

Wise Speakers

***Key Verse: "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be."
—James 3:10***

***Selected Scripture:
James 3***

SOME CHRISTIANS HAVE A strong desire to instruct others concerning the Word of God. Those selected to perform this function should not only be apt to teach, but also have sterling qualities of character.—James 3:1

Since it is impossible not to err in speech and, therefore, offend others from time to time, Christians need to control their tongues so that their influence for good may be more pronounced.—vss. 2-4

"We put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.—vss. 3-6

"Every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men,

which are made after the similitude of God.”—vss. 7-9

Our Key Verse contrasts the inconsistency of using our tongues for praise and prayer on the one hand while also using them for evil speaking and slander. Such a contradiction must be overcome if the believer is to develop the required purity of character that will make him acceptable to God.

The Apostle James amplifies this point further by citing the impossibility of a spring to bring forth fresh and bitter water simultaneously. Similarly, neither can a fig tree bring forth olives, a grapevine bear figs nor can both salt water and fresh water spring forth from the same source together.—vss. 11,12

God’s wisdom is “first pure” and not adulterated by the doctrines of men. It provides peace of mind under the Holy Spirit’s influence. Other characteristics of Divine wisdom are described as “gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.” Believers who have learned to bridle their tongues appreciate the transforming influence of God’s wisdom in directing their lives.—vss. 13-18

This fruitage is akin to the development of the graces of the Spirit enumerated by the Apostle Peter. “Beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.” (II Pet. 1:5-7) Those who apply these admonitions faithfully in their Christian walk have reason to entertain a great hope at the completion of their earthly sojourn. “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things.”—vss. 10-12 ■