

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Notes

Sermon Notes for August 1, 1999

Dale Whitehead

"Taming the Tongue"

James 3:1-12

The potential for judgment (James 3:1)

In a broad sense a teacher is anyone who represents themselves as knowledgeable and seeks to transfer that knowledge to another (Hebrews 5:11-12).

In a more narrow sense of the word a teacher is anyone who functions in an official teaching or preaching role (John 3:10).

When James says, "Let not many of you become teachers..." he is cautioning people from quickly standing up in public forums and representing themselves as knowledgeable of God's word and attempting to pass that knowledge along to others (1 Corinthians 14:26-33).

How can we sin when representing ourselves as a teacher of God's word?

We can sin by teaching out of impure motives (1 Peter 5:2, Philippians 1:15-17).

We can sin by teaching hypocritically (Matthew 23:1-4).

We can sin by not putting out the effort to interpret and present the word properly (2 Timothy 2:15).

When James tells us that teachers will undergo a stricter judgment he is simply saying that increased responsibility means increased accountability (Luke 12:48).

The future tense in James 3:1 looks forward to the time when all believers will stand before the judgment seat of Christ for the purpose of determining reward (Romans 14:10-12; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

James does not intend to restrain those who are genuinely qualified and personally prepared to teach. But he wants anyone who aspires to teach to understand the seriousness of that wonderful work.