

**The Institute of Self-Worth®**  
**Teaching Notes**

**The Horse and The Ship**

James chapter three is divided into three sections.

1. James 3:1-6            **Deals with the power of the tongue**
2. James 3:7-13        **Deals with the power to control the tongue**
3. James 3:14-18      **Deals with learning how to speak**

**The Power of the Tongue**

James 3:1-6

Vs. 1 Someone who teaches the Word has a great responsibility to the listeners. Ministers affect a lot of people by not only what they say but also how they say it.

Vs. 2 Just as the bridle controls the direction of the horse, our tongue controls the direction of our body.

Vs. 3 A bit in a horse's mouth is small and not easily seen. This is like the tongue, a small part of our body and not easily seen. The horse like us has a will. We will always go in the direction of our will. Before we can change our external problems, we must have a change in our will first. We, like the horse, can change our will in a split second. **Bits** (or the unseen) control the horse (or the seen), which represents mankind. Mankind can change directions quickly by simply changing the heart.

Vs. 4 Ships represent our circumstances, which are external. Ships (like our circumstances) do not have a will. Unlike internal change, external change takes time. The helm or rudder (complete steering gear) of a ship is small when compared to the ship. Like the tongue and the bit it's not easily seen and yet the helm or rudder has the ability to turn a large ship. Sometimes the turning of a ship is so slow, it doesn't look as though there's been a change of scenery. The **Helm** (or the unseen) controls the ship (or the seen), which represents our circumstances of life. Our circumstances change, but not as quickly as our heart. Circumstances are waiting to be changed. It's only the power of the tongue that can change them.

**Key: We must first change directions on the inside of us before we can change our circumstances on the outside of us.**

Vs. 5 The tongue is like a match in a very dry forest; it can destroy a lot of things and people.

Vs. 6 The words, "**world of iniquity**" refer to the realm of the unseen. The words "**course of nature**" refer to the realm of the seen. We bring the realm of the unseen into the realm of the seen by the power of the tongue. According to Romans 4:17 "we call those things which be not as though they were". Everyone has the power of the tongue.

With our tongue we bless people or we curse people. Some think that because they have knowledge of the power of the tongue they have become spiritually mature. The power of the tongue has nothing to do with our maturity. It's the power to control the tongue that expresses our spiritual maturity.

### **The Power to Control the Tongue**

Vs. 7 Mankind has learned to control wild animals but has never learned to control our own tongue.

Vs. 8-10 These verses describe the effects of an uncontrolled tongue. In Psalm 19:14 we find that our words and our meditations are designed to be acceptable to the Lord. Matthew 12:34 tells us that our speech comes from our heart. Whatever the heart contains is what we will speak. In verse 9 James says that man is made in the image of God and when we bless God but curse man, we're cursing the image of God Himself.

Vs. 11-12 These verses speak of nature. The suggestion is that nature is smarter than a man with an uncontrolled tongue. Water is either salt or fresh, it can't be both. Most of mankind hasn't figured this out yet.

Vs.13 The answer to controlling the tongue is **Knowledge of the Word**. A wise man has knowledge of the spirit of the Word and walks out this knowledge producing wisdom. The reason this takes place is because the heart has been transformed by grace.

The key to these verses is to have a personal encounter with the Holy Spirit and gain knowledge of the Word that causes change to come to the heart. At this point our speech changes and others recognize the maturity because of our ability to control our tongue.

In Colossians 4:5-6 Paul teaches us the difference between a Christian and a mature Christian. When we become a Christian, we are the salt of the earth. However, a mature Christian is "seasoned salt". A seasoned Christian's speech is one of grace and he knows how to answer every man.

### **How Should We Speak?**

In verse 13 we found it is possible for man to be wise. A wise man knows the Word and his speech is full of grace.

Vs. 14 **Envy** refers to jealousy and **strife** refers to division. James says that when our hearts or our soulish realm (mind, will, emotions, thoughts, and feelings) are not renewed or transformed to the truth of the Word we are lying against the truth that's inside our recreated spirit. When we were born again, our spirit was recreated into the image of God. Everything that God is was deposited inside our spirit at the new birth. When our

soul is not renewed to the truth of the Word and our spirit is recreated with the truth in us, we lie against the truth.

Vs. 15 James says this wisdom (that lies against the truth) is not from God but from the devil.

Vs. 16 Envy or jealousy and strife or division creates confusion. Confusion begins within a person's soulful realm when their soul doesn't know the truth. Where there is confusion there is every evil work.

Vs. 17 God's wisdom is pure, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits without being partial and without hypocrisy. The words "**easy to be entreated**" mean you desire the truth even if it means you're wrong.

Vs. 18 When we operate in God's wisdom, we have the fruit of righteousness operating in our lives toward others.

### **Keys to remember about James 3**

- 1. Everyone has the power of the tongue**
- 2. Maturity is defined by the ability to control the tongue**
- 3. You can call the unseen realm into the realm of the seen by the power of the tongue.**
- 4. When a Christian speaks from a heart of envy or strife they are lying against the truth that's in their spirit.**

In John 6:63 Jesus said that the words that He speaks are "spirit" and "life". We need to realize that our words can either give life or take away life depending on the spirit of those words.

Paul says in Ephesians 4:15 that a person of maturity not only speaks the truth but speaks that same truth in love because they "know" God. Love keeps your faith in line.

Vs. 15 "earthly" = flesh, from the curse that was placed in the earth

"sensual" = sense realm or soulful

"devilish" = demonic—Matt. 4:6—devil knows the Word—but not love

We are born-again in our spirit; God is love, we're born of God, therefore we are born of love. Love is our nature.

Earthly =- flesh

Sensual = soulful

Spirit = love

God's Word backed by love changes lives.

Vs. 16 "strife" = division

Words without love = confusion and evil works

Why? Because we're not speaking out of our nature

Vs.17 Heavenly wisdom is backed by love and produces:

1. Pure, clean, no spots—in context: not mean  
Matt. 11:12 This is not Christian; it's the religious leader. If you are speaking the truth in love, you won't be afraid to be challenged. Love will always prevail.
2. Peaceable = an attitude
3. Gentle = cares about people
4. Easy to be entreated = not afraid to be challenged
5. Mercy =not receiving what you deserve
6. Good fruits = production
7. Without partiality= they are not partial
8. Without hypocrisy=they don't wear two masks

Vs. 18 Fruit represents the end result. When a believer understands grace, the peace of God is operating in their hearts. When we are operating in peace, we sow peace or grace and its fruit is righteousness.

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**Exam**

**The Horse and The Ship**

1. What do the verses in James 3:1-6 reveal?
2. What do the verses in James 3:7-13 reveal?
3. In verse 3: (a) How is the horse like us?  
(b) What does the bit represent?  
(c) What part of your body controls your destiny?
4. In verse 4: (a) The ship is like what?  
(b) What does the rudder represent?  
(c) What part of your body controls your circumstances?
5. In verse 6: (a) What does the phrase “a world of iniquity” mean?  
(b) What does the phrase “the course of nature” mean?  
(c) What part of your body causes things that you can’t see to be seen?
6. When we curse man, who else are we cursing and why?
7. Why is nature smarter than man?
8. In verse 14 one part of your three part being lies against the truth. Which part is it and why?
9. Truth is found in two places. Where are these places?
10. Why do Christians get confused?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Answer Sheet**

**The Horse and The Ship**

1. The power of the tongue
2. The power to control the tongue
3.
  - a. A horse has a will
  - b. The tongue
  - c. The tongue
4.
  - a. Our circumstances
  - b. The tongue
  - c. The tongue
5.
  - a. The realm of the unseen
  - b. The realm of the seen
  - c. The tongue
6. God—because we are made in His image.
7. You have either sweet water or bitter water.
8. Your soul- because it's not renewed to the truth.
9. The Word and your recreated spirit
10. Because the soul thinks differently than the recreated spirit