six things the Lord hate deals with the tongue. Proverbs 6:16-19
 - c. It is important that teachers teach correctly 1 Peter 4:11; Matthew 28:18-20; 2 Timothy 2:2; Titus 1:9-14
 - d. The perfect man is
 - i. A married man, the Greek word is that of a married man
 - ii. The word “perfect” means: 1) brought to it end, finished; 2) wanting nothing necessary to completeness. When used to refer to “men” it means full grown, adult, of full age, mature.
 - iii. He is mature in his religion. James 1:19,26
2. Illustrations of Restraint Vs 3-4
 - a. Bits, an iron bar attached to a bridle by which pressure is applied to the horses’ mouth to be able to restrain the beast. Psalm 39:1
 - b. Helm, that by which a ship or boat is guided through the water. If a ship or a boat loses its stirring device it will never remain on course.
 - c. Compared to these two the tongue is a little thing yet can boast of such great things. Proverbs 13:3
3. Injury where there is no restraint vs 5-8
 - a. Destructive fire. Proverbs 26:20

- i. Being surrounded with such a mass of combustible matter, we should take great care not to send from our tongues the least spark by which it may be kindled, lest we ourselves, with those whom we set on fire, be consumed in the flames, which we raise.
 - b. Dangerous animals. Vs7
 - i. Psalm 141:3
 - c. Deadly poison. Vs 8
 - i. Psalm 140:3 They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adder's poison is under their lips.
 - ii. 1 Peter 3:10-12
- 4. Inconsistency when there is no restraint vs 9-12
 - a. It is improper in a Christians. Romans 12:14
 - i. Blessing and cursing cannot come out of the same mouth.
 - ii. Peter Matthew 26:69-75
 - iii. Matthew 12:34-37
 - b. It is impossible in nature
 - i. Fountain
 - ii. Fig tree

III Conclusion

1. The tongue is such an unruly thing that must be watched at all times by all men.
2. No one can ever let up on bridling the tongue.
3. We ought to bless God with our mouth by confessing Romans 10:9-10 and praising God Ephesians 5:19
4. Will you let your tongue glorify God this very day?
5. Have you let your tongue get out of control and do damage to the church?

Sources: Denton Lecture on James 1997 lectures by Elkins and Rogers: The man who has Faith, studies in James by Winfred Clark and Wayne Dunaway; Great Lessons from Hebrews and James by Connally