

Valley Bible Church – Sermon Notes

Sermon Notes for October 3, 1999

Dale Whitehead

"Taming the Tongue"

James 3:1-12

Why do we need to work at taming or controlling our tongue?

We need to work at taming or controlling our tongue because of the tongue's potential to bring judgment (James 3:1).

We need to work at taming or controlling our tongue because of the tongue's potential to effect the entire course of our lives (James 3:2-4).

We need to work at taming or controlling our tongue because of the tongue's potential to bring destruction (James 3:5,6)

We need to work at taming or controlling our tongue because of the tongue's potential to become unruly (James 3:7,8).

We need to work at taming or controlling our tongue because of the tongue's potential to be inconsistent (James 3:9-12).

What is the inconsistency?

Our tongue should be used as an instrument of praise, exaltation and blessing to our Lord and Father unmixed with angry outbursts toward others. But so often this is not the way it is.

The word "bless" (eulogoumen) means to speak well of, to extol. And when God is the object it means to celebrate His name and acts with "praise".

According to Vine: The word "curse" (kataraoimai) means to pray against, to wish evil against a person."

Praying evil against a person

Getting God involved in our personal quarrels by calling down His judgment is certainly not what we want to do. Certainly this would be true no matter how we might be treated (Matthew 5:44; Luke 23:34).

Getting ourselves involved in God's issues and calling down His judgment on His enemies is a different matter (Psalms 139:19-22).

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We may not invoke the specific words of condemnation that would technically establish a particular expression as a curse in the OT sense and still be guilty. We can do this by hurling verbal abuse on someone out of a heart of anger, wishing them ill and in a sense calling upon God to act without ever uttering the words (Matthew 5:27-32).

Our abuse of people with out tongue does not only reflect on them but on their creator as well (V. 9).

The divine likeness imparted at creation has not been totally obliterated by the fall of man. Sin has marred this likeness but man is still God's noblest creature, every human being retains "an indestructible nobility" that declares his divine origin and his dignity as the crown of creation (Genesis 1:26; Psalms 8:4-8).

If our tongue is used one moment to praise the Lord and then the next moment to curse men it is unnatural (VV. 11,12).