

[Jas 3:1-5 ESV] 1 Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. 2 For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. 3 If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. 4 Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. 5 So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire!

## I. Intro

### A. James recap:

1. Count it all joy
2. Genuine Faith will have genuine fruit
3. Circular teaching, we circle back to previous statements and go deeper

### B. This week we build of a truth introduced in chapter 1: [Jas 1:26 ESV] 26 If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless.

### C. We look at the importance of taming the tongue.

## II. Text

### A. 3:1: Chris preached back before thanksgiving, take your calling to teach seriously

### B. 3:2:

1. All of us need to keep our lives in discipline, and recognize the seriousness of our situation.
2. [1Jo 1:5-10 ESV] 5 This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

### C. 3:3-4:

1. small things have large impact
2. Horses and ships are controlled by a relatively small device
3. Without a rudder, a ship is not controlled or directed
4. Without a bit, a horse will not go where you want it to go.

### D. 3:5:

1. the tongue is powerful, and sets the course for the body
2. The tongue can cause great damage, or bring great blessing

## III. Points

### A. Discipline in the small things

1. Our tongue can get us in trouble, keep it in check
2. Moses:
  - a) God always used a central figure to lead His people, and Moses was chosen
  - b) He was trying to make an excuse so he would not be chosen, but God had other plans
  - c) [Exo 4:10 ESV] 10 But Moses said to the LORD, "Oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent, either in the past or since you have spoken to your servant, but I am slow of speech and of tongue."
  - d) I think God wanted Moses to depend upon HIM rather than Moses' own ability to talk his way out of a problem.
3. Moses may have actually had a problem with his speech, and yet he was chosen to lead well.

4. It is not uncommon in authentic ministry for God to remind us of our need for Him.
  5. The discipline we instill in our christian walk is indicative of this truth.
    - a) When we purposefully choose to rely of God, we choose to practice discipline.
    - b) Choosing to practice discipline is recognition that you need God's strength to do anything and everything worthy of the calling.
    - c) To model discipline is to show others you have chosen to submit to the Lord in order to be used of God.
    - d) Discipline is a reminder to yourself that you can't, but God can through you.
  6. Small practices of discipline: reading your Bible, Prayer, meditation will bless your effort to remain disciplined in the big things.
    - a) Bible study/intake will remind you of faith and dependance
    - b) Prayer will remind you of your need for God
    - c) Meditation will capture your thoughts and point them towards things of God
  7. The tongue may be small, but the practice of discipline will gain you momentum as you hope to honor God.
  8. Discipline is not an exercise in frustration, but an exercise in growth.
    - a) Practice discipline, and see God shape you
    - b) Practice discipline and watch God change your responses to circumstances from physical to spiritual
- B. Impact in the large things
1. Black Beret:
    - a) On June 14, 2000 General Eric Shensiki declared all people enlisted in the army would be issued a black beret as standard head cover.
    - b) He did so as a show of unity among all the Army, but had not considered some things.
    - c) He did not in fact create unity: one soldier wrote: Firstly, black berets at the time were synonymous with the United States Army Rangers. This was seen by many, even non-rangers as a serious affront. At the time only three groups of people wore berets in the Army. People in Special Forces (United States Army) units wore green, people in Airborne units wore maroon, and people in Ranger units wore black. These were necessarily exclusive units and their berets identified them and gave them recognition. It also gave other soldiers something to aspire to.
    - d) There was also a supply chain issue: The Chief of Staff wanted an unprecedented 1.3 million active duty and reserve soldiers outfitted by the June deadline, while a second beret would be issued to each soldier in the fall of 2001. The total order was an unprecedented 3.2 million black berets. The number would grow to 4.8 million. DLA's logisticians endeavored to meet the deadline, failing to raise the implications of General Shinseki's decision. DLA leadership remained mute and focused on satisfying the new demand. They were following a common logistician's mistake, "never say no." In doing this, they ran head on into the Berry Amendment.
    - e) The Berry Amendment: Under the Berry Amendment all items procured for DOD had to be 100 percent domestic in origin. Also, the Berry Amendment closed the loophole on the purchase of products by DOD even if the products are used outside the United States.
    - f) So, A general makes a statement, that hurt morale, could not be physically produced, and broke the law...He spoke without consulting the potential issues and it spiraled. The good idea fairy.
  2. We can have a large impact on the world with your words
  3. We can impact our world negatively by a misuse of the tongue
  4. We can impact our world eternally by a Spirit filled use of the tongue.
  5. The tongue boasts of GREAT THINGS:
    - a) If this is boasting of the work of God, huge impact

- b) If this is boasting of the power in man, huge negative impact
  - 6. Great things are God things, don't mess this up.
    - a) Don't steal the glory
    - b) Don't take credit
    - c) Don't think too highly of yourself, point people to Christ...not yourself
- C. Responsibility in the body
  - 1. We should season our words, yet speak the truth
    - a) [Col 4:5-6 ESV] 5 Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. 6 Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.
  - 2. We should tell the truth, for the purpose of building up the body
    - a) [Eph 4:11-16 ESV] 11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. 15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.
      - b) Building up the body should be our mission at all times: Encouragement, Correction, whatever: for the building up.
  - 3. We should speak blessing, as a reminder of our dependence
    - a) [Luk 10:1-7 ESV] 1 After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go. 2 And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. 3 Go your way; behold, I am sending you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. 4 Carry no moneybag, no knapsack, no sandals, and greet no one on the road. 5 Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house!' 6 And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. But if not, it will return to you. 7 And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages. Do not go from house to house.
      - b) Your words have influence and can bring blessing.
- IV. Close
  - A. Watch carefully how you conduct yourself
  - B. Remember our theme for the year: Share the gospel, share yourself...