

Repeated Words, Themes, and Ideas

1. Brethren, James urges his Christian brethren not to be too eager to desire the position of teacher because teachers, including James, will receive a stricter judgment, 3:1. James reminds his Christian brethren that our speech should not be used for both blessing and cursing; this is not the way things ought to be. He shows them that nature itself teaches us that we ought not use our mouth to bless and curse, just like we don't expect a spring to produce fresh and bitter water, or a fig tree olives, or a grapevine figs, or a spring salt water and fresh, 3:10-12 (other places this appears: 1:2, 16, 18, 19; 2:1, 5, 14, 15-16).
2. Tongue / Speech, James warns his audience not to be too quick to desire the use of their tongues for teaching because all teachers will receive a stricter judgment, 3:1. We all stumble in various sins. If anyone does not stumble in the use of their speech, he is a perfect man, able to control every other sinful impulse, 3:2. We put bits in horses to obey us and control their whole bodies and large ships which are driven by fierce winds are turned by a very small rudder wherever way the pilot wants. Likewise, the tongue is a little member which boasts great things; it's like a spark that can bring down a great forest! 3:3-5. The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. It's so set among our members that it can defile the whole body and set on fire every area of our lives. And it is set on fire by hell, 3:6. Mankind has had dominion over every kind of animal, whether it walks, flies, crawls, or swims, but no one can tame the tongue. It's an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father and curse those made in His image. Out of the same mouth come blessing and cursing. This ought not be. Nature itself teaches us that two opposites cannot come from the same source: we don't get fresh water and bitter, figs and olives, grapes and figs, or salt water and fresh from the same source, 3:7-12. James wants those who think they're wise and understanding to reveal their wisdom by doing something not saying something because wisdom is meek not eager to blab, 3:13. If some in James' audience have bitter envy and self-seeking in their hearts, their speech will boast and lie against the truth, 3:14. Speech that proceeds from demonic wisdom results in confusion and every evil thing. But speech that proceeds from godly wisdom results in fruits of righteousness which are sown in peace by peacemakers, 3:15-18 (other places this appears: 1:19).
3. Judge / Judgment, James doesn't want his audience to be too quick to desire a teaching position because all teachers will receive a stricter judgment, 3:1 (other places this appears: 1:13; 2:1-4, 6, 9, 13).
4. Satan / Hell, the tongue is a fire that holds a world of iniquity. It is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body and sets on fire every corner of our lives. This is no surprise since it's set on fire by hell, 3:6. Hell drives our tongue to both bless God our Father and curse those He made in His image. Out of the same mouth we bless and curse, 3:6, 9-10. Satan's demonic influences drive us towards bitter envy and self-seeking which result in confusion and every evil thing, 3:14-16 (other places this appears: 1:13-15, 22-24, 26; 2:4, 18-19).
5. God, we use our tongue to both bless our God and Father and curse those He made in His image, 3:9 (other places this appears: 1:1, 5, 6-7, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19-20, 27; 2:5-6, 11, 18-19, 20-23).
6. Perfect, we all stumble in many sinful areas. If anyone is able not to stumble in their speech, he's a perfect man, able also to control every other sinful impulse, 3:2 (other places this appears: 1:2-4, 17, 25; 2:21-22).

7. Sin, the tongue is a little member that sinfully boasts great things; it's a spark that can burn down a great forest! It's a fire that contains a world of iniquity. It is so set among our members that it defiles the entire body. It sets on fire every aspect of our lives and is set on fire by hell, 3:5-6. No man can tame the tongue. It's an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father and curse those made in His image. Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. This is not the way our tongue should behave. Nature shows us that two opposites don't come from the same source. You can get fresh and bitter water, figs and olives, grapes and figs, or salt water and fresh from the same source, 3:8-12. The devilish way to use your tongue is to have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts; we must not boast and lie against the truth like this. Such wisdom is not heavenly but completely worldly and demonic and it results in confusion and every evil thing, 3:14-16. But the godly way to use your tongue is to be pure, peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and hypocrisy; it is to sow the fruit of righteousness in peace as a peacemaker, 3:17-18 (other places this appears: 1:6-8, 11, 13-15, 19, 20, 21, 22-24, 26, 27; 2:1-13, 14-17).
8. Wisdom, if there are wise and understanding individuals in James' audience, they should show their wisdom by doing something not saying something, since wisdom is meek not boastful. But if they have bitter envy and self-seeking in their hearts, they will boast and lie against the truth. Such wisdom is not heavenly but completely worldly and demonic and wherever it exists, it results in confusion and every evil thing, 3:13-3:16. But godly wisdom is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and hypocrisy and it results in peaceful fruits of righteousness which are sown in peace by those who make peace, 3:17-18 (other places this appears: 1:5).
9. We are the source of a failed (foolish, faithless, ungodly, selfish) life, our tongue holds a world of iniquity; it defiles our whole body. It sets on fire every aspect of our lives and is set on fire by hell, 3:6. We use our tongue to bless our God and Father and curse those He made in His image. Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing, 3:9-10. If we have bitter envy and self-seeking in our hearts, we will boast and lie against the truth. Such wisdom is completely human and demonic and wherever it exists, confusion and every evil thing are there, 3:14-16 (other places this appears: 1:6-8, 11, 13-15, 22-24, 26; 2:1-13, 14-17, 18-19).
10. God is the source of a victorious (wise, faithful, godly, selfless) life, those who have true wisdom and understanding will not show it by saying something but doing something and their good works will be done in the meekness of wisdom, 3:13. If we use God's heavenly wisdom, we will be pure, peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and hypocrisy and it will result in fruits of righteousness that we sow in peace as peacemakers, 3:17-18 (other places this appears: 1:2-5, 9, 10 [1:4, 11, 12], 12, 19-20, 21, 25, 27; 2:5, 21-23, 25).
11. Doer-of-God's-Word vs. Hearer-Only-of-God's-Word, a *Doer-of-God's-Word* will do something instead of say something to show their wisdom and understanding, thus revealing their good works through the meekness of wisdom. They will also use their godly wisdom—which is pure, utterly selfless, gentle, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and hypocrisy—to produce fruits of righteousness that unify instead of divide. But a *Hearer-Only-of-God's-Word* will be full of bitter envy and self-seeking and will boast and lie against the truth. From this wisdom—which is totally worldly and demonic—they will produce confusion and every evil thing, 3:13-18 (other places this appears: 1:2-5 vs. 1:6-8; 1:9-10, 12 vs. 1:11, 13-15; 1:19, 21-22 vs. 1:20, 22; 1:23-24 vs. 1:25; 1:26 vs. 1:27; 2:1-13, 14-26).