JAMES 3

A STUDY THROUGH THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

Too Tough To Tame

James 3:7-12





"Human forces secure cities against the savagery of the wilderness and capture its beasts for menageries and circuses."







James 3:7-12

7 For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. 8 But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; 10 from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. 11 Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? 12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor can salt water produce fresh.

3 Terrible Truths of the Tongue

- I. The Tongue is Incomparable
 - (vv. 7-8)
- II. The Tongue is Hypocritical
 - (vv. 9-10)
- III. The Tongue Is What It Is
 - (vv. 11-12)

James 3:7

7 For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race.

"tamed" - δαμάζω (damazō)

Used one other time in the NT – Mark 5:4
 of the Gerasene Demoniac –

"because he had often been bound with shackles and chains, and the chains had been torn apart by him and the shackles broken in pieces, and no one was strong enough to subdue him."



James 3:8

8 But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison.

James Says (Quite Blatantly)

There is NO Force within or beside the destructive force of the individual that can subdue the wild beast within him: The Tongue.

The "Tongue" in 2018



"a restless evil"

- This is extremely similar to the word translated "unstable" in 1:8 describing the "double-minded man, unstable in all his ways."
- Like the double-minded person who cannot truly trust in God and invariably falls into evil, the tongue, because it is uncontrollable, does the same.

In Other Words:

People Do What They Do Because Of What They Are Already Saying.

The Tongue Drives The Train (and in most cases, it's already left the station).

Ever heard it said:

"Your mouth is writing checks that your body can't cash."

The Tongue Tends Toward:

- Anger (1:20)
- Self-Deception (1:26)
- Insult (2:6)
- Quarreling (4:2)
- Boasting (4:16)
- Swearing (5:12)



"full of deadly poison"

Psalm 140:1-4

1 Rescue me, O Lord, from evil men; Preserve me from violent men 2 Who devise evil things in their hearts; They continually stir up wars. 3 They sharpen their tongues as a serpent; Poison of a viper is under their lips.*



3 Terrible Truths of the Tongue

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James 3:9-10

9 With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; 10 from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way.



"we bless our Lord and Father"

- We praise the Giver of every good and perfect gift (1:17).
- We praise the God Who befriended us (2:23).
- "To bless God is the sublimest function of the human tongue; thrice daily the devout Jew recited 'the Eighteen Benedictions,' with their ending 'Blessed art Thou, O God."





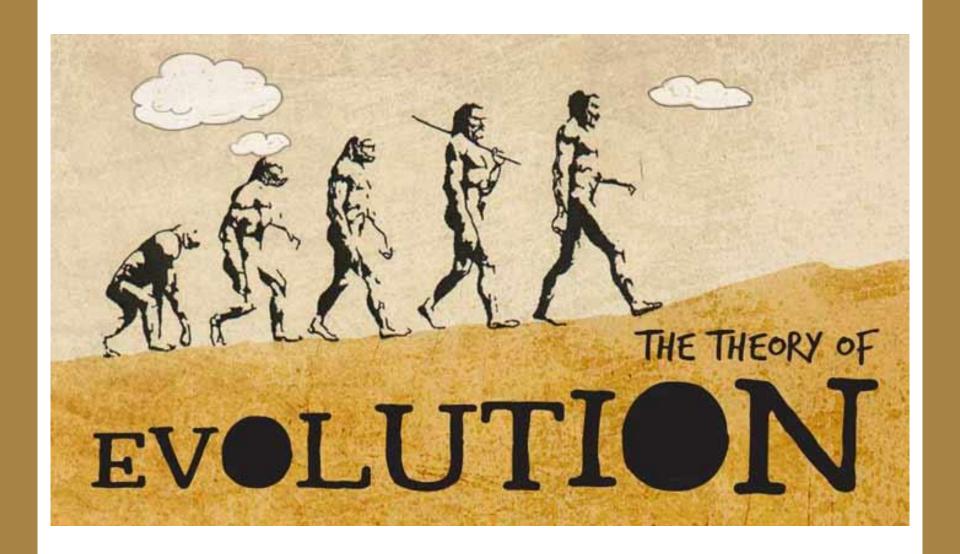
And Then Almost Immediately

We turn our tongue against others who "have been made in the likeness of God" all the while professing a faith in a holy and righteous God.

Only God Gives Life

Even though we are marred by sin, we are still made in the likeness of God.

Therefore, human life is sacred.



'A Tragedy Hit Home': Push to Stop Bullying After Death of 12-Year-Old Girl

Mallory Grossman's former gymnastics coach remembered her as "sweet, smart, kind, quiet"

By Lori Bordonaro

Published at 9:55 PM EDT on Jun 19, 2017 | Updated at 10:47 AM EDT on Jun 20, 2017



"from the same mouth"

How can that which builds up and that which tears down come from the same voice?

If God is "praised" and humans are cursed, what does this say about those "praises?"

"these things ought not to be this way."

As James said in 3:2, we all stumble in our sanctified journey to perfection.

But the follower of Christ cannot (and will not) actively condone this hypocritical double-mindedness that James describes.

"To the person who speaks praise to God in the worship service and then abuses people verbally at home or at work, James commands, 'Purify your speech through the week.' With the person who says, 'Oh, I know I talk too much,' and laughs it off, James is not amused. He insists, 'Be quick to listen, slow to speak.' By the person who boasts, 'I always speak my mind, no matter who gets hurt,' James is not impressed. He commands, 'Discipline your speaking.' Of the person who says, I know I gossip too much, but I just can't help it,' James still requires, 'Control your tongue.' Of the person who is in the habit of speaking with insults, ridicule or sarcasm, James demands, 'Change your speech habits.' He expects discipline to be happening in the life of a Christian. Any Christian can ask for the grace needed, for God gives good gifts (1:17) and gives them generously (1:5). There is, then, no justification for corrupt habits of speech in our churches today."

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11 Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? 12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor can salt water produce fresh.

These Are Not Difficult Questions





James Appeals to the Natural Order

Bombshell Announcement:

Followers of Christ Follow Christ!

Luke 6:46

"Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"

Two Groups of People

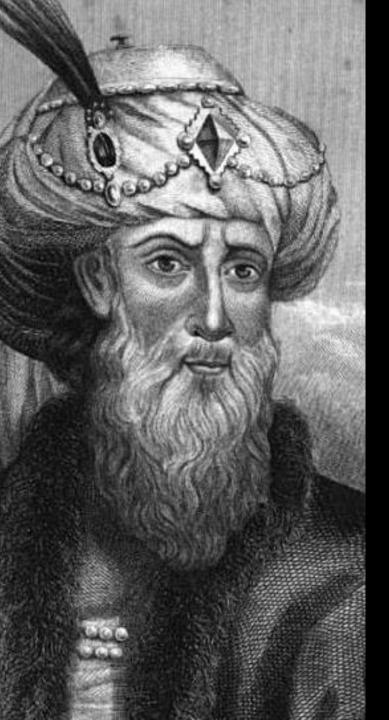
Those who are "salt water."

Those who are "fresh water."



Satellite View of the Land of Israel
NASA photograph; Use permission granted for educational purposes





"The country also that lies over against this lake hath the same name of Gennesareth; its nature is wonderful as well as its beauty; its soil is so fruitful that all sorts of trees can grow upon it, and the inhabitants accordingly plant all sorts of trees there; for the temper of the air is so well mixed, that it agrees very well with those several sorts, particularly walnuts, which require the coldest air, flourish there in vast plenty; there are palm trees also, which grow best in hot air; fig trees also and olives grow near them, which yet require an air that is more temperate. One may call this place the ambition of nature, where it forces those plants that are naturally enemies to one another to agree together; it is a happy contention of the seasons, as if every one of them laid claim to this country."



Ezekiel 47:6-11

6 He said to me, "Son of man, have you seen this?" Then he brought me back to the bank of the river. 7 Now when I had returned, behold, on the bank of the river there were very many trees on the one side and on the other. 8 Then he said to me, "These waters go out toward the eastern region and go down into the Arabah; then they go toward the sea, being made to flow into the sea, and the waters of the sea become fresh. 9 It will come about that every living creature which swarms in every place where the river goes, will live. And there will be very many fish, for these waters go there and the others become fresh; so everything will live where the river goes. 10 And it will come about that fishermen will stand beside it; from Engedi to Eneglaim there will be a place for the spreading of nets. Their fish will be according to their kinds, like the fish of the Great Sea, very many.

Notice James Doesn't Say:

"The Tongue Cannot Be Tamed."

• He said:

"No One Can Tame The Tongue."

What's the Difference?

Go Back to v. 8

"But no one can tame the tongue..."

A literal translation of the Greek word order is:

"But the tongue no one is able to subdue of men."

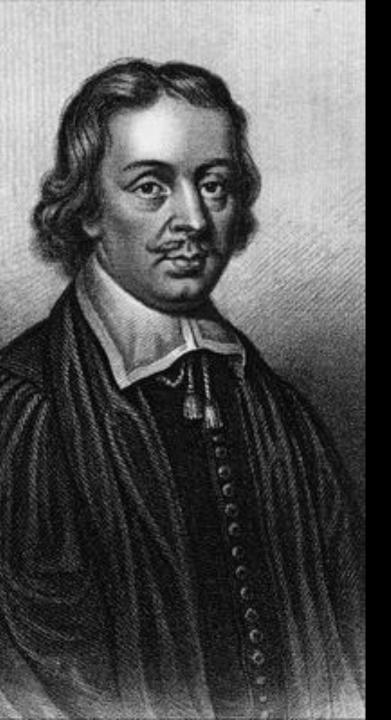
Subduing the Tongue is Above the Pay Grade of Man!



Hebrews 4:12 12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any twoedged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart. (Also, Revelation 1:14)

Matthew 15:18-19

18 But the things that proceed out of the mouth come from the heart, and those defile the man. 19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.



Robert Leighton once said:

"The cure of an evil tongue must be done at the heart. The weights and wheels are there, and the clock strikes according to their motion. A guileful heart makes a guileful tongue and lips. It is the work-house where is the forge of deceits and slanders; and the tongue is only the outer shop where they are vended, and the door of it. Such ware as is made within, such, and no other, can come out."

You Want To Fix Your Tongue?



One Commentator says:

"The Bible nowhere places much value on knowledge that remains merely cerebral or credal. Nothing is known until it also reshapes the life."



You Can't Control Your Tongue. But He Can.

Ephesians 5:25-27

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, 26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

