

James – Taming the Tongue

"One of the first things that happens when a man is really filled with the spirit is not that he speaks with tongues, but that he learns to hold the one he already has."

- J. Sidlow Baxter

Where is this bible study going...?

God's clear purpose is that we become his fully mature children, fully able to participate in a relationship of love with Him, where we will have a deep sense of satisfaction in all of our life. A perfect relationship with God overflows into perfection in our relationships with one another and with ourselves.

Read James Ch. 3 v. 1-12.

Write down some words which spring to mind when you think of both the good and bad ways the tongue can be used.

Keeping in mind what you have written above look at some of the biblical examples of an untamed tongue and think about why there is a need to control what we say.

In your groups read Proverbs Ch. 12 v. 18-19, Ch.13 v. 3, Ch.16 v. 27-28, Ch. 17 v. 7, Ch. 18 v. 8, Matthew Ch. 7 v. 15, Ephesians Ch. 4 v. 25, Philippians Ch.2 v. 14-15.

Take some time within your small groups to discuss the ways we misuse our words in our personal life.

Judging Others...

Read James Ch. 2 v. 8-9 and Ch. 4 v. 11-12. How do these verses affect our relationships with both Christians and people who aren't Christians?

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A Humble Tongue...

Read James Ch. 1 v. 9-10 and v. 19-21. How does humility, or indeed pride affect the kinds of things which we say? In what ways can we strive to be humble in what we say?

Wisdom...

How do we differentiate between the good and bad ways in which we can use our tongue? We have already studied James ideas about wisdom in a previous bible study – a wisdom which is rooted in God and which describes living a life with God at the centre.

Read James Ch. 3 Verses 13-18. How can the kind of wisdom that James is talking about be reflected in what we say and how we say it?

Teaching and Evangelism...

In James Ch. 3 v.1-2 James warns that teachers have a big responsibility. How can our words help and hinder Christians who we have a responsibility for teaching?

As Christians, our lifestyle and words can be judged more strictly than others. Read James Ch. 1 v.26. How can what we say help or hinder our witness?

Can you think of situations you have experienced where a careless word has destroyed a Godly witness?