

DOES YOUR OWN TONGUE SET THE COURSE OF YOUR LIFE?

JAMES CHAPTER 3

Have you heard the saying, “be careful what you say — is what you will get?” I have, but I gave it no thought, and now I pay more attention to the words I speak. James, a brother of Jesus, has learned what words can do and how it can control the whole body. James had a deeper understanding of how faith alone was not enough to produce results in a person’s life. In other words, just saying you believe is not enough unless you walk out what you believe. In essence, it is your tongue that speaks the truth of what is in your heart and what course you have set in your life. Many today confess that they are a Christian, but they do not walk out what they confess? Do they really follow Jesus and do what He has done? James stated in chapter 2, verse 26 that “**faith without works is dead,**” [KJV]. James used father Abraham as an example, for Abraham believed God that he would be the father of many nations. Abraham shows us an example of his believes in God’s word with his action by putting his only son Isaac upon the altar as a sacrifice. Abraham did not falter that God would keep his word with him in that he would become the father of many nations. Abraham was not only justified by faith but by his action. Abraham obeyed God and was justified by his faith in God’s word and by his action in walking out what he believed. We must remember that God had established an everlasting covenant with Abraham and his seed [see Genesis chapter 17].

Today, we have God’s written word [The Bible] as His will and testament that instructs us on how we should live in this world. We read that “**faith cometh by hearing the word of God**” [Romans 10:17], and “**with the mouth confession is made unto salvation,**” [Romans 10:10]. But, for many, this is where they stop in their Christian belief. They go no further in their walk to experience God manifesting himself in their life through the Holy Spirit. They have made their confession towards salvation, but they stop there and return to religious task that become redundant. Many have experienced God’s love and forgiveness, but soon forget about it and go on living a more religious life that is based on works, or doing good. What happened? Did the flame die out? James illustrates how Abraham walked out his faith by obeying God in regards to his son Isaac [see James 2:21], and in verse 22 we read, “**seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect**” [KJV]? Faith then produces action in a person’s life, and this faith is perfected by walking and living out what one believes. It’s like starting a fire with a flat piece of wood or bark and a straight pointed stick that is rubbed between your hands into the flat piece to start a spark. See how it takes two objects that rub together to create an outcome. God’s word, our faith, plus action equal or produce the outcome. Let’s take this a step further. What motivates faith? Is it not by hearing the word of God? Yes, but it is also driven by the message of love. We are given the gospel message how “**God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,**” [John 3:16]. Herein is the key. The key is God’s love, “God so loved us,” and “God is love.” The word love has taken on a lesser meaning in our society today due to selfish lust and an individual’s own ambition. In the New Testament the apostle Paul used the Greek word (agape) love to mean unselfish concern for the well-being of another. The King James uses the word charity which is the Latin word (caritas), which means affection for,

or concern for another. In either case it displays an unselfish attitude towards others. Christ himself fulfilled the meaning of love by his concern for humanity. Christ followed the great commandment when he told the Pharisees in Matthew chapter 22, verses 37-39, "[Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.](#) This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, [Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,](#)" [KJV]. If we keep this in the forefront of our mind and heart we will begin to see the importance these two commandments make when we walk out our faith as the children of Light.

James makes a strong statement about the tongue in that although it is a small member of our body, it can become a huge **fire** that **sets the course of man's nature** [see James 3:6]. The tongue can become out of control when we ramble off and curse or say mean things to a friend, etc. James then tells us that every animal can be tamed but **the human tongue can be tamed by no man** [see James 3:7-8]. This is an amazing thing what James is saying here that no man can tame the human tongue. Does this not suggest that the individual is responsible for their own mouth? We use our tongue to bless and curse and sometimes we do not even think about what we say as it comes pouring out like water with no shut off valve. In Proverbs 17:14, it reads, "[the beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water; therefore leave off contention,](#) before it be meddled with," [KJV]. Leave off [let go of] contentions, arguments, and disagreements. James says, "[where envying and strife \[self-seeking exist\] is, there is confusion and every evil work,](#)" [James 3:16, KJV]. In fact in verse 15 of James chapter 3, James tells us that envying and strife does not come from above [God or Heaven], but this is earthly, sensual, and devilish [James 3:15]. What James is saying is that envy and strife are the works of the flesh [see Galatians 5:19-21], and the flesh is earthly or carnal, which Paul tells us in Romans 8:6, "[to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace,](#)" [KJV]. Therefore, we must bridle our tongues to speak life instead of death. In Proverbs 18:21, "**Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and they who indulge in it shall eat the fruit of it [for death or life],**" [Amplified Bible]. What we speak is the power of death or life. Can the words we say really have that much power? The answer is yes, my friend.

The word of God is so powerful that it can transform what is in the natural realm into a new thing to the glory of God. A Christian who has the Spirit of the life of Christ living within them should not be blessing and cursing, for there is a breach in their relationship with God. If we speak, let us speak His words of life, instead of words of death. Let us confess our faults and believe that "[he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness,](#)" [1 John 1:9 KJV]. Let us therefore, put to death the deeds of the body that is contrary to the word of God [see Romans 8:13]. Paul states, "[as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God,](#) [Romans 8:14, KJV]. Jesus said, "[as the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love,](#)" [John 15:9-10, KJV]. This then is our goal — to abide in His love. Let us make Psalm 39:1 our prayer, "**I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle,**" [KJV]. Allow the Holy Spirit to change your heart and you will learn to speak life and walk out what you believe in love.