

August 23, 2020  
*The Bridge Bible Fellowship*  
Pastor Paul S. Brown  
James 3:1-12

“Guard Your Tongue!” – Part 2

**VII. Guard Your Tongue!**

A. Your Tongue Denounces You (1-2)

B. Your Tongue Directs You (3-5a)

C. Your Tongue \_\_\_\_\_ You (5b-6)

D. Your Tongue \_\_\_\_\_ You (7-8)

E. Your Tongue \_\_\_\_\_ You (9-12)

**So What?**

## Discussion & Application:

1. How well did you do this past week at guarding your tongue? Of all the things you said this past week, on the Day of Judgment, what percentage do you think will be rewarded and what percentage will denounce you? Give examples of how your tongue (words) directed you this past week. Give examples of how your tongue (words) directed others. What are some specific things you could do better this way to make sure your tongue directs you down God's paths?
2. James uses 3 analogies for the tongue: a **bit/bridle**; a **rudder**; and a **fire**. Why does he command them to "**look**," "**see**" these analogies? What is James' point with these analogies? What does fire have the power to do (good and bad)? What are some ways that people are careless with fire? What were the slogans of **Smokey Bear**? How could you apply those slogans to the control of the tongue?
3. The fiery tongue is ("**makes itself**") a world of iniquity. God didn't make it that way, but the tongue makes itself a rebel against God. What purposes did God originally have for our tongues? What is **iniquity**? What relationship does the tongue have to iniquity? How does the tongue uniquely **defile** (pollute; contaminate) the entire body? What are some ways your tongue defiles your body? What are some ways your tongue defiles others? [See Prov. 26:18-28 for a few examples to get you started]
4. What does the phrase "**course of our life**" mean? Alistair Begg describes verse 6 as the "**force, course, and source**" of our fiery tongues. What is the force, course, and source of the tongue's fire?
5. James says that our tongue **is set on fire by "hell" (Gehenna)**. [present, passive participle = habitually set on fire by hell. The tongue allows itself to be used by satanic evil.] What is the history of the term Gehenna? What images would come to the minds of people who had lived in or visited Jerusalem? How would this help them understand how the tongue could defile their entire body?
6. What role would **Satan** like to have in our speech? What are some characteristics of the way he speaks? Jesus said that unsaved Jewish people were of their "father" the devil (see John 8:44). Remember the phrase, "**Like father, like son**"? The Jewish people at that time claimed that God was their Father. How does the way we speak reveal who we truly have as our father?
7. James 3:7-8 tells us that man has tamed other creatures (see Gen. 1:26; Ps. 8:6-8), but no one can (is able to) tame the tongue. "**Tamed**" = to subdue; curb; subjugate; bring under control for one's purpose (see Mark 5:4 for only other place the word is used in the NT). James describes the tongue as "**restless**" (unstable – cf. James 1:8; fickle; unreliable) "**evil**" (base; degrading; prone to injure). The picture is of a caged but unsubdued wild animal pacing up and down waiting for the chance to attack. It is also "**full of deadly poison**" (see Ps. 58:1-5; 140:1-3; Rom. 3:10-14). What attitude would you take to a poisonous snake being loose in your house? How alert or vigilant would you be to its deadly presence? Do you take the same approach with your tongue? If not, why not?
8. James 3:9 speaks of the inconsistent (unstable; restless) use of the tongue. What is the contrast between "**blessing**" and "**cursing**"? Verses 10-12 give analogies from the natural world. How does our tongue **define** who we really are spiritually regardless of what we claim to be?
9. If no human can tame the tongue, then only God can. The first step in God controlling the tongue is to give Him control of your life (salvation). Have you taken that step? What other steps do we need to take to let God control our tongues and use them for His glory and the good of others?
10. If you haven't already done so, **memorize James 3:1-12** and quote it in the morning, at noon, and at night every day this week. Don't forget to review the first two chapters. Ask the LORD to transform you by the renewing of your mind and tame your tongue so that it demonstrates a living faith.