

## Bible Lesson – James 3:9-12

### The Tongue of Blessing

<sup>9</sup> With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; <sup>10</sup> from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. <sup>11</sup> Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? <sup>12</sup> Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor can salt water produce fresh.

- 1. Like a rudder is to a ship; the tongue steers our path (either to Godliness or to sin).**
  - a. Using your tongue for blessing should be a priority in pursuing Godliness.
  - b. You have the ability to provide incredible blessings to others.
  - c. Strive for a single-purposed tongue (blessing).
  
- 2. The problem: A multi-purpose tongue.**
  - a. It can both bless and curse; diametrically opposed. Some descriptions:
    - i. Verbally schizophrenic
    - ii. Bipolar mouth
  - b. Versatility (multi-purpose) is sometimes a good thing:
    - i. Multi-tool; knife, screwdriver, scissors, bottle opener, saw
    - ii. Printer, copier, fax
    - iii. Emergency radio, flashlight, siren
  - c. Regarding the tongue, versatility is not a virtue.
    - i. Illustration: A Toothbrush
      1. Bathroom: Brush teeth
      2. Workshop: Clean grease
  
- 3. There is something dreadfully wrong with a tongue that both praises God, yet curses man (man is made in the image of God).**
  - a. God takes this very personally...cursing man is really cursing God.
    - i. Illustration: A dog's tongue (think of all the places a dog's tongue has been)
      1. God knows:
        - a. Every place your tongue has been
        - b. What you have said
        - c. Even your unspoken thoughts
      2. He sees and hears every time you have torn someone apart with your tongue.
    - ii. Commandment breaking:
      1. 5<sup>th</sup>; You shall not murder (verbal assault)
      2. 9<sup>th</sup>; You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor (unkind words and thoughts)
  
- 4. The solution: A single-purpose tongue**
  - a. Your tongue's single purpose should be to bless others.
  - b. James understands that although sin still exists, he is not resigned to it.
    - i. First must acknowledge your own sinful heart in order to repent & kill the sin (the source).
      1. In order to fix your tongue, you must fix your heart (source).
        - a. **Matthew 12:34**; <sup>34</sup>... For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart.
    - ii. **John 15:1-5**; Jesus – Abide in me and you will bear good fruit.  
<sup>1</sup>“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. <sup>2</sup> Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can

## Bible Lesson – James 3:9-12

### The Tongue of Blessing

you unless you abide in Me. <sup>5</sup> I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

- c. As a follower of Jesus, your faith should influence both what you say and how you say it.
  - i. “If you don’t have anything nice to say...”
  - ii. Sometimes rebuke is necessary, but your delivery should be seasoned with grace.
    - 1. **Luke 17:3**; Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.
    - 2. **1 Peter 3:8**; <sup>8</sup> To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; <sup>9</sup> not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead;
    - 3. **Romans 12:14**; <sup>14</sup> Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.
- d. What to do when your fountain runs dry.
  - i. When the emptiness of your heart leads you to curse rather than bless...PRAY!
    - 1. “Lord, give me a new heart. Like a container, fill me daily with your Spirit so that I will have words of blessing for others.”

#### 5. The potential for good.

- a. Picture your tongue as a fountain of blessing; abundantly pouring forth fresh water.
- b. **Proverbs 10:11**, <sup>11</sup> The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life...
- c. **Proverbs 16:24**; <sup>24</sup> Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

#### 6. Summary

- a. The words you speak can ultimately:
  - i. Curse (damn), or
  - ii. Bless (bring one to salvation)
- b. The words you speak can ultimately:
  - i. Put someone over the edge, or
  - ii. Bring someone back
    - 1. Illustration: Someone ready to jump off a building
- c. Jason Gray; “With Every Act of Love”
  - i. Jesus help us carry you, alive in us your light shines through, with every act of love, we bring the kingdom come.
- d. Put your tongue to good use for God’s glory. Press into the opportunities that God puts in front of you. Make your tongue single-purposed (blessing).
  - i. **Psalm 34:1-3**; <sup>1</sup> I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. <sup>2</sup> My soul will make its boast in the Lord; the humble will hear it and rejoice. <sup>3</sup> O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together.