

The Epistle of James: Living One's Faith

- Living One's Faith is an excellent approach to the letter
- This includes:
 - Living my faith in the midst of trials from without and temptations from within
 - Living my faith in relation to the word of God
 - Living my faith in relation to our fellow man
 - Living my faith by understanding that pleasing faith works obedience
 - Living my faith in relation to the use of our tongues
 - Living my faith in relation to the world
 - Living my faith in prayer and compassion



The Epistle of James: Living One's Faith

- Living my faith starts with
 - The right relationship with God which is only through Jesus Christ
 - The righteousness of God which is by faith
- Living my faith requires
 - The right attitudes
- Living my faith is seen in
 - My words
 - My deeds
- As we go through this letter, take intermittent attitude checks



Living my faith involves controlling my tongue

- “Let not many of you become teachers”
 - Acts 8:4
 - Hebrews 5:12
 - 1 Timothy 3:2
 - Romans 12:7
 - 2 Timothy 2:2
- Great responsibility
- Attitude check: Why do I want to be a teacher?



Living my faith involves controlling my tongue

- “If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body”
 - Shows how difficult to perfectly bridle the tongue in comparison to other members of this body
- First 2 Illustrations
 - Bit or bridle in horse’s mouth – small object restrains the whole body
 - Very small rudder in a ship – small object steers the entire ship
- Small objects controlling large animals and massive ships
- Tongue is small compared to size of the body, yet great effect exercised by it



Living my faith involves controlling my tongue

- Illustration #3
 - Small fire kindles a lot of wood
 - The tongue, though small, is potent and powerful
- Unlike the horse and the ship, which are controlled, the effect of the little fire and the resulting destruction are uncontrolled
- Psalm 120:2
- Proverbs 26:18-25
- Psalm 15:1-3
- Proverbs 16:27



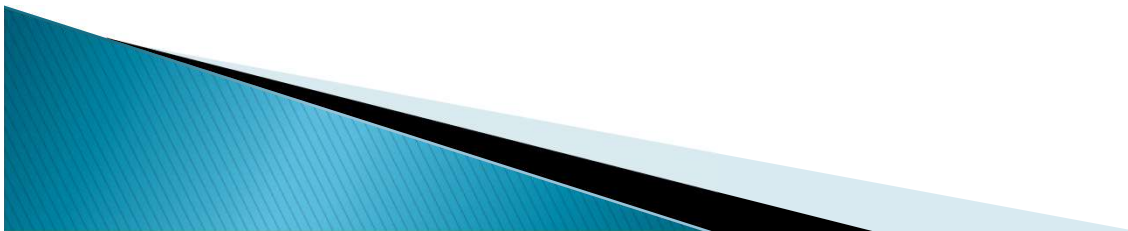
Living my faith involves controlling my tongue

- “And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.”
- There are far-reaching effects from the abuse of the tongue
- There is a constant need of restraint
- “But no man can tame the tongue”
 - Does not mean we are excused from improper use
 - We can never let the guard down! We can never say I’ve tamed it, and I’m forever done with it.
- We are being taught here that we must exercise unceasing care and sobriety and vigilance in the use of our tongue.



Living my faith involves controlling my tongue

- It is full of deadly poison
- Psalm 140:3
- Romans 3:13
- Bless God yet curse men?
- Psalm 62:4
- Matthew 26:33...



Living my faith involves controlling my tongue

- The mouth was created for holy purposes and not for sinful ones
- It is inconsistent to praise God and yet curse men made in His likeness
- It is contrary to nature – verse 11



Living my faith involves the fruits of wisdom

- “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom.”
- Wisdom and understanding are seen in conduct, in a godly life
- Works done in the meekness of wisdom – not arrogant, boastful, or parading self
- Matthew 11:19



Living my faith involves the fruits of wisdom

- “But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.”
- Bitter envy or jealousy and faction or spirit of selfishness are works of the flesh (Galatians 5)
- Where is this wisdom from?
 - Not God!
 - Earthly – of this world
 - Sensual – base, carnal
 - Demonic – Satan the author
- Results? Disorder and disturbance and conflict that leads to confusion
 - Romans 16:17-18; Titus 3:10-11



Living my faith involves the fruits of wisdom

- “But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy.”
- This wisdom is from God; it is God’s gift (chapter 1)
 - Proverbs 2:1-6



Living my faith involves the fruits of wisdom

- God's wisdom is:
 - Pure – uncontaminated and without fault; wholly good
 - Peaceable – peace-loving; produces and maintains peace
 - Instills peace in the heart and has peaceful pursuits
 - “It is impossible for a factious spirit and a factious disposition to issue from a pure heart”
 - Gentle – reasonable, fair in dealing; disposition that does not demand its rights but is willing, if necessary, to suffer wrong in the cause of right
 - Willing to yield – “easy to be entreated”; open to reason, ever ready to hear what others have to say and willing to yield to what is right
 - Full of mercy – compassion and desirous to help those in distress
 - Full of good fruits – that demonstrate the wisdom; compare James 1:27 to James 2:15
 - Without partiality – “without variance” – not with divided opinions; not double-minded
 - Without hypocrisy – does not wear a mask but appears in own true character



Take-aways

- It is very important that we give great effort to restrain our tongue because
 - Even though a little member, it is capable of the most far-reaching effects
 - It is the most difficult member of the body to restrain
 - It is impossible to tame it to the point that it can be left unguarded
 - If unrestrained, it will defile the whole body
 - Matthew 12:36-37
 - Proverbs 15:1-2
- Earthly wisdom has different fruits than heavenly wisdom
- A tree is known by its fruits (Luke 6:43-45)

