

Greater Pleasant Branch Baptist Church

Connect Learn Grow

Review of the Book of James-Chapter 3- May 12, 2021

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I. Central Focus

You were created to become like Christ-Romans 8: 29-30- Message Translation

II. Big Idea

God wants believers to control their tongues and to demonstrate true wisdom.

III. Overview- James chapter 3

In this chapter, James brought to the forefront two significant aspects of the Christian life : the control of the tongue and wisdom. Ultimately, the issue that James addressed was self- control.

Benjamin Franklin once stated the following: “ A slip of the foot you may soon recover, but a slip of the tongue you may never get over.”

James teaches that a person should not rush to be a teacher. It is dangerous for everyone stumbles when they talk a lot.

The tongue is small but powerful. Like a bit used to control a horse or a rudder to steer a ship, we control the whole person when we control the tongue.

Words usually lead to deeds.

During World War 2 it was not uncommon to see posters that read “ Loose lips sink ships,” Loose lips can also wreck lives.

Only God’s gracious power can supply the strength to change, the double-mindedness of the tongue. With the same tongue we praise God and curse people made in God’s image.

James urged believers to demonstrate wisdom in speech and life through humility. James cautioned believers that envy and selfish ambition represent false wisdom and can damage the believers witness.

For James true wisdom produces peace and a harvest of righteousness.

A. The tongue- James 3:1-12

1. James teaches about the need to control the tongue, the power of the tongue, the rebellion of the tongue and the double-minded tongue.

2. By its nature the tongue can serve as an evil instrument.

3. By God's grace the tongue can become an instrument of positive blessing. God can mold an abusive tongue into a force for good and righteousness.

4. In Ephesians 4:29 Paul teaches about the use of the tongue for good and righteousness as follows: " Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

5. James concludes that teachers and all believers must understand that the tongue has the power to direct others to right choices.

6. Lessons for life regarding the tongue: Proverbs 10:19 , 12:22 and 15:1.

B. True wisdom- James 3: 13-18

1. James describes true wisdom and the contrast with false wisdom. James reminded teacher's especially and other believers of the need to demonstrate true wisdom.

2. James poses a rhetorical question in verse 13: " Who is a wise man and endured with knowledge among you? How do you answer this question?"

3. James wanted those who desired to be teachers to understand that it was not enough to stand before people and say words, they must have something to say.

4. Essentially James taught that knowledge enables us to take things apart, but wisdom enables us to put things together and relate God's truth to everyday life, thereby communicating a message to people. In other words James is teaching that knowledge without wisdom results in words with no message. It is not enough to have knowledge, you need wisdom to be able to use knowledge correctly.

5. James identified five traits of true wisdom as follows:

Peace - loving: means that wisdom demonstrated by a desire to promote peace between struggling factions.

Considerate: refers to being reasonable in the demands it makes on others.

Submissive: indicates a willingness to learn from others by being open to reason.

Full of mercy: offering compassion to others in distress.

Full of good fruit: shown by kind actions and helpful deeds to others.

6. James describes false wisdom as earthly, sensual, and devilish. Such wisdom is characterized by envy, strife, confusion and every evil work.

7. False wisdom has the capacity to produce division within the church.

8. True wisdom has the capacity to produce blessings and edify the body of Christ.

IV. Questions

1. Why does James warn people not to be so quick to become teachers?
2. According to verse 2 words are powerful and the tongue is difficult to control, should people be held accountable for what they say?
3. How does James describe the negative impact of the tongue in verses 3-6?
4. What is the meaning of the tongue being a “restless evil” and a “deadly poison”?
5. Looking at verses 9-12, how would you explain the statements: “with it we bless” and “with it we curse”?
6. Define the term “wisdom”, what part should it play in our lives?
7. What is the source of bitter envy and strife?
8. What did James mean by “this wisdom”?
9. How does James describe false wisdom in verses 14-16?
10. According to verse 18, what is a harvest of righteousness?