

Sins Of The Tongue.

Bridling the Tongue James 3:5 – 12

A. How great a matter a little fire kindleth!

1. In the dry forest it only takes a spark to create a forest fire that can burn thousands or millions of acres. The word “matter” means – a forest – and the word “kindleth” means – light -
2. James says the tongue; while just a little member or a little spark can do countless damage. **Psalms 52:1 - 4** "Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? the goodness of God endureth continually. (2.) Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully. (3.) Thou lovest evil more than good; and lying rather than to speak righteousness. Selah. (4.) Thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue."
3. God says we put bits in horse's mouths to guide them and ships are guided by small rudder or helm was made in the shape of an oar. While the small bit and the small rudder control both of these the tongue of man leads astray. John Gill once said "Christians...are like ships upon the ocean, tossed to and fro with tempests, driven by Satan's temptations and the world's persecution, and ready to be carried away with the wind of false doctrine, yet are influenced and directed aright by those that are at the helm, the faithful ministers of the word, who say to them, this is the way, walk in it."

B. The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. V 6

1. The word fire means - lightning or fiery – That describes the power or sharpness of it.
 - a. It is like to fire, especially useful in its place, to warm and comfort; so is the tongue in Christian conversation, and in the ministry of the word; the hearts of God's children burn within them, while they are talking together.
 - b. The tongue can be such a blessing to man.
2. "...a world of iniquity..." But it can be like a fire the other way; it can be very hurtful, causing much damage, and can even cause death. **Psalms 140:3** "They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent; adders' poison is under their lips. Selah."
3. "the tongue...defileth the whole body"

- a. It stains or pollutes the whole body.
 - b. The body is the temple of God; and this little member that can stains or soils the whole body.
4. **Mark 7:15** "There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man." That is - to make profane, defile, pollute.
 5. "...and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell." V. 6 - by the devil - stirred up by Satan, to speak many evil things, and it will be hereafter set on fire in hell. **2 Corinthians 11:13 - 15** "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. (14.) And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. (15.) Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."
- C. God calls the tongue of man the untamable beast. Verses 7 - 8 "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: (8.) But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison."
1. There is nothing in creation that can control or tame man, God gave man dominion over the earth. **Genesis 1:26** "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."
 2. Man cannot change himself nor can man change another man. Remember God said in **Jeremiah 13:23** "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." - people sometimes give other people credit for one changing but it is not so; only God can change a person.
- D. The same tongue we praise God and condemn men. Verse 9 "Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God."
1. Man was made in the image of God; man belongs to God; men that are saved are children of God; and we use the same tongue to bless God, but curse man who is in the image of God.
 2. James says that the reason we should not curse people is because they have been made in God's likeness. We should not use any word or name that reduces them

to anything less than their full stature as God's created beings.

3. God says "...My brethren, these things ought not so to be." V. 10 God says we are never to reduce man to be less than he is (in God's image) whether other Christians or not. Romans **12:14** "Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not."
4. But folks the tongue is what it is, and it will not change unless God changes it. Verses 11 - 12 "Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? (12.) Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh."