

**Introduction**

1. James has explained to us two characteristics of the mature Christian: he is patient in trials (James 1) and he practices truth (James 2). In this section we will learn a third characteristic of the mature Christian: he has power over his tongue.

**I. The Power To Direct: The Bit And Rudder 3:1-4**

- a. Responsibility & Accountability
  - i. James warns us not to become teachers for this a great role has a strict accountability to God
  - ii. Our tongues are powerful forces for good or evil beware for we all stumble in many ways (3:2).
- b. The Bit & Rudder
  - i. James chose two items that are small yet exercise great power (Proverbs 18:21; Psalm 141:3-4; Matthew 12:34)
  - ii. Since they have the power to direct they affect the lives of others like in John 4 and Acts 2

**II. The Power To Destroy 3:5-8**

- a. Like A Fire The Tongue Can Heat Things Up (Proverbs 26:20-21; Psalm 139:1,3)
  - i. Like fire we can burn and hurt others with our words and the more fuel you give it the faster and farther it will spread
- b. Like A Dangerous Animal
  - i. Some animals who seem harmless can do great damage. Some are poisonous. Our tongues too can be dangerous and poisonous. However animals can be tamed by man but the not the tongue. Only God can tame our tongues!

**III. The Power To Delight 3:9-12**

- a. The Fountain That Brings Cool Water
  - i. Proverbs 18:4; 13:14; 10:11 parallel what James wrote
  - ii. Water is life giving but uncontrolled can cause death (Proverbs 12:18)
  - iii. Water also cleanses (John 15:3; Ephesians 5:26-27) like in Ezekiel 47 where the water brought life to everything it touched
- b. Like A Delightful Tree (John 6:63)
  - i. The most important part of a tree is its roots. If we are rooted deep in God and Jesus we will have fruit of our fellowship with our lips (Like the blessed man in Psalm 1)
- c. A Warning
  - i. A fountain cannot give two kinds of water not does a tree bear two kinds of fruit
  - ii. If our tongue is inconsistent then we have heart problems (Matthew 12:34; Proverbs 4:23)