

Welcome to: - Bible House of Grace.



God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

James 3.

(2013)

The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

Teach it, don't demand it.

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man. As to such I neither claim special knowledge or perfect understanding.

If you think items presented on this site to be in error, please let me know and I will gladly reconsider the content.

James 3.

Introduction; James is commonly referred to as the Proverbs of the New Testament. It practically and faithfully reminds Christians how to live and covers topics such as perseverance, true faith, controlling the tongue, submitting to God's will and having patience. James aids readers in living authentically and wisely for Christ it is one of the earliest of the New Testament writings (A.D. 40–50). It is believed to have been written by Jesus' brother James.

Many have claimed that James and the apostle Paul differed on the question of faith versus works, but in reality the spiritual fruit that James talks about is the outward evidence of inward faith. James gives us a picture of what inward Christian faith looks like practically on the outside it demonstrates the true faith of which Paul wrote. James and Paul's writings rather than being contradictory beautifully complement each other.

Topics.

- Teachers will be judged with greater strictness.
- Whoever is able to control what they say is able to control their whole body.
- The tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness.
- From the same mouth come blessing and cursing.
- Can a fig tree, bear olives or grapevines produce figs?
- Do not be false to the truth.

The Previous Chapter: in the previous chapter James spoke of the sin of partiality and favouritism, of God choosing the poor in the world to be rich in faith, he told the faithful in Christ they are delivered from the judgement of Moses Law, but will be judged by the law of Liberty and by the judgment of this law some will be rewarded while others will suffer loss. He spoke of mercy triumphing over judgment and said whoever shows no mercy will be, judged without mercy. He talked of faith apart from works being dead and of Rahab the prostitute being justified by her works.

NOTE: for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

Teachers will be Judged with Greater Strictness.

James 3:1 ----- ¹Not many of you should become teachers (Masters in KJV) my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.

James here is warning those who desire to teach the Bible for their own selfish gain or ambition, money or fame, power or control as the religious leaders of Jesus day did that all teachers of Scripture will be judged with greater severity because they are teaching the words of eternal life and will be either influencing those they teach toward God as the apostles and Paul did or away from God as the religious leaders of Jesus generation were doing.

Whoever is able to Control what they Say is able to Control their whole Body.

James 3:2-5 ----- ²For we all stumble in many ways, and if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. ³If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. ⁴Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder

wherever the will of the pilot directs. ⁵So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire!

If it was possible for a man or woman to not only teach and say the right thing in every situation, but also to be able to control everything they say throughout their lives it would mean that they were able also to control every action of their body.

If we are honest with ourselves we will agree with what James says, "For we stumble in many ways" (v2, 8) clearly James the brother of Jesus recognises that all who belong to the family of the Lord Jesus Christ will slip-up at various times in what they say (especially when influenced by various emotions).

The tongue is a little member compared to the body as the bit is compared to the horse or the rudder to the ship or a spark to a blazing fire. Placing a small bit into a horse's mouth allows us to control one of the most majestic, fearless, strong and powerful animals God created. A tiny rudder on a ship guides the ship through the greatest of oceans, and a tiny spark in a forest can set ablaze thousands of acres of forest destroying everything in the path of its flames.

The goal of James here is to illustrate that the power and influence of a controlled tongue can bring about much good, but the power and influence of an uncontrolled tongue (such a small member of the body) will bring about tremendous destruction.

The Tongue is a Fire, a World of Unrighteousness.

James 3:6-9 ----- ⁶And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. ⁷For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, ⁸but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God.

The tongue gives utterance to the most inappropriate, unfitting, ill-chosen, insensitive, improper, tasteless, unseemly and tactless thoughts it boasts of what we can do of our gifts and successes simply to puff up our own pride and ego. It causes arguments, strife, contention divisions and wars.

Just as a very little spark is sufficient to set alight large forests, stately buildings and populous towns and cities and in a short time bring them to total ruin likewise the tongue is able to set a relationship, neighbourhood, a village or nations aflame in discord, division and even war.

No Human can Tame the Tongue.

This does not mean that the tongue is never brought under control, but that even though it is possible to subdue and domesticate any kind of beasts, it is impossible to effectually and certainly subdue and restrain the tongue from its unruly power. One only has to look at the condition of the world to see the truth of this statement.

Full of Deadly Poison.

The words, "The tongue is a restless evil, full of deadly poison" (v8) seems to be an allusion to the bite of a venomous serpent.

David prayed that: -

- The LORD would deliver him from violent men who planned evil in their heart and stirred up wars with *tongues* as sharp as serpent's and lips full of the venom of asps (Psalm 140:1-3).

Paul said: -

- The throat and *tongues* of those whose mouth is full of curses and bitterness are swift to shed blood and cause misery and deceive as the *venom of asps* (Rom 3:13-16).

Nothing better describe the destructive power of the tongue than the bite of a serpent since there is no poison more deadly to our body than the poison of an asp nor is there any power that can so quickly bring a relationship, town, church, or nation to ruin and destroy the happiness and unity of mankind as the tongue.

From the Same Mouth come Blessing and Cursing.

James 3:10-12 ----- ¹⁰From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so. ¹¹Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water? ¹²Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water.

Speechmakers gifted with the art of eloquence and persuasiveness in public speaking can motivate an audience to peace and submission to do-good or excite them to furious sedition such is the power of the tongue it can inspire to save or persuade to destroy.

Can a Fig Tree, Bear Olives or Grapevines Produce Figs?

Clearly fresh and salt water cannot come from the same spring nor can a fig tree produce olives or a grapevine produce figs in the same way it is not right that brothers and sisters in Christ filled with the Spirit of the Lord should be speaking words of bitterness, strife and contention.

The book of Proverbs says: -

- The tongue of the righteous is choice silver and the lips of the righteous feed many (Proverbs 10:20-21).

This shows that it is words of encouragement and peace that should be flowing from the Spirit and the mouth of those who belong to the family of Christ.

Who is Wise and Understanding among You?

James 3:13-18 ----- ¹³Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. ¹⁴But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. ¹⁵This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. ¹⁶For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. ¹⁷But the wisdom from above is first pure then peaceable, gentle, open to reason (Easy to be entreated in KJV) full of mercy and good fruits, impartial (Without partiality in KJV) and sincere. ¹⁸And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.

James is saying whoever is wise, intelligent, knowledgeable and has a good understanding of the Bible should live a lifestyle of humbleness and doing-good to others in contrast to pridefully and boastfully using their intellectual knowledge of the Scriptures to puff up their own pride and ego or to fulfil their own selfish ambition as the religious leaders did in Jesus era.

Do not be False to the Truth.

Being false to the truth means using the word of God to exalt one's own self and for one's own gain in contrast to serving others in love and humility.

Wisdom from Below.

Unspiritual wisdom is called earthy and demonic it refers to whatever we say or do from selfish-ambition, pride or ego and from jealousy of the success of others or of their gifts or knowledge. They are called earthy because we are all decedents of Adam who was made from the earth and it is from him that our human nature is birthed. This nature is also referred to in many Scriptures as the flesh (i.e., self, pride and ego) they are called demonic because wherever they dominate there will be contention, strife and division.

Unspiritual wisdom is wisdom that is used to: -

- Glorify oneself.
- Further one's own selfish ambition or religious empire.
- Exalting ones-self into the prime place of fame and importance.

Wisdom from Above.

Spiritual wisdom is called wisdom from above, because it stems from the Spirit of God, i.e. love, kindness, compassion mercy and grace etc., and because wherever these exist no matter what we say or do there will be peace, unity and joy.

Being wise and having understanding in this context is, knowing that: -

- Boasting in one's knowledge and gifts is feeding one's own pride and ego.
- Knowledge is for helping others.
- Gifts are to benefit others.
- Both knowledge and gifts should be used to bring glory to God, not to self.

NOTICE: in an atmosphere of peace spiritual wisdom is open to reason meaning it is always willing to listen to other people thoughts, views and ideas and even to be persuaded of whether a thing is true or false, but as soon as pride and ego enter the room spiritual wisdom leaves.

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