

James 3:1-12, Bible Devotions

☐ Monday - A Stricter Judgment.

James 3:1

“Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we shall incur a stricter judgment” (James 3:1). This “stricter judgment” is ultimately the result of one of two errors that teachers of God’s Word may commit: [1] faulty content of the message (1 Tim. 1:7), or [2] right content, without right conduct which is hypocrisy. The first error is the result of a lack of knowledge and the remedy is to “*study* to show yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). The second is the result of a lack of personal application. Christian parents, Sunday school teachers, Bible study leaders, pastors take heed: “you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself?” (Rom. 2:21). Read Romans 2:17-24, (try substituting the word “Christian” for “Jew” and “God’s Word” for “the Law” when you read).

☐ Tuesday - Christian Maturity.

James 3:2

“For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a [mature] man, able to bridle the whole body as well” (James 3:2). Here, James tells us to measure Christian maturity, not by the number of years one has been a Christian, but by the tongue. “Careless” words (Mt. 12:36), an impulsive, unguarded tongue (Prov. 12:18), speaking the truth without love (cf. Eph. 4:15), blurring out whatever pops into one’s mind (Prov. 18:2), all reveal a basic immaturity, regardless of how “advanced” we think we may be in other areas of the Christian life.

Read Ephesians 4:29, 5:4

☐ Wednesday - Bridling the Tongue.

James 3:3-5a

“Now if we put the bits into the horses’ mouths so that they may obey us, we direct their entire body as well. Behold, 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. So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things” (James 3:3-5a). “If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man’s religion is worthless” (James 1:26).

Read Proverbs 17:27-28, 21:23

☐ Thursday - Tongues of Fire.

James 3:5b-6

“Behold, how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! 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” (James 3:5-6). Fire has a multiplying effect, as do unguarded words, gossip, and critical attitudes. One drop of water can extinguish a match, but it takes thousands of gallons of water, much time, and hard labor to quench a forest fire. Dear Christian, correct every misspoken word *immediately* after you speak it, before you have a wild fire on your hands.

Read Proverbs 10:19, 13:13, 18:7, 29:20

☐ Friday - Beast Master.

James 3:7-8

“For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed, and has been tamed by the human race. But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison” (Jam. 3:7-8). The tongue is a wild beast, but Christ is the Beast Master, who alone can domesticate its savage ways. Read Gen. 4:7; Rom. 6:14

☐ Saturday - Forked Tongue?

James 3:9-12

“With [our tongues] we bless our Lord and Father; and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way.” How many of us speak with forked-tongue.

Read James 3:9-12