



Words and Wisdom

By Johnny Caruso on March 1, 2021

TODAY'S READING: James 3

Uncontrolled words and the wisdom of the world almost always turn out bad for a Christ follower.

James first addresses the tongue in chapter 3. The bottom line is the tongue can be unbelievably powerful and cannot be totally controlled. A person who can perfectly control their tongue 100% of the time would have already arrived at full control of every aspect of their body and their entire life. The tongue is small and so is the bit in a horse's mouth, a rudder on a ship and a spark that ignites a forest fire. James settles on the forest fire analogy. He calls the tongue the fire that sets the whole direction of our lives on fire and is set on fire by hell. He calls it a restless, unstable evil, full of fatal poison.

James insists that the tongue is untamable. We have no hope of controlling our words on our own. Blessings and cursing should not come out of the same mouth. It is as strange as salt and fresh water coming from the same spring. And still, speaking blessing and curses with the same tongue is normal behavior for sinful, fallen man.

James then turns to the subject of wisdom. He basically says that what wisdom is, wisdom does, echoing his point in chapter 2, where he says what a person does is an indicator of what a person believes or is as a person. James says that wise people live lives full of good works done in the humility of wisdom.

The wisdom of the world is built on a totally different worldview than that of a Christ follower. Instead of humility, the world makes life about themselves. This thought pattern tells us to compare what others have, decide what we want (bitterness and envy) and plan to get it for ourselves (selfish ambition).

James writes that this is a false perspective. Believing in such things leads to all the chaos, disorder, and evil in the world. You don't have to think very hard to see the riots in some of our states since March 2020 and at our country's capital as worldly wisdom. The wisdom from heaven offers a different perspective of living and then leads to a different result. If we trust in God to provide what we need we can let envy and selfish ambition go. We can lead

lives of purity, peaceable and gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.

PRAYER:

Lord help me to control my tongue so I may be a blessing to the people You have placed around me. Please help me to not follow after the world's thinking and philosophies. Rather, help me follow hard after Your word and Your ways. Help me use my mouth and my mind to glorify You and speak the gospel of peace today.

TOMORROW'S READING: James 4

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