

Wisdom for Living

Taming Our Tongue

I. Introduction

- A. James 3:2 (NAS) *For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well.*

1. "Perfect" - - "complete, mature"

II. Why Should We Tame Our Tongue?

- A. Because my tongue directs where I go.

1. James 3:2-3 (NAS) *²For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well. ³Now if we put the bits into the horses' mouths so that they will obey us, we direct their entire body as well.*
2. James 3:4 (NAS) *Look at the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, are still directed by a very small rudder wherever the inclination of the pilot desires.*

- B. Because my tongue can destroy what I have.

1. James 3:5 (NAS) *So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire!*
2. James 3:6 (NAS) *And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell.*
3. Proverbs 21:23 (NAS)
4. James 3:7-8 (NAS) *⁷For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. ⁸But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison.*

- C. Because my tongue reveals my true character.

1. James 3:9-10 (NAS) *⁹With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; ¹⁰from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way.*
2. James 3:11-12 (NAS) *¹¹Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? ¹²Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor can salt water produce fresh.*
3. Luke 6:45 (NAS)

III. How to Tame Our Tongue

A. Get a new heart.

1. II Corinthians 5:17 (NAS)

B. Regularly ask God to help you to tame your tongue.

1. Psalm 141:3 (NAS)
2. "The proof that God's Spirit is in your life is not that you speak in an unknown tongue, but that you control the tongue you do know!" (Sidlow Baxter)
3. Psalm 119:11 (NAS)
4. Proverbs 15:1 (NAS)
5. Proverbs 21:23 (NAS)
6. Proverbs 10:18b-19a (NAS)

C. Think before you speak.

1. James 1:19 (NAS) *Everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger.*

D. Ask for forgiveness from those you may have damaged with your tongue.

1. Matthew 5:22 (NAS)
2. James 3:2 (NAS) *For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well.*

IV. Conclusion