

- I) V1-5 INTRO: My brethren let not many of you become teachers knowing that we shall receive
 - a) AS WE KNOW: Speech is unusually potent in its use for good or for evil

- II) ON THE ONE HAND: Words can bring tremendous joy and healing
 - a) We can bring words of comfort, hope, and encouragement to those who are in pain
 - 1) Pr 12:25 Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, but a *good word* makes it glad.
 - 2) Pr 15:30 A cheerful look brings joy to the heart, and *good news gives health* to the bones.
 - 3) Pr 16:24 Kind words are like honey--sweet to the soul and healthy for the body (NLT)

- III) YET ON THE OTHER HAND: Unguarded words are often used to hurt and to cripple others
 - a) We have all either used our words to hurt, or have been injured by things said to or about us
 - 1) You are fat, you are stupid, I hate you, you're ugly:
 - 2) I heard of a man on his deathbed, whose final words to his son were you will never be anything

- IV) SOME PEOPLE: Even greatly enjoy saying or hearing something bad about someone else
 - a) Pr 16:27 An ungodly man digs up evil, and *it is on his lips* like a burning fire.
 - b) Pr 26:22 The words of a talebearer *are* like tasty trifles, and they go down into the inmost body.

- V) FACT: Some people are experts at harming others with their words
 - a) Pr 12:18 There is one who speaks like the piercings of a sword, but the tongue of the wise promotes health.
 - b) Ps 64:3 (Speaks of those) Who sharpen their tongue like a sword, and bend *their bows to shoot their arrows--bitter words*

- VI) YET: The *worst form* of speech occurs when things are said about God and salvation that are untrue
 - a) Those who do not know Him, or do not respect the bible often speak of what *they do not know*
 - 1) Their unbelief often harms the innocent faith of the young: as occurs in some college classes

- VII) WORSE YET: Are the *false teachers* who promote a false gospel
 - a) 2 Pe 2:1-2 But there were also false prophets in Israel, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will cleverly teach their destructive heresies about God and even turn against their Master who bought them. Theirs will be a swift and terrible end. Many will follow their evil teaching and shameful immorality. And because of them, Christ and his true way will be slandered (NLT)

- VIII) WITH THIS IN MIND: *Bible teachers* have a tremendous responsibility as they teach the church
 - a) They are responsible to teach *accurately* and *thoroughly* God's word
 - 1) Mt 28:20 teaching them to observe *all things* that I have commanded you

2) 1 Co 3:10-12 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed *how he builds* on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

IX) AS WE BEGIN: We must remember that James has already warned Christians to *guard their speech*

a) He has made this clear in various portions of this letter: 1:19, 26, 2:12

1) HIS POINT: If a person claims to know the Lord, his speech will reveal whether this is true

2) Lu 6:45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

I) GUARDING ONE'S SPEECH: Is a basic and *general* discipline of a Christian believer

a) WHY? Because Christians, *of all people*, ought to understand the power of the *spoken word*

1) It is one of the most basic ways of how God's love for man is communicated

2) Eph 4:29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

II) THE FACT IS: It is through the power of the spoken word (preaching/teaching) that people are saved

a) Ro 10:14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a *preacher*?

III) THE GENERAL BODY OF CHRIST: Is instructed to be careful with our speech

a) YET: There is a special responsibility placed on the Teacher of God's word

IV) V1 MY BRETHEREN: Let not many of you become teachers knowing that we shall receive a stricter

a) CONTEXT: Too many were attempting to teach what they themselves did not clearly comprehend

1) God has placed teachers in the body of Christ for the purpose of instructing how to live

2) Eph 4:11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers

3) 1 Th 4:1 Finally then, brethren, we urge and exhort in the Lord Jesus that you should abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God

4) OBVIOUSLY: Teachers are necessary, but incompetent and unworthy ones do much harm

V) FACT: *Bible teachers* have the responsibility of teaching *God's word* to people

a) BECAUSE IT IS GOD'S WORD: They are especially subject to a stricter judgment (4:17)

1) Lu 12:48: For to whomever much is given, of him shall be much required:

VI) THEY NEED TO BE SO: Because of the *importance* of the message of salvation (wholeness)

a) THE GOSPEL: Must be communicated faithfully, without alteration because it heals us

1) Dt 12:32 Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it.

2) Gal 1:8-9 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed (doomed to destruction).

VII) V2 FOR: *We all stumble* in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word he is a perfect man

a) TEACHERS: Have more opportunity to speak about God and His kingdom

1) We have more opportunity to stumble in word and can easily misrepresent God to His people

2) Pr 10:19 In the multitude of words sin is not lacking, But he who restrains his lips *is* wise.

VIII) BECAUSE THIS IS TRUE: The teacher must *be certain* he is teaching God's Word accurately

a) 2 Ti 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, *rightly dividing* the word of truth.

IX) ALSO: He is not to present the latest wind of doctrine or the latest popular ideas, but timeless truth

a) 2 Ti 2:1-2 You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also *be qualified to teach* others.

I) THOSE WHO FAIL TO TEACH: The Bible accurately are spiritually dangerous

a) FACT: When necessary, they are even to be pointed out, warning young believers to avoid them

1) Ro 16:17-18 I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them. For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people.

II) V2 IF ANYONE: Does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man able to bridle the whole body

a) POINT: Being accurate in what you say reveals a heart that is mature in the things of the Lord

1) If you are disciplined in your speech your whole manner of life will also be disciplined

2) You actually *live out* what *you say* you really *believe*

III) V3-4 INDEED: We put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us and we turn their whole body

a) ILLUSTRATION: Both the horse and the ship are examples of things controlled:

1) COMPARISON: With life or without life, *both* are steered or controlled by a master

IV) V5 EVEN SO: The tongue is a little member and *boasts* great things. See how great a forest a little fire

a) Like a small flame kindling dry brush, our words can destroy

- 1) **FACT:** Many teachers are *fantastic orators*, and can stir the emotions
- V) **KEY:** The problem is, if the people stirred are untaught, or taught incorrectly, it is harmful
- a) Human nature does not require too much prompting to erupt in response
- VI) **V6-8 AND THE TONGUE IS A FIRE:** A world of *iniquity* (Unrighteousness of heart and life)
- a) An unguarded tongue inflames and destroys instead of bringing healing
 - 1) The tongue (speech) can be used to *reveal* as well as to *ignite* evil passions
 - 2) Mt 27:20-21 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. The governor answered and said to them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" They said, "Barabbas!"
 - 3) Without *the power of the Holy Spirit*, we would simply reveal the evil of our own hearts
- VII) **V7-8 FOR:** Every kind of beast and bird of reptile and creature of the sea is tamed and has been
- a) **THOUGHT:** The tongue is ungovernable and there is no power *in man* to keep it under control
 - 1) We can tame animals that are savage, but cannot tame our speech
 - 2) **SADLY:** Instead of bringing peace and community, we can use our speech to destroy
- VIII) **V9 WITH IT:** We bless our God and Father and with it we curse men who have been made in the
- a) The tongue is used to bless God and to curse men who were created in God's image
 - 1) **Similitude:** Image or likeness; though severely impaired, it is not wiped out completely
- IX) **THROUGH OUR SPEECH:** We reveal our lives and our *genuine* religion (1:26)
- a) Our speech betrays the hidden contents of our hearts
 - 1) Mt 12:33-35 Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.
- I) **V10 OUT:** Of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren these things ought not to
- a) The same person can use the tongue for flowery speech and praise to God
 - 1) Yet they also can destroy people with the same ease
- II) **V11 DOES:** A spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening?
- a) Reminiscent of the Jordan emptying into the Dead Sea
 - 1) Use your words to promote love and wholeness
- III) **V12 CAN:** A fig tree my brethren bear olives or a grapevine bear figs?
- a) **CONTEXT:** False teachers will never produce words of life

1) Mt 7:17-19 Even so every good tree brings forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

IV) **MOST IMPORTANTLY:** Listen to what God has to say to you and do not give in to inner voices
a) Noah would not have built an ark, Moses would not have spoken in God's Name, David would not have fought Goliath, the Apostle Peter would have remained in the boat

V) **WHAT DOES GOD SAY ABOUT US:**

We are new creatures in Christ 2 Co 5:17

We are redeemed from the kingdom of darkness Col 1:12

We are overcomers through the blood and the word of our testimony Rev 12:11

We are more than conquerors through Christ Who Loved us Ro 8:37

We are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ Ro 8:17.

We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ Eph. 1:3