

Audio file

[Study 26 Journeying with James 5526gsm_james_3_v7-12.mp3](#)

Transcript

00:00:00

Turning in the Scriptures this morning to James chapter 3, the Epistle of James and chapter 3.

00:00:09

James chapter 3 and reading from verse 1.

00:00:13

My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

00:00:21

For in many things we offend all and if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man.

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and able also to bridle the whole body.

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Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us, and we turn about their whole body.

00:00:42

Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whether soever the governor listeth.

00:00:58

Even so

00:00:59

The tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things.

00:01:04

Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth.

00:01:11

And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity.

00:01:14

So is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell.

00:01:26

For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind.

00:01:35

But the tongue can no man tame it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

00:01:44

Therewith bless we God, even the Father, and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude or the likeness of God.

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Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing.

00:02:00

My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

00:02:04

Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?

00:02:12

Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries, either a vine, figs?

00:02:19

So can no fountain both yield salt water and

00:02:25

fresh and the Lord will add his blessing to the reading of his holy word now this morning we're going to take the portion from verse 7 down to verse 12 James chapter 3 verses 7 to verse 12 and we've entitled this message in taming the tongue taming

00:02:54

the tongue.

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Now, what is the most uncontrollable thing you can imagine?

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Well, you might think of a large animal, maybe a sea creature.

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James uses those images as illustrations of the most uncontrollable thing of all.

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And sometimes we don't realize how uncontrollable it is.

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It's the very thing that sits in our mouth.

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Or is it?

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The tongue here is an illustration or a picture of speech.

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When you learn a foreign language, some people make fun of you because you use the wrong words in the wrong place.

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You don't do it deliberately, you're not trying to cause upset or offense.

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And it's so we use the word language or tongue in the Bible to denote speech, conversation, what we say, what comes out of our mouths, what words we use, what sentences we use, what phrases we use.

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And so James here has been very practical.

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But what I did this week was I did a little bit of research and I looked up some of the most unusual

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animals that have ever been tamed.

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You may not know this, but perhaps you did know this, that in ancient times weasels were tamed by mankind, particularly in Egypt and other places, to hunt rodents, rats.

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Maybe we didn't know that.

00:04:44

We know about ferrets.

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Some of us grew up near people with ferrets, and we can remember that.

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Now we know what ferrets were used for.

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Perhaps this is most unusual for you though.

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What about a giant capybara?

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A huge rodent, the largest rodent in the world.

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Did you know some people try and tame them?

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The only thing is they're very large, so you need a large cage, but you also need special food.

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Maybe you've not heard of this kind of creature before, a flying sugar glider.

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Looks a bit like a squirrel.

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And it glides.

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Some people think it flies, but it glides with these special adapted arms that have special skin flaps, and they jump from high tree to high tree.

00:05:39

Or a monitor lizard.

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You know those big lizards with those long tongues?

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They also have been tamed.

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Perhaps more common for us is tigers, lions, and bears.

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You remember going to a circus as a boy or a girl, as a young boy or a young girl, and you see these wonderful, gigantic elephants, these majestic prancing horses, Arabian horses.

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Or the lions who were being tamed, who had been tamed, and who were under the control of the lion tamer.

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Of course, that's not allowed anymore, but you remember those images.

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And you might have been amazed at a young boy or girl of seeing these great animals being so easily controlled.

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Now, last week we began looking at this, about the tongue or the speech, and we looked at controlling the tongue.

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And we saw how the horse, a great horse, is controlled by a tiny little metal bit.

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in their mouths and how it's attached to the bridle and how the bridle is attached to the rest of the harness and how the horse turns very quickly just with the twitch of a rein because the rein is attached to the bit.

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That was one illustration and James used another illustration, the rudder of a large ship.

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Then we saw a little of the destructive power of the tongue and do you remember

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how he used the tongue as a fire, as a little fire, as a little spark that generates a great fire.

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We saw four things about the tongue.

00:07:26

It's a world of iniquity.

00:07:28

It's full of all kinds of sin.

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It defiles the whole body.

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It affects all of our personality.

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It sets on fire the course of nature.

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It's like a wheel that revolves.

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And alas, perhaps the most convincing and convicting was it set on fire of hell.

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That when we use evil words, sinful words, offensive words, especially against the Lord and against His people, we are using that tool that Satan uses.

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It's set on fire of hell.

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Now this morning we're going to move on very quickly.

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We're going to look at the problem of taming the tongue.

00:08:16

The problem of taming the tongue.

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Do you notice how James then has moved on from the four things about the speech to verse 7, For every kind of beasts and of birds and of serpents and of things in the sea is tamed and hath been tamed of mankind.

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And that sounds so positive, doesn't it?

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Then he uses that little Greek word, but.

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Ah, but there is an exception.

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There is something that mankind naturally cannot tame.

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That word, tame, might be surprised at it.

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Control.

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I didn't realize that my speech was uncontrollable.

00:09:03

That's what James is saying in the original language.

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And it's an unruly evil full of deadly poison.

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This is why it's a problem.

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It's full of unruly evil.

00:09:16

You know people who speak their minds?

00:09:19

Sadly, they never think of the consequences of their speech.

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Did you think of that?

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We'll see in a few moments some of the helps that others have given us in this, but an unruly evil.

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What does that word literally mean?

00:09:36

It literally means it's unrestrained.

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Unlike the horse, unlike the great creatures of the sea and of land, it's not easily restrained.

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Imagine having a young calf on the end of a dog lead.

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It's impossible to restrain a calf.

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You ever try?

00:10:03

We used to use ropes when we were working on the farms.

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And even that you couldn't hold a young calf.

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You need a big, strong man, maybe two, to hold back this calf.

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And so it is with the tongue.

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We need to realize that it's unruly, naturally.

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And some of us know the effect of this.

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But it's not only unruly, it's not only unrestrained, it's secondly, full of deadly poison.

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Literally, it brings death.

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Have you ever thought of a speech like this?

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It brings death?

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But how?

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It's amazing how words do kill.

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How hateful words leave their mark.

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How harsh words are still remembered.

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How hurtful words have brought death to relationships and to friendships.

00:11:01

and even to marriages.

00:11:02

This is what the tongue, this is what speech can do.

00:11:08

It brings death.

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That's quite something, isn't it?

00:11:13

If you listen to social commentators today, and they make all kinds of comments about the society we live in, and they argue like this, we need more special programs, we need better education, we need better living standards, we need better housing, how foolish they are.

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They can't even control their own tongues.

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Listen to them on a hot mic.

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Listen to them when they're off guard, not when they're performing in front of the camera, not when they're speaking great programmes into the ether, because they're never going to be realised.

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Listen to them when they're

00:12:01

with their friends, or when they think that no one else is listening.

00:12:08

They can't control their own tongues.

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They don't have the ability.

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Sadly, some of the great speaker, orators of a previous generation, you see, you read some of the things that they would have said to their closest, their nearest and dearest in privacy.

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They couldn't control their own tongues.

00:12:29

they couldn't control.

00:12:30

Do you remember as a boy or a child growing up, you were told by your parents, or usually your grandparents, cut that out.

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Go and wash your mouth out with soap and water.

00:12:42

I never did it, by the way.

00:12:48

Because they had heard me say things that were not acceptable.

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The funny thing was, I'd heard the adults say it as well.

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But of course, it wasn't a suitable in a child's mouth.

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It was okay for an adult to say it.

00:13:00

And that is the problem.

00:13:02

And that's what James zones in on.

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Of course, he's speaking here in a first century context.

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They wouldn't have spoken in English, but no doubt they use the same kind of language that we hear around us today.

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Do you ever notice that in a society that has

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more or less thrown off all God's restraints, the language deteriorates.

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The language.

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You hear young people using terms and phrases that we wouldn't have used even as teenagers.

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You hear four and five-year-olds using language that is not accepted, not suitable.

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Why is that?

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First of all, probably because they've heard it from the adults.

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They might even have heard it from their TV programs or whatever they've been watching.

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But it comes out of the heart.

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And that was what we looked at a little last week.

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This is where the source of it comes from.

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It's from the heart.

00:14:12

The Lord Jesus, as the great physician of souls, says, Out of the heart the mouth speaks.

00:14:21

And he tells us what comes out of our mouths if we're unregenerate and unconverted.

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But there's something else I want you to notice.

00:14:33

There's the problem of the tongue.

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Secondly, there's the proof or the double nature here.

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Notice how James now focuses on two contrasting phrases used by the same person.

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By the way, this is for brethren.

00:14:51

This is for Christians.

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Perhaps you realize that, that we're going through this passage and it's all addressed to Christians.

00:15:01

But even Christians can say things that are displeasing to God and hurtful and offensive.

00:15:07

Look at verse 9, Therewith bless we God, even the Father, or therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

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This proof, it's a double proof.

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It's quite sobering when you start to think about it.

00:15:23

We bless God.

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What does that mean literally?

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It means we praise the Lord, we exalt the Lord, we adore the Lord, we worship the Lord.

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It's taken from the word eulogia, which we get our word eulogy.

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You go to some funerals and you hear a eulogy and you think that this person who has passed away never made a mistake.

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That's A eulogy.

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Now, we don't use that kind of approach in our funerals, just in case you're worried.

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The eulogy, I try and encourage folk, and I know Mr.

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Seaton did the same, to speak honestly, even of a Christian, the struggles they may have faced, the difficulties, if you have a tribute at all.

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But sadly, people think that we should eulogize man

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and decry God.

00:16:24

But the Christian wants to bless God, worship God.

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You know those phrases from the Old Testament, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

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But there's a little word just before that word, worship.

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It's, oh, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

00:16:41

Bow down before Him, exalt His name, praise the Lord.

00:16:48

all ye nations.

00:16:51

Praise my soul, the King of heaven.

00:16:55

To his feet thy tribute bring, ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven.

00:17:02

Who is name like thee should sing?

00:17:04

Praise him, praise him, praise him, praise him.

00:17:08

Praise the everlasting King.

00:17:10

We sing that, and I'm glad we do, because that's what the Christian is to do.

00:17:17

to praise God.

00:17:20

And our lives should be, as it were, peons of praise.

00:17:25

They should be full of praise.

00:17:28

That's why we should smile.

00:17:31

We have a God worthy of praise.

00:17:35

Football teams, sports teams, great teachers, commentators, authors, artists, they come and go.

00:17:48

But God is worthy of all praise.

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And sometimes we can be so eloquent in our praise.

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We can use some fine words.

00:18:01

And some of us have come to the conclusion that just after we've used some fine words of God, and bless we God, even the Father.

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See how James zooms in here?

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Of course he takes it that we worship the God, God of

00:18:17

Glory, God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

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But we worship God the Father.

00:18:21

Our worship is addressed to God the Father through the Son by the Spirit.

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That's the one aspect.

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But on the other hand, we curse men.

00:18:38

This word is a serious word.

00:18:44

We speak evil.

00:18:46

of men who speak evil of those who are made in God's image.

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And I said this at the beginning, and I want to point it out again.

00:19:01

James here is using allusions from the Old Testament without directly quoting them.

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He was thinking of Genesis 1.26.

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Did James believe?

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in six-day creation?

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Absolutely.

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Did he believe that men and women were made in the image of God?

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Absolutely.

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26, God says, Let us make man in our image.

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The word similitude there speaks of image, likeness.

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And how wonderful that is.

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that men and women are made in God's own image.

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And even after the fall of our parents, first parents in the Garden of Eden, Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 11 verse 7, Though men and women have fallen and the image has been damaged or marred, in the original language, they are still in God's image.

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That's why it's so important

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to realize that from the cradle to the grave, men and women are valuable no matter what society says about them, no matter what society declares about them.

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Men and women are made in God's image.

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You might not think that this morning.

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You may think, well, I'm not made in God's image.

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God tells us we are.

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That's why we're so valuable in and of ourselves.

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That's why somebody who's got learning disabilities is as valuable as somebody with an IQ of 140.

00:20:48

They're made in God's image, and they're precious to God.

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They're special to God.

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And oh, if only we could convince people that because they're made in God's image, they have a value far beyond commodities.

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They're not just a commodity.

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or a pawn on a great chessboard of the state.

00:21:16

They're special, they're unique, and they're wonderfully made.

00:21:23

But even, even Christians, see the contrast here?

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We bless God and then we curse others.

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What does that mean?

00:21:35

We pour hate upon them.

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We don't blaspheme them.

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Some people like to translate this word as blaspheme.

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That's not the word here.

00:21:44

We heap hurtful, offensive things or words upon them.

00:21:49

Words is better.

00:21:52

We curse them.

00:21:54

And sadly, we've all been guilty of this.

00:21:57

And we may never say this in public, but in our own private hearts, we have said things that we regret.

00:22:04

even as Christians.

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And where does that come from?

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Well, James has told us it's set on fire of hell.

00:22:14

Here's somebody that's made in God's image, a fellow Christian, a fellow believer, and we say hurtful things about them.

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We spread malicious rumours about them.

00:22:26

Oh, my friends, and see how James pastorly

00:22:34

appeals to the conscience.

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And this is just only found in biblical truth.

00:22:44

These, and he goes, My brethren.

00:22:48

He doesn't say, You believers, or You Christians.

00:22:54

Like the Apostle Paul, he identifies himself with them.

00:22:57

He says, My brethren, and this has appealed to the conscience.

00:23:02

These things ought not so to be.

00:23:05

Oh, do you see this?

00:23:08

Do you see, yes, he's shown us what we say.

00:23:11

We praise God, and then sadly we say hurtful things about other believers.

00:23:15

But it shouldn't be so.

00:23:19

And only the Christian responds and says, yes, James, it's true.

00:23:24

It shouldn't be so.

00:23:24

You see how this works?

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This is so beautiful and so wonderful.

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The Holy Spirit is appealing to the conscience and saying it shouldn't be like this, should it?

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And when we fail, we feel awful.

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And we've all done it.

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We may even have done it this week.

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We may even fit into this very verse and we say, well, what can I do about it?

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And we go to the Lord.

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And we ask for forgiveness.

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And we say, Lord, I have sinned again with this sinful tongue.

00:23:58

I've spoken ill things.

00:24:01

Please forgive me.

00:24:03

Give me the strength to resist this temptation.

00:24:07

Because it is a temptation.

00:24:10

So we have seen something of the problem.

00:24:13

Secondly, we have something of the proof.

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It's double nature.

00:24:17

And thirdly, very briefly, the two pictures.

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The two pictures.

00:24:22

You see how James now gives us an illustration to think about.

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We have a fountain on one hand and we have a fig tree on the other side.

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And I want you to notice how he constructs this.

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People think, well, these mere fishermen or these mere apostles, they didn't really have much knowledge or much education.

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Look at how he structures this verse.

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It's a special word.

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I don't usually use special words, but here's one.

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It's a chiasm.

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Notice how he does it.

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Doth a fountain send forth at the same place.

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He starts with the fountain.

00:25:01

Then his very next phrase is the fig tree.

00:25:05

Then he puts the fig tree in the middle and he brings the fountain in at the end.

00:25:12

You see how he does it?

00:25:15

This is how he does it.

00:25:17

And it has quite an effect.

00:25:18

Can the fountain

00:25:20

Send forth sweet water and bitter.

00:25:22

Sweet water and salty water, says one writer.

00:25:26

Or can the fig tree bear olive berries, either a vine or figs?

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In other words, the only time you get a fig tree-- sorry, the only fruit you get from a fig tree are figs.

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The only thing you get from an olive are olive berries.

00:25:45

You can't get both.

00:25:46

It doesn't happen.

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And then he talks about the fountain.

00:25:52

Sweet water and bitter, can it both, can it yield both salt water and fresh?

00:25:58

See how he does this?

00:26:01

In other words, can you get fresh water out of salt water?

00:26:06

Unless you use some amazing amount of ingenuity.

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They use this in the Middle East to filter salt water to become fresh water, but it costs an awful lot of money.

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In Singapore, I believe they have this large lake and they've cut it off and they've made it.

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Eventually, over time, it's become fresh water.

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But it takes ages.

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But if you go to a fountain or a water spout, you expect to get fresh water, don't you?

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You're in one of the airports and you're very thirsty and you go to one of these fountains, you don't expect to find sea water flowing out of the fountain, do you?

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I hope you don't.

00:26:49

Very strange fountain in the airport.

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You'd be very thirsty if you had a drink.

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But now I wanted to show you just a little of the influence that someone else has had upon James.

00:27:04

Because I did say at the beginning that most likely he grew up in the same household as the Lord Jesus Christ.

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And in Luke chapter 6, verse 43, the Lord Jesus puts a similar argument.

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Here he's talking about fruit born

00:27:19

of faith.

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But he says it's, quote, for a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit, neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit, for every tree is known by his own fruit.

00:27:31

For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.

00:27:35

You see this.

00:27:37

You see this, how you're just comparing scripture with scripture.

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In other words, every tree bears its own fruit according to its kind.

00:27:48

Olives will always produce olives.

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And some of those from the Mediterranean are the nicest of all.

00:27:55

Dates will always produce dates.

00:27:58

A date tree will always produce dates.

00:28:01

A fig tree will always produce figs.

00:28:05

And we trust a freshwater fountain or a freshwater stream or a freshwater spout, literally, will always produce freshwater.

00:28:17

And so the thing is this.

00:28:19

James is saying, surely, surely, our mouths should bring forth sweet words and not salty.

00:28:31

But who can help us?

00:28:33

I've said already, naturally, we cannot control, we cannot tame this tiny little member that is part of our speech.

00:28:43

And of course, it's not the tongue on its own.

00:28:46

We've got the brain,

00:28:49

You've got your heart, your inner person, your personality.

00:28:53

That's all part of the construct of the speech.

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What I want us to do is look at some practical helps.

00:29:04

And I borrowed some from some worthies of the past.

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And the first thing I'll say from the very beginning is that we need to acknowledge that we need God's help.

00:29:19

Now I can put it many ways.

00:29:21

We need to look to the Lord to help us.

00:29:27

Just a little word here of my own experience.

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When I was converted back in the 1990s, someone told me recently that was a long, time ago.

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It probably was to some.

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It seems as if it's only yesterday.

00:29:44

But I was a young man who had grown up in a culture where we used an awful lot of swear words.

00:29:51

I'm sad to say that, it's just part of our growing up.

00:29:56

Everybody used swear words.

00:29:58

On the football pitch, in conversation, swear words would be second to none.

00:30:06

But one of the greatest encouragements to me as a very young Christian, but in a very, very short time,

00:30:14

that stream of cursing and swearing was all but dried up.

00:30:23

Who did such a thing?

00:30:26

How can it be?

00:30:28

It was my nature.

00:30:29

It was part and parcel of my DNA.

00:30:32

I was brought up in this atmosphere.

00:30:35

And maybe you were brought up in a similar atmosphere, in a different country or a different culture.

00:30:40

Maybe you didn't use English swear words.

00:30:42

Maybe you used other languages.

00:30:44

But whatever it was, when you're converted, there's a power, there's a principle, there's a personal work of God done in your heart.

00:30:57

And we no longer swear like we did.

00:30:59

At times, do you find yourself, perhaps you've had this experience, even as a Christian, and you've been a Christian many, many years, you're pouring

00:31:13

You're rushing out with the family on a picnic and you're pouring hot water into a flask from a kettle.

00:31:20

You didn't wait long enough.

00:31:23

And the kettle is still, as it were, as the boiling water is still foaming up and you're pouring it into the flask and it burns your hand.

00:31:32

In the past, you might have said a whole stream of swear words.

00:31:39

And it might even just dwell up in your mind, and I don't want you to think that we're perfect and we're sinless and we're spotless.

00:31:45

It might come up in your mind and, amazingly, you're given this ability to resist.

00:31:54

Where does that come from?

00:31:56

It comes from Almighty God.

00:31:57

It can only come from Him.

00:32:01

Because when you and I became Christians, a special, holy,

00:32:06

person, the third person of the Trinity, came to live and dwell and abide and reside and stay in our hearts.

00:32:16

And therefore, when we are tempted to say things that are hurtful or offensive or even swear words, we can say, Lord, help me.

00:32:26

And it can be as short a prayer as that.

00:32:31

Three little words.

00:32:36

And in a twinkling of an eye, there's an infinite amount of power and assistance given us.

00:32:43

The first thing is, rely upon God.

00:32:50

John Trapp says this, he suggests that only God can set a watch and control upon the door of our lips.

00:33:00

John Flavel,

00:33:01

one of the great worthies, advised praying for the Holy Spirit to intervene and literally guide our words before they leave our lips.

00:33:12

One man puts it like this, Let Christ bridle your mouth, and he will be able to turn about your whole body.

00:33:18

Let him have his hand on the tiller of your tongue, and he will guide your life as he desires.

00:33:28

Oh Lord God Almighty, creator of everything including our tongues, having given us the gift of the speech, please help us to control it.

00:33:41

Second, that's the first thing, rely.

00:33:43

Secondly, filter our language.

00:33:46

Filter our language.

00:33:48

And I would go a little bit further.

00:33:49

I would say filter the things we hear.

00:33:54

If we're constantly in an environment where the words are offensive to God or blasphemous even, then we need a little time away just to detoxify ourselves.

00:34:11

It's amazing what a tiny little spark of somebody else's words will set a forest on fire in our hearts.

00:34:18

Again, John Trapp says,

00:34:20

He stresses the need to weigh our thoughts before them letting pass our teeth.

00:34:25

That's good advice, don't you think?

00:34:28

Weigh them up.

00:34:31

It's not easy in a split second, but learn how to do this.

00:34:35

Third, keep a strict watch.

00:34:39

Keep a strict watch.

00:34:41

Let us be vigilant over ourselves.

00:34:43

We're vigilant about a lot of things.

00:34:45

We'll make sure our homes are secure, our cars are secure.

00:34:50

Our family are secure.

00:34:52

Do we put a strict watch upon our mouths, upon our tongues?

00:34:56

We should recognize the double guard.

00:35:01

This is for, I said this to the children a few weeks, a few months ago.

00:35:05

We've been given two ears and one tongue and two eyes.

00:35:15

That means we shall be swift to hear, slow to speak, and quick to listen.

00:35:24

I wonder, just having that little phrase, keep a strict watch.

00:35:30

Let's listen to another man, Thomas Adams.

00:35:32

Because the tongue is so unruly, the Lord hath hedged it in, as a man will not trust a wild horse in an open pasture, but prison him.

00:35:41

or corral him in up close pound, a double fence has the Lord Creator given us to confine our tongues, the lips and the teeth.

00:35:54

Fourth, purify our hearts.

00:35:58

Purify our hearts.

00:36:00

We cannot fix the tongue without fixing the heart.

00:36:04

Some people think, Oh, I can control my tongue, but I let my heart run riot.

00:36:09

Proverbs 4 verse 23, Solomon says, Keep thy heart with all diligence for out of it flows the issues of life, including our speech.

00:36:25

So let's have that approach.

00:36:29

I'm going to purify my heart.

00:36:32

I'm going to work on that.

00:36:33

That's going to be my aim.

00:36:35

That's going to be my goal.

00:36:39

How do I do that?

00:36:41

You immerse yourself in the word of God.

00:36:45

You saturate your soul with the truth of Scripture.

00:36:49

You let the word of God dwell in you richly.

00:36:52

You meditate upon it.

00:36:55

As 5th, you meditate on the word of God.

00:36:58

Meditation, people think, oh, that's emptying my mind, opening myself up to all kinds of things.

00:37:03

You hear this even in sports commentary now.

00:37:07

But what does the psalmist says in Psalm 119 verse 15, I will meditate in thy precepts and have respect unto thy ways.

00:37:15

Again in verse 23, thy servant did meditate in thy statutes.

00:37:19

Verse 48 of the same Psalm, my hands also will I lift up unto thy commandments.

00:37:25

as a sign of submission and reverence, which I've loved, and I will meditate in thy statutes.

00:37:30

And the apostle Paul picks up this theme, Meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all.

00:37:41

I don't know who wrote this, but this is a quote I learned many years ago as a young Christian.

00:37:45

When a heart is filled with Christ, the overflow of the words will naturally be gracious.

00:37:56

consciously fill our minds.

00:38:00

Another man puts it like this, a mind deeply engaged in spiritual thoughts will produce fewer vain, harmful or cruel words.

00:38:11

It's practical.

00:38:12

What do we listen to?

00:38:14

Often what we listen to will come out from our speech.

00:38:18

What do we listen to when we're travelling in the car on our own?

00:38:21

or sitting at home, or walking the dog, or whatever else we do?

00:38:24

Are we listening to the Word of God?

00:38:29

Some of us find it helpful to read the Bible and listen to the Bible at the same time.

00:38:34

That's possible.

00:38:36

You're using two parts of your senses.

00:38:41

Sixth, seize in our speech.

00:38:45

You know there's a phrase in Colossians 4 verse 6, Let your speech be always with grace seasoned with salt that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.

00:38:56

Apply the salt of grace.

00:39:00

One man puts it like this, Salt seasons our speech, but grace sweetens it.

00:39:07

It's interesting, isn't it?

00:39:09

We think of salt and we think of it being added to our food.

00:39:13

And I know all these arguments about not having too much salt.

00:39:15

It didn't do our grandparents much harm.

00:39:19

But salt, what's this salt?

00:39:21

Well, it seasons it.

00:39:22

It preserves it.

00:39:25

Ah, but salt doesn't sweeten.

00:39:29

Not our speech.

00:39:30

Grace sweetens our speech.

00:39:34

John Flavell puts it like this.

00:39:36

He says edifying, our speech ought to be edifying and beneficial to others, protecting our conversations from the withered, sapless fruit of idle talk and the rotten fruit of profanity.

00:39:49

Think about that.

00:39:50

Think about that.

00:39:53

There's so much available to us, especially in the English language.

00:39:58

So much wise counsel.

00:40:00

I've just given you a flavor.

00:40:02

This is all to help us with this one area of speech.

00:40:07

I wonder about us.

00:40:09

We think, well, some of us might have thought, well, there's no hope for me.

00:40:14

There's no help available.

00:40:17

there is.

00:40:18

There's lots of help available, especially as a Christian, especially as a child of God.

00:40:24

And you might not see the change, but you know what's the most remarkable thing?

00:40:29

It's when somebody you grew up with or somebody that was part of your family,

00:40:34

has seen the difference in your conversation.

00:40:37

And they remark on it one day.

00:40:40

They can't help it.

00:40:44

And they're puzzled by it.

00:40:46

And there's a gospel opportunity, because they might ask you, Why?

00:40:51

What's happened to you?

00:40:52

And there's a perfect opportunity to tell them of what the Lord has done for you in Christ.

00:40:59

Well, we've seen taming the tongue.

00:41:01

I trust that the Lord will help us by His grace to do so, and that we'll speak more of Him.

00:41:08

Because I'll leave you with this thought.

00:41:10

Our tongues are used, our speech is full of all kinds of information, but who do we speak most of?

00:41:18

As Christians.

00:41:20

And who has spoken most of in heaven?

00:41:23

It's Christ.

00:41:25

So let's try, with the help of the Spirit, the utility to control our tongues and our speech,

00:41:31

not only to tame our speech, but also to speak more of Christ, our beloved Saviour.

00:41:38

Amen.

00:41:41

Let us pray.

00:41:42

Almighty and gracious God, we thank thee for thy word to us this morning.

00:41:47

We know, Lord, that each one of us here who are truly thy children have seen a change in our lives, and how marvellous it is that it is not of anything of us.

00:41:58

Some of us tried to control our own personality or our own sins or even our own conversations, but now we've been given divine help and others have seen it too.

00:42:10

And so we pray, Lord, that these mouths and these words that we have been given to speak forth will be sweetened with grace and seasoned with salt, that Christ would get all the glory

00:42:25

that people would see what true Christianity really looks like.

00:42:28

It's in a changed life, because Christ is now the Saviour of our souls, and the Holy Spirit is indwelling our hearts.

00:42:38

And so, Lord, we know that faith stands leaning on thy word, but soon thy bright appearance will be visible to all.

00:42:50

And so we ask, keep us faithful, and keep us looking on to Jesus.

00:42:55

the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore.

00:43:03

Amen.