

## The Book of James

### James 3:6-18

It's always a joy to be able to share with you the Word of God, and you know, the introduction says Bible study, fellowship, and prayer. Well, we're going to have Bible study today, and we are having fellowship with one another, that is, saved people looking at the Word of God. And if you're not saved, we can have fellowship today if you'll simply bow your head and ask Jesus to come into your heart to save you. And let me remind you that Jesus came into the world to give everlasting life.

The Bible teaches us that in John 3:16, *For God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish; but have... everlasting life.* And if you'll simply ask Jesus to forgive you of your sin, you must realize you're a sinner. The Bible says, *For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.* That's everybody. You're not alone. But you need to ask Him to forgive you of that sin. You need to ask Him, "Lord, come into my heart. I want You as my Savior. Thank You, Lord, for dying for me on the cross. Thank You for shedding Your blood that I would be able to go to Heaven." If you'll ask Him to save you today, He'll save you, because that's why He came into this world. And He's alive today, and He wants to make intercession for you. And that's the reason Christians can have fellowship. That's the reason you and I as saved people today can have fellowship as we go through God's Word. The introduction says Bible study, fellowship, and prayer. I pray over these programs. I pray over these texts that we're going through together, and I pray for you. I may never have met you, but I pray for you. God knows who you are, and I pray for each one who listens to this program. May the Lord bless you is my prayer.

Well, today, we pick up with James 3:6. Remember the last time I read this, it says, *And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.*

Remember in verse 5 it talks about a match being able to start a forest fire, and I made mention of Smokey the Bear. And I used to hear those commercials where they talked about, "Only you can prevent forest fires," and it would show the match at the end of that commercial. And that's changed today as we see those commercials, but as you look at that little match that can cause so much trouble, the tongue is a world of iniquity. It can set things on fire. The tongue, if it's not controlled, is as destructive as a small match. It's extremely sinful. It's able to destroy, and as you read verse 6, the world here signifies a mass, a great collection, an abundance. In other words, one thing leads to another and it causes a great problem. And unlike other members of our body, the tongue is capable of defiling the whole body, according to James 3:6. It's capable of altering the moral actions of the natural man and is influenced by the powers of evil, in verse 6 that talks about that.

In Psalm 39:1 the Bible says, *To the chief Musician, even to Juduthun, a Psalm of David. I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue: I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me.* And that should be our prayer today, that we need to bridle our tongues to keep them under control. And really, the only way you can do that is to trust Jesus. I mean, the natural man it talks about there in the verses we've just read is really unable to control his tongue, but God gives us the ability as saved people... we don't

always do it... but God gives us the ability, and we need to pray, "Lord, bridle my tongue. Help me not to be a hindrance to people but to be a blessing. Help my tongue, Lord, not to give out the things that are unkind and those things that hurt people."

Now, in verses 7-12, we see that there is difficulty in taming the tongue. In verses 7-8, it says, *7For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: 8But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.* No man can tame it, but we're going to see God is the One who tames it. And I've already mentioned that. Man can control creatures of the land and sea but not the tongue. Isn't that something to think about? An uncontrolled tongue is venomous and harmful according to verse 8. It's full of deadly poison. The tongue can hurt; it can kill.

James 3:9 says, *Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.* We praise God with the tongue, according to that verse, and with the same tongue, we blaspheme men who were originally made in God's likeness, and that's not right. We're not to do that. We're not to blaspheme, but we're to help our fellow man to know, first of all, Jesus is Savior, and we're not to be mean. We're to control that tongue.

James 3:10 says, *Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.* Remember, James is speaking to the church. He's saying, "There's trouble here in the church. Some of you are not controlling your tongue and these things shouldn't be. You shouldn't be mean-spirited and say things that are unkind." And he says in that verse 10 the same mouth continues to praise and curse the fellow members of the body of Christ, I believe is what he's saying here.

And he says, "My brothers, you shouldn't praise God and then ask Him to harm someone." You know, I've actually heard people say, "Is it all right if I pray that God kill somebody?" Well, that is certainly not right. We don't have to pray a prayer like that. And I've heard people say, "Is it wrong for me to ask God to do something harmful to a person?" Well, certainly, it's wrong to do that, and that's what James is pointing to here.

Proverbs 18:21: *Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.* You've heard the old saying, "What goes around comes around." Well, that pretty much says it. It's not that we can control what comes around, but we can control what goes around. We don't have to be mean-spirited and do something that would harm someone else in this world.

Notice verses 11-12. It says, *11Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter? 12Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs? so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.* Think for a moment. He's saying does fresh or sweet water and saltwater come from the same spring? Can a fig tree produce olives? Or a grapevine produce figs? In other words, they're made for certain things and he continues that there is no way. And what he's saying is there is no way in nature that a spring can produce both fresh and saltwater. And in nature, these things are impossible, according to verse 12.

In Matthew 7:16, it says, *Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?* In other words, each thing brings forth what it's supposed to be bringing forth.

And now we look into verse 13. If you would look at 13-18, you would see heavenly and earthly wisdom are involved in these verses. Verse 13, the true display of wisdom and

understanding is seen in this verse. It says, *Who is a wise man and endowed with knowledge among you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.* What man in your local assembly, James is saying, has wisdom and the ability to learn? Let that man, he says, be humble in his behavior, showing with wisdom what he's learned. James is saying, *Who is a wise man endowed with knowledge among you?* This is spoken with reference to the work of public teaching. Remember, we're talking about teachers also here. And the meaning of the apostle is that, if there were such persons among them, they should be selected for that office, in other words, someone who can control his tongue. This is another sign or another indication that a person is able to teach if they can control that tongue.

And the characteristics here stated as necessary qualifications are wisdom and knowledge. The person is to be able to teach, share with others, what he's learned. And you look back and it talks about studying to show yourself approved unto God a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth. That's a teacher.

Now in verses 14-16, we see the display of earthly wisdom. Verse 14 says, *But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth.* He's saying, if you are jealous, causing conflicts, don't be proud of it or don't deny the truth. In Mark 7:21, it says, *For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders.*

Now, in James 3:15 it says, *This wisdom descendeth not from above....* He's talking about the wisdom that is wrong. *This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish.* And this type of wisdom that's in verse 14, James is saying in verse 15, is

not of God but results from being fleshly, carnal, and sinister.

Verse 16 says, *For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.* Wherever there is jealousy and contention, there is chaos and immoral wickedness. God is not the author of confusion.

In verses 17-18, we see the display of heavenly wisdom here. He's told you that earthly wisdom is wrong. Now we go into what is heavenly wisdom. James 3:17 says, *But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.*

Wisdom of God is from above, is not contaminated. It's pure. It's not contentious; it's peaceable. It's kind. That means it's gentle. It's not hard to ask earnest, serious questions of. In other words, it's easily entreated. He who is under the influence of the wisdom which is from God is not a stiff, stern, obstinate, unyielding, hard-to-talk-to man. He is one who is willing to listen and give advice and help you. It goes on to say he's overflowing with compassion, mercy that produces kind actions, does not show favoritism or partiality, does not have false principles, is without hypocrisy.

And James 3:18 says, *And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.* Seeds of tranquility are planted by those who do not cause a commotion, and the result is righteousness.