

“Developing Maturity in the Power of the Tongue” 2/27/11
James 3:1-12

James- Pressing on Toward Spiritual Maturity

The spiritually mature will: 1) be patient in trials/testing; 2) practice the truth (through loving others; 3) control the tongue; 4) be a peacemaker, not a trouble maker; 5) be prayerful in various challenges (Warren Wiersbe on book of James)

James 1:19- slow to speak, quick to hear

"The tongue can bring death or life; those who love to talk will reap the consequences."
(Proverbs 18:21 NLT)

Morgan Blake Quote; Gen 3:12-13; Isaiah 6:5; READ Matt 12:33-37

POINT 1- The mature will understand the tongue's power of DIRECTION

- A. The power of direction for a teacher should be taken SERIOUSLY (3:1; Luke 12:48; Mark 12:38-40; Romans 2:2; 3:8; 1 Cor 4:1-5)
- B. The power of direction is indicative of the level of applied WISDOM (3:2-4; Silence is golden- Prov 10:19; 17:27-28; Ecclesiastes 10:14)

"Even a fool who remains silent is considered wise, and the one who holds his tongue is deemed discerning." (Proverbs 17:28)

Going God wants us to recognize the potential for good!
Deeper

POINT 2- The mature will understand the tongue's power of DESTRUCTION

- A. The power of destruction is complete and most times IRREVERSIBLE (3:5-8; Rom 3:14-15; Proverbs 16:27; 26:20-21; Mark 9:43-48; Ps 64:3)

Going God wants us to realize the destructive and hellish qualities of the tongue!
Deeper

POINT 3- The mature will understand the tongue's power of DUPLICITY

- A. The power of duplicity is evidenced in blessing and CURSING (3:9-10; Isaiah 59:3; Ps 62:4; David blesses- Psalm 35:8; Gen 1:26-27)
- B. The power of duplicity is shown to be contrary to God's natural ORDER (3:11-12; Matt 7:16-19; 2 Cor 5:17; Colossians 3:17)

Going God wants us to avoid being duplicitous and put a guard on our mouths!
Deeper

Woman tells pastor she wants to put her tongue on the altar... altar not big enough!

"Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my lips." (Psalm 141:3)

For next week: Please read James 3:13-18; Proverbs 1-10

Sportswriter, Morgan Blake for the *Atlanta Journal* wrote the following satire:

I am more deadly than the screaming shell from the howitzer. I win without killing. I tear down homes, break hearts, and wreck lives. I travel on the wings of the wind. No innocence is strong enough to intimidate me, no purity pure enough to daunt me. I have no regard for truth, no respect for justice, no mercy for the defenseless. My victims are as numerous as the sands of the sea, and often as innocent. I never forget and and seldom forgive. My name is.....Gossip.

(Cited in George Sweeting, *Faith that Works*, Chicago: Moody Press, 1983, 76-77).