

Use this daily Transformation Journal to learn how to study the Bible for yourself. Pray before you begin and ask God to bless you with insight and discernment as you ponder and respond to the questions, which are tools for your spiritual growth.

Inbox

James 3:1-12



faithbook

James 3:1-12 NIV

¹Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. ²We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check. ³When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. ⁴Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. ⁵Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. ⁶The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. ⁷All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, ⁸but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. ¹⁰Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. ¹¹Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? ¹²My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

Sermon Notes

Monday, September 21

In the early church a person did not become a teacher by going to seminary or major in Biblical Studies. Instead, teachers were called and empowered by the Holy Spirit. The problem was that the gift of teaching could be faked. It was a prestigious position and if a person were eloquent, he or she might pretend to be a teacher. False teachers were a real problem in the first century. Teachers were held in great honor and that was the great danger. They might begin to teach their own opinions instead of God's truth.

James 3:1-2

Who was one of your favorite teachers in school? Why?

What do you feel God is saying to you through these two verses?

Tuesday, September 22

James begins today's reading by using two metaphors to illustrate the point that he has just made that if a person controls their tongue, and "is never at fault in what he says," then that person is in control of their whole body. Both metaphors describe the power of the tongue. The person who controls the bit or the rudder has control over the horse or ship.

James 3:3-8

Why are the illustrations of a horse's bit, a ship's rudder, and a fire's spark so fitting regarding the tongue?

If verse 8 is true, why should we even try to control our tongues?

Think over the last couple days about how this verse could help you.

Wednesday, September 23

James shares with us that the tongue is vital to all worship: praying, singing, praising and thanking. Devout Jews at the time offered praise to God three times a day. James ends with three illustrations from nature which show how unnatural it is for human beings to use the same vehicle to utter praises and curses. Nothing in nature is like that, he says.

James 3:9-12

In your everyday conversation, how seriously do you take verse 9?

What does this verse say about the caution, and the reverence, with which we must choose our words?

Take some time to pray and praise God for the joys in your life.

Thursday, September 24

This is part two of James; discussion of wisdom. In it he probes why it is that, on the one hand, speech can be so destructive—yet on the other hand, there are teachers in the church (of which he is one) who communicate true wisdom. His conclusion is that it all depends on the source of the words.

James 3:13-18

Are you more likely to “say what you mean” (emphasis on correct speech), or “mean what you say” (emphasis on follow-up action)?

Who do you admire in your life for their ability to make wise decisions? How do you feel they make such wise decisions?

Friday, September 25

We have been talking about 3 things we want to take from James each week: Holy Heart Repetitions (a verse that speaks to you), Living a “faithbook” life and putting your faith into action.

Reread James Chapters 1 & 2

What verse spoke to you?

How are you putting something from Chapter 1 and 2 into action?

Saturday, September 26

Read James Chapter 4 (James continues to talk about wisdom)

What verse spoke to you?

How will you put something from Chapter 4 into action?