

The Power of Words

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[0:00] places one particular time preaching in Cambodia and I've gotten a great opportunity to preach in different mission contexts whether it was Cambodia or Nicaragua or Honduras or different places and it's interesting all over the world it's it's so much the same preaching in the middle of a rice paddy you know just under a tin roof muddy ground and 100 people gathered there and the kids are all over the place the whole time I mean they're just they're in the service they're they're among us sometimes on top of us and as I'm preaching there's been a few times where in those moments there have been great distractions I mean trying to preach and stay focused when a cow walks through or when they're trying to get a hold of a bull and the bull is threatening to come through the door or chickens non-stop and and dogs you know just all over you just get used to the distractions in those those contexts and and especially the kids because they they're just kids they're gonna be kids right and and so that's why we say we love our kids in here with us but in this one particular time I was preaching the distractions were so bad as I'm trying to preach and there was a table set up one kid was hanging on underneath the communion table and as I'm preaching he's swinging back and forth underneath the table there I know another couple of kids break out the fight down in the front and then to top it all off for the hat trick one very small kid he's probably just old enough to walk probably he made his way up to the platform and then he urinated off the side and and with that I say if your kids are doing less than that praise the Lord okay just praise the Lord I'm not trying to give ideas to any kids this morning but just to say we love our kids in here and it is it's always great to have them as a part of our worship we're raising a generation of kids to worship the Lord we want them in here with us we want them to see us worshipping we want them to learn to worship from us so many churches it's a segmented time where all of our kids are sent off all over the place and the problem with that comes into play later when these kids grow up not really knowing how to worship with their family and and I just want to encourage you if your kids are here today we love your kids and we're glad they're here there's coloring pages back there if they need to be occupied a little if you need to go outside to the room next door take them out there for a minute let them get it out of their system whatever but they are welcome here and we love them this morning we are talking in the book of this epistle of James and we're continuing on I had great ambition of going from chapter 3 verse 1 to verse 12 I mean I was I was like I'm gonna really push through I want to I don't want to get bogged down in this and yet as I said from the beginning we're crawling through this book because there's so much you know I mean every every few words it's like proverbs some of you been reading through proverbs these last few weeks and in your daily reading and and the the thing is it's so packed that it's hard to just just breathe through it so I I told

Lucas this week I'm a man I'm gonna do all 12 verses man it's gonna be awesome so today we're gonna cover the first two it is it is parallel to what some of you did read in proverbs this week in when you were reading through proverbs 18 when Solomon said death and life are in the power of the tongue death and life and and really this shift that's taking place in chapter 3 what which is now spending an enormous amount of content on our words is is really just one expression of genuine faith where where he described it in the context of works our words are part of our works and you see the evidence of the expression of a genuine worship in somebody's life you can see it on in their works we're not justified by our works although he said that in there he said well we're justified by works but he's given you the bigger picture that we are that it's our works that is justifying our faith which is justifying us so in a sense yes we're we're being justified by works but the focus he's giving here is on the works the evidence of five or six just intense examples that are giving us different aspects of the the power of our words and the power that words have on us and and so as i looked at that i was thinking well i could cover all five of those things or so and each one of those would be a point and so i started i i i kind of outlined the big outline and then i started looking at the first one and i was like how are you going to cover that in just one sermon and you know what happens i get going and then i can't stop and then it's like 12 o'clock or whatever and so rather than than do that to you i said you know what i'm just going to go with the first two verses because it's it's the substance there i think is great i think the issue if we were looking to look at one issue of the word this morning it would be the issue of influence influence i thought of this as i read through this passage uh because i heard the story about billy graham when he was 92 years old right before he died and billy graham has been an influential preacher in america there's few people that are over age probably 35 few people that wouldn't know who billy graham is younger than that you may or may not know but really influential in america and probably later in his life dealing with parkinson's and whatever his theology was a little you know kind of questionable at times but you got to cut it in some slack he did at parkinson's right we know others that way right now but but but at 92 it was right before his 93rd birthday in the city of charlotte north carolina was putting on a luncheon for him and they're just celebrating because he's a you know charlotte boy raised born and raised and and so they were putting a luncheon on in his honor and he at first declined to go because he's 92 and he can't speak anymore and they just assured him we don't want you to speak you just come we want to honor you you just come and let us honor you and so they went through a series of people just saying all kinds of nice words about him and all of this and then they they they you know just gave him the microphone for a second just to say thank you but he he said he went on in good preacher fashion uh went and said a little more but he told him the story about albert einstein and he said uh there was a time when albert einstein was honored and in his words he said he was honored by time magazine as the man of the century einstein was once traveling from princeton on a train when a conductor came down the aisle punching the tickets of every passenger when he came to einstein einstein reached into his vest pocket and he couldn't find his ticket he reached into his trousers pocket and he couldn't find his ticket i can imagine billy graham saying he couldn't find his ticket he wasn't there he looked at the conductor said dr einstein i need you about it einstein nodded appreciatively the conductor continued down the aisle punching tickets as he was ready to move to the next car he turned around and he saw the great physicist down on his hands and knees looking under the seat for his ticket the conductor rushed back and said dr einstein dr einstein don't worry i know who you are no problem you don't need a ticket i'm sure you bought one i know who you are einstein looked at him and said young man i too know who i am what i don't know is where i'm going and having said that billy graham said he said i came here this morning and i bought a new suit my my children told me that i was looking sloppy in my old age so i bought a new suit for this occasion and for one morning and you know what that next occasion is it's when they bury me he said but in that moment when they bury me do not think about the suit but but know this i know who i am and i know where i'm going as i thought about that i mean i'm thinking about the influence of somebody like that and the confidence that they have in their relationship with christ and i think about the epistle of james because this really is what james is getting at for you who are a believer in christ you you're claiming to be a believer in jesus you have been influenced by the person and the work of christ and the entire letter of james now is an epistle that's supposed to work for you in the way that you're you're doing this constant self-examination of yourself so that you can know who you are and have confidence in that and so that you can be assured in where you're going i don't want to go through this life aimlessly not realizing where i'm headed with this but i need to understand that if jesus

christ has called me if jesus christ has raised me from the dead he has a destination for my life a purpose for me and i on my way to that destination am to be a person of influence so that i can influence everyone around me for christ this is so critical here so james chapter 2 is focusing on the works james chapter 3 is now honing in on our words

and we could talk about this for a month he dedicates a whole chapter to it i think we could probably go through section by section and still not do it complete justice for what he's intended this for the reader and i believe what the holy spirit has intended for us today james taught that the tongue is an instrument of speech but it has significant accountability and significant influence and it reveals the condition of our soul the necessity of aligning our soul with god it there's there's great power here and so what we want to recognize is the power and responsibility of our words but we want to recognize the power of god's word to influence us james chapter 3 and let's stand we're going to read just a couple of verses here this morning beginning in verse 1 of chapter 3 not many of you should become teachers my brothers for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness for we all stumble in many ways and if anyone does not stumble in what he says he is a perfect man able to bridle his whole body father may you bless the reading of your word may you speak to us today may you guide us the influence of your word to be a people of influence with our words i pray father that you would just bless our time together and may you just be with us we just love you and we praise you lord it's in christ's name we pray amen amen you may be seated so let's just consider these first couple of verses here these examples as you see in verse one starting with teachers teachers is uh certainly a primary application in what he's saying but in the larger context the ships also though they are large driven by the wind and guided by very small rudder and then he moves on to uh the end of verse five how great a forest fire is ablaze by such a small fire and the tongue is a fire he says a world of unrighteousness and then verse seven for every kind of beast can be tamed by mankind but no man can tame the tongue example example example example example and in this it gives you just some different highlights to see another facet of the importance of our words the words of those people who are going to influence those around them you're a believer in christ here this morning if you are you desperately want to be a person of influence for jesus you say well i don't know that i want that you must not know him right because if you know jesus then the holy spirit is living inside of you and a transformation has taken place that affects your whole life it affects the crisis points of your life so that he said you know though you're you're challenged or in you know chapter one as he talked about it count it all joy brothers when you meet various trials of all kinds knowing that the testing of your faith produces faith patience i mean you're facing crisis in your life and joy is going to be the characteristic of a mature believer in those moments because you've been so changed by jesus and if you're not finding the joy the encouragement the challenge is for you to do some introspection to see is this a point where i'm just struggling in my life or is this characteristic of a deep heart problem because i don't know jesus because if i know him it's going to affect the way i look at the crisis of my life the trials the testing it's going to affect the way i question god even as he went through to define in chapter one this example is not just for tea and then i think should anybody be teaching this is this is serious teachers are warned of a stricter judgment because their words have potential to guide the whole body not only their body physically their body but but it seems like the illusion here is to the whole body that we're talking about leaders in the assembly of the churches that are scattered and these assemblies he's talking about a teacher in these assemblies you in these assemblies but it's not just to the teachers it's to you as you listen and think well here's the example of teachers but what does that mean for me importance of your words the influence of teachers can shape beliefs and it can shape behavior and so can yours they're doing it and there there is a special role that they play and and we need to consider that role but that is not isolated to them it's it's all of us and you have to ask yourself why would anybody aspire to be a teacher now the scripture says a few things about why i think first timothy 3 1 says it says the same this saying is trustworthy if anyone aspires to the office of overseer he desires a noble task and it is no it's it's huge it's a it's a task of grandeur meaning it's it's important in its responsibility it's important in its gravity it's important important in its effects it's big it's also big in its responsibility and it's big in the grief that comes along with it sometimes and it's big and the trouble that's associated with it it is a big deal but some people may want that because of position position and and they may aspire to that for position i've seen this in seminary students when i was in seminary and even after i hear this so often is somebody in seminary says well i'm just i'm just teaching in a small church right now but i'm looking for a bigger platform and i'm like lord don't give them a bigger platform please position the prestige

that comes along with a position like that can be perceived from somebody and they see it as something glamorous you know oh man that's a glamorous job what a what a what an awesome thing it would be to be a teacher and and teaching on sunday morning the the spotlights on you the camera's pointed to you your words are on the screen sometimes people are applauding they're laughing at your jokes right you're laughing at my jokes or not jesus said be careful about this matthew 23 jesus said they talking about the pharisees he said they do all their deeds to be seen by others for they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long and they love the place of honor [19:56] they love the best seats in the synagogue and the greetings in the marketplace and being called rabbi by others they love it and if you don't think that's true of people in teaching positions whether it's in a church or a small group or wherever it is it happens way more than we'd like to admit and it was happening in the churches in james's time or maybe the desire for power jesus addressed that in matthew 20 25 jesus called his disciples together he said hey guys be careful about what we're doing here be careful jesus called them together and said you know that the rulers of the gentiles lorded over them and their great ones exercise authority over them it shall not be so among you but whoever would be great among you must be your servant and whoever would be first among you must be your slave even as the son of man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many you want to be a teacher you can't even be a student what makes you think you're going to be a teacher that's going to be effective and a person of influence for the kingdom of god if you don't learn to even be a student yourself or a slave you notice how he says it here in verse one not many of you should become teachers my brethren for you know that we who teach we who teach james is saying i'm in this category we who teach you among the assembly those of you that are called to teach specifically primary leaders i mean james is is not just your average teacher he's not calling attention to the fact that he himself is the primary teacher in the church of jerusalem i mean of all the people that could claim something and to say something about himself being a teacher this would be the time to brag on himself and he doesn't say he just says hey we i'm included with you we who teach we when he uses the word teachers here it's the greek word didaskalos which means to instruct or to impart knowledge so when something's didactic we say that's teaching it's of a teaching quality uh so so some passages are more didactic passages meaning it's direct teaching where some might be like a narrative kind of a story so you read through a story and it's going to teach you something but it's not specifically like point one two and three this is how you pray that's a teaching passage it's didactic uh didaskalos is meaning teaching it's instruction it's imparting knowledge in this this time in the church it's not just speaking of general teaching although it does speak of general teaching in this context he's talking about the those called to teaching the teacher those of you are called to be the teacher in the church or someone of an important role an official office of teaching you look through the scripture and there is an expectation that all of us teach right i mean all of us should be teaching something somewhere in some sphere all of us deuteronomy 6 6 tells parents you're to be teaching your kids right you have a responsibility to teach your kids dads you have a responsibility with your wife to teach your kids it's not your wife's responsibility your responsibility don't don't leave that here she does all the spiritual things i teach all the

practical things no you have a responsibility before god to be a teacher of god's word and his truth these words i command you today shall be on your heart you shall teach them diligently to your children shall talk of them when you sit in your house when you walk by the way when you lie down and when you rise you may not be much of a talker your responsibility still is to be a teacher to

speaking in your home bring them bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the lord and for all believers as a believer in christ if you're a follower of jesus you have a responsibility to pass on the gospel by explaining the gospel to people this is a teaching aspect in your life as matthew 28 19 says therefore go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the father the son and the holy spirit teaching them to observe whatsoever i've commanded you you are a teacher you are teaching the gospel and then you are teaching those who receive the gospel all of us are called to be disciple makers in that way so this is personal it's not just the teacher we're all going to do it on some informal basis and then in this context there are some called to the specific office and we can all learn something as we look at that office as he's holding it up even paul when paul taught about this role of teacher he was talking about something very specific first corinthians 12 28 and god has appointed in the church first apostles second prophets third teachers he's talking about something very specific here unlike a prophet who's going to transmit revelation new revelation to the two believers that's not the role of a teacher a teacher is not giving new prophecy a teacher is explaining prophecy that's been given our role as a teacher in the church is to take prophetic words of god which is all can take right here reliable trustworthy i'm to take the revelation of god and i am to teach that i'm to make the sense of it i have a responsibility not just to come with my own ideas and clever sermons and man all my outlines are super poetic and elaborate and my jokes are all funny and my stories are all detailed and detailed and i can captivate an audience and i can manipulate your spirit all day long that's not my job i'm actually contrary to popular opinion i'm not an entertainer okay although i can juggle i can do a few tricks uh but that's not my role and in fact on sunday morning i need to be very careful when i'm presenting god's word that i don't just focus on the mechanics of what i'm doing but focus on the content of what i'm communicating second timothy 2 2 the things you've seen of me paul said among many witnesses the same commit to others who will teach others also in this moment in the biblical context this role of teacher in many ways was being equated with the rabbi in the jewish synagogue and you can see the natural progression of that that that that somebody that's in the assembly of believers being the one the primary focus of teaching

is going to be he's going to look at for look look to for a lot but the danger for him is that he would fall into a love for the position and the prestige and the power instead of the christ who should hold all the prestige that are going to help us be people of influence number one he speaks of the incredible difficulty of this role the incredible difficulty i want you to notice how he says it in verse three not many of you there is a problem in the context of the church where apparently many of them were aspiring to be the leaders because this did seem like a power position for them to be in everybody that teaches needs to be careful in this this is a very difficult thing as he goes on to explain you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness not many of you should become teachers because we will be judged with a greater strictness for we all stumble in many ways and if anyone does not stumble in what he says he is a perfect man able to bridle his whole body this is a universal problem about the teaching of god's word is that there are dangers in this to be considered uh there even in our own time we see false teachers arising all the time everybody's got a blog site everybody's got a recording you want to search for a sermon online you don't know who to listen to because there's a thousand sermons on every passage of scripture online and you're like well which one do i go with i mean whose blog do i listen or read and whose whose uh podcast do i listen to i don't know there's so many there's books a million of them about these passages of scripture and and you can get caught up in all kinds of weird stuff it's difficult not everybody should do this but we also need to be careful not everybody that teaches that even when they teach wrongly even though there's there's difficulty in this everybody's not a heretic even when they get it wrong sometimes it may be heresy it may be a wrong teaching but everybody's not a heretic i appreciated what rc sproul and al moeller were saying in a discussion in a panel group one time they were talking about heresy false teaching and in this discussion uh sproul and moeller are talking about different theologians and and heresy and doctrinal error and then uh sproul said something like he said heresy strikes at the very heart of the gospel there's not just a small mistake often it's a departure from the truth that can lead people astray this responsibility of teachers is important because it's so difficult stay on course moeller agreed but he also said however we must also recognize that not everyone who holds a mistaken belief is a heretic some may simply be confused some may have misunderstood a complex doctrine it's crucial to approach these situations with discernment with grace sproul goes on and he says yes indeed we must differentiate between those who are willfully spreading false teachings and those who are genuinely seeking the

truth but have erred it's such the danger our goal should be to to guide and to correct with a spirit of love and patience always pointing back to the scripture the truth of scripture we must be vigilant against heresy but we must be compassionate toward those who are mistaken the aim is always a restoration and clarity of the truth of god's word because herein is the difficulty many stumble he said we all stumble in fact he said all of us stumble in all kinds of things how many of you don't stumble any hands yeah means to lose one's footing right as the service was started one of one of uh lucas's kids were up here you're all stumble it's a universal problem all of us stumble in many ways verse two for we all stumble in many ways and if anyone does not stumble stumble means to lose your footing in this context it's a challenge it's like a guy that's trying to communicate in english and it's not his first language and you've got to be gracious to those people i was in that context living in northwest uh north yeah northwest uh central asia we'll say it that way uh as i was living there just being you know i couldn't speak chinese very well i i couldn't speak uighur very well and people had pity on me at times and would come and help me i'm so grateful but it's like the guy that english wasn't his first language and he's trying to explain that his wife's pregnant he goes to the doctor and he says uh my wife she is unbearable the doctor's confused he said uh you are saying she's unbearable the man shakes his head he says no no no no no i mean i mean what's the word she's impregnable and he says no that's not it either he shakes his head he said i'm trying to find the right word my wife yes i know it my wife she's inconceivable all kinds of forms of words that are just a little off that carry such a different meaning and this is the danger of teaching and the danger with your words be careful with many words for the teacher even peter said second peter 1 10 brothers be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election for if you practice these things these qualities you'll never fall that that's something that a teacher could really take hold of but that wasn't just for a teacher that was for everybody it's it's understand the difficulty and the complexity of what we're teaching and be careful with it be cautious with it be careful with your words you are a person of influence and if you're not careful with your words you're running to trouble paul said in romans 7 i do not understand my own actions sometimes i i don't do what i want but i do the things that i hate now if i do what i want i agree with the law that's good so now it's no longer i who do it but the sin that dwells in me for now i know nothing good dwells in me that is in my flesh for i have the desire to do what's right but not the ability to carry it out carry it out for i do not do the good that i want but the evil that i want is that i keep on doing oh wretched man that i am a wretched man that i am who will deliver me from this body of dead thanks be to god through jesus christ our lord so then i myself served the law with my mind but with my flesh i served the law but thanks for christ he's the influence of my life it's the direction of my life that's changed i'm not perfect no but the direction of my christ i am rooted in the person and in the work of christ and because of that i can look at the difficulty and know that jesus is the only one that rescues me from the difficulty of this task aren't you glad keep our eyes on jesus and we keep our ear bent to his word we have to keep reforming ourselves back to scripture over and over again and he will provide the wisdom for the crisis and he will give the answer for the deepest questions of our life and he will help us when we're questioning in the circumstances and give us peace that passes understanding that's why he doesn't start off saying i'm the teacher of jerusalem but he starts off saying i am a servant of the lord jesus christ the incredible difficulty of the task the incredible accountability secondly is what he's looking at here the incredible accountability of our words in the role of the teacher he says something very specific for the teacher make note of this all of you who want to be teachers that you will receive a stricter judgment comes from the word crema which means severe judgment or evaluation critical evaluation it doesn't mean the same thing but as i hear that word if i'm memorizing that i'm thinking yeah you're going to get creamed crema it doesn't mean that at all but at the end is about the same you're going to be judged more strictly you're going to be evaluated the words that you say are important we're in a political time right now right and so you think of this in terms of politicians leaders in our country do we hang on every word they say right i mean we do we they say something they make a gaffe and man it's huge and and both sides will catch a gaffe from the other side and they'll hang on it the timing may be wrong or the word may be wrong and and boy it'll be oh it's it's game on i mean biden's saying we're going to put trump in the bullseye now now some of us may think that that was very strategic in what he said okay i may be among that group but some may say well that was just a timing thing he wasn't thinking about what he's saying i can't answer for him i don't know what it was but boy aren't words important the timing of it it isn't just what you say it's how you say it stricter judgment for you if you're a teacher even for i was reading about that looking at gaps and things that politicians did

1984 ronald reagan was doing a mic check before he did an address to the american people and in the mic check he said in five minutes we will begin bombing moscow it was just a mic check everybody in the room apparently laughed and it was a funny moment i guess he was a pretty funny guy and so i mean i could imagine doing that sitting there yeah yeah five minutes we'll begin bombing moscow well that the recording of that leaked out and when the recording of that leaked out moscow and the entire russian military was put on full alert because of one little word that he said and what james is saying is he said you who teach all of you there's a lot of people that are wanting to be teachers be careful about this because what you may not be realizing is that those who teach have a much stricter accountability part of it is temporal it's here people hear what i say and they'll criticize what i say can i get an amen right i i say something on a sunday morning and and i'm saying a lot of stuff right and the possibility for me to mess up is great and if i say something wrong or don't think and say something uh it can be a big deal

[40:21] and he's saying it's not only that case here but it's going to be a stricter judgment not just temporally but eternally at the judgment seat of christ all of us are going to give an account and that's inherent in this that that all of us are going to give an account for our words you are going to give an account for everything that you said today in the car on the way to church last night before you went to bed when you were putting the kids to bed last night when you got in an argument with each other when you talk to your boss everything that you say all the words that come out of your mouth one day are going to come out at the judgment seat there's not one single moment that's going to be it's going to escape that that that time and and james is saying listen you're you got to think of this for those talking about those preaching he said it is no light thing to stand before the congregation of god's people and to speak to them in god's name it is a burden that bows the heart it often bows the body to when a true minister of christ thinks of the weight of the souls that hang on his lips of the responsibilities which his office brings to him and of the account which he must one day render to his master he might well say who is sufficient for these things it is the burden of the lord he will not seek to please men but to save them he will not aim at popularity but at fidelity he will not seek his own honor but the honor of his master if he thinks rightly in this the burden of the lord will be upon him and he will be pressed in spirit until he has delivered his message and that is true for the preacher but what james is getting at is true for all of us i need to make application of that to my heart my life i as a teacher of god's word should think with great gravity every time i stand and open this book and i do i sometimes i'm way down with it i'm studying during the week and i'm thinking lord i don't know what to say i'm gonna get up there sunday morning what am i what do you want me to say i don't know what to say i'm studying and i'm studying and i'm looking up words and i'm looking up context i'm looking up history and i'm looking up the application and i'm reading books i'm researching researching and i'm praying and i'm just wrestling sometimes i will just lay on the floor and we just lay on the floor and i'm looking up to keep because i don't want to get it wrong i don't want to lead people astray i also don't want to bore people with god's word and make them hate god's word the weight of it because it's a calling in my life i'd rather do nothing else in the world and yet i'm burdened with it and i can't get away from it and i love it and i'm weighed down and crushed by it but i think james probably feels this i'm gonna give an account from every word

but as you see that in the teacher james is saying that to the whole group to say this is how we should all feel about our words everything you say should be treated this way you are a child of god your whole life is dedicated to proclaiming the truth of god's word you are a preacher of the gospel your life is surrounded by the truth of god and you're filled with this holy spirit your role now is to go communicate it what are you saying have you said anything in this last week that would tell

somebody about the love of jesus has there been one word on your lips that pointed somebody to christ to say be careful for what you say and what you don't say matthew 12 he's only saying what jesus said out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks the good person out of the good treasure brings the good he gets us the evil person out of evil treasure brings evil i tell you on the day of judgment people will give an account for every careless word they speak for by your words you will be justified and by your words you will be condemned because it's only illustrating on the outside the condition of your heart are your words subject to christ the wisdom of god remember that's kind of the theme that he's been running with ask of god who gives wisdom it's the wisdom of god that plays itself out in expression and is that showing in your mouth in the words that you say and then third not just the great accountability of our words but then yes ultimately the influence of them a bridle a bit notice how he says it for we all stumble in many ways if anyone does not stumble in what he says he is a perfect man able to bridle the whole body and then he goes into the example of the horse with the bit at first it's starting with the teacher then it goes to the horse and then the ship and then the animals and all these other or the fire then the animals and and maybe a couple more bridle this is the verb form to bridle something of the same word which means the bit the noun is the bit and the verb is to bridle something so you're you're bridling i don't know if that is the connection of the word bride like she's been she's now controlled i don't know i don't know how that etymology works so i'm not going to say that i'm not going to go there because i'm going to be careful for my words but the the issue is one of control it's like the the bit is in there to control the horse is to keep it from going it is to keep it from running on its own it's to keep it from going according to its own will now it's it's there's a bit put in and it bridles the tongue and so he says if anyone does not stumble in what he says he's a perfect man able to bridle the whole body so this bridle in his mouth is now able to affect the whole body and you see the influence of his words on his whole life so the words in the life of this teacher then are going to influence his whole life so when you hear what he says

then you look at his life and see if it's so right and and and the the secondary implication of this is that as a teacher of the body of christ you can't walk away from it so many commentaries look at that and say he must be getting at this issue of the teacher influencing the body of christ because it's the same body there the same word is used to describe the body of christ the teacher's influence can influence the whole body and when he teaches something wrong it's going to influence a lot of people in a wrong direction or if he teaches something right it's going to influence people in a right direction and and it's going to change the course of the whole body why it is so important that you look very critically about who's going to be the teachers in the church because those people are going to guide the direction of the whole church don't let many of you become teachers he said you're going to give a greater account your accountability is great but understand that your influence is going to be great so you look at this in the life of the teacher and you go yeah i can see that true and the application is and so is yours it's to you in the assembly scattered assembly john mcarthur said teaching god's word is a great privilege but it's also a great responsibility those who teach are held to a higher standard because they influence others so directly it is not something to be entered lightly rc spurl said the same thing he gives a warning about this passage he said the warning of james 3 1 should cause every would-be teacher to pause and consider the gravity of their task the weight of god's judgment on those who mislead his people is a sobering reality it's so true and it's true for you your words i think of teachers like jd greer in the last few years he's been a good whipping boy for conservatives because the things that he said he says things that you i just hear it and i'm like are you kidding me and he's written so many books and he's real popular and people love him and all those kinds of things and i'm like man jd brother watch your mouth the things you're saying are misleading maybe he's speaking out of hyperbole maybe he's saying something so he says something like you know when the we need to love the homosexual because the bible said the bible only whispers about homosexuality and it shouts about other things what are you saying what be careful about your whispers about homosexuality he he he went to sodom and gomorrah with with fire raining out of the sky what a whisper you know uh i mean literally the archaeologists that have studied that area of the world and look at the evidence that sodom and gomorrah say the evidence there resembles the explosion of a nuclear bomb the the blast of the burning substances that were melted at sodom and gomorrah are archaeologically provable that god does not whisper about sin be careful about what you say you're you're leading people astray and people heard that from people like jd greer and ed litten and some other pastors that said that very same phrase because they're plagiarizing each other or whatever

but but they say that same phrase and and people hear it and are like yeah that's right so so andy stanley's church will have homosexuals serving in positions in in the church openly sinful openly that he'll do a gay wedding uh churches even in our own town

uh people come they visit our church they say well i'm going to look around okay go ahead i want to tell them man i know of a few things you might want to know about some of those but i don't i've they've got to find it out for themselves and i pray god will send them to where they need to go but i'm like man there's some of those that there's a homosexual servant in the church on the worship teams got mormons singing it's it's crazy be careful influence how many books do you read in a year if some of you are avid readers you you read a lot some of you haven't picked up a book if you're having to think back the last few years ago see when was high school could you imagine reading 130 books a year i mean literally 130 books that'd be a book every what every couple of days if you did that you would be taking in all kinds of information you'd be learning all kinds of things but i give you that number because there are very few people that would read that many words but it is the amount of words that you speak in one year on average we speak enough words to fill 130 books a year every year you're writing a book it's your life god made us in his image so that every one of us could communicate the gospel in Matthew 28 3 or 23 8 jesus said you're not to be called rabbi for you have one teacher and you're all brothers neither be called instructors for you have one instructor and that is christ his point is christ is the influence and if we we will let christ be the teacher for the teacher and if his word becomes the substance of our life so that his word becomes the bit and god's word becomes the bit i'm not the teacher he's the teacher i take his word and i let it control my behavior and now all of the sudden my will reflects the will reflects the will of the teacher and this is going to be the example we see follow with the horse and his rider and the ship and its captain you're not the captain you're not the writer you're not the teacher christ is the teacher and you're to be the student and you're to be changed you're the father you're the wife you're the parent you're the friend you're the citizen you're the proclaimer of the gospel and we together have to think that it was by words that god set the universe in motion it's by words that god has revealed himself it's by words that he calls us it's by words that he helps us and we are to reflect him in our words paul said it in ephesians 4 let no corrupt talk come out of your mouth but such is good for building up as the occasion fit as fits the occasion that it may give grace to those who hear for colossians 4 6 let your speech always be gracious seasoned with salt so that you may know how you ought to answer each person

as james said before in chapter one know this let every person be quick to hear slow to speak and slow to wrath our words matter can i have every head bowed every eye closed as we come to this invitation time respond to god's word god has spoken and boy does he say a lot about our words your words reveal a lot about your heart some of you may be here this morning and the reality is that christ is not seen as the key teacher of your life because you've never surrendered your life to christ christ scripture says that christ came according to the scriptures the word of god has informed us about the whole purpose of christ coming he came he lived a perfect life he died a substitutionary death for you and for me according to the scriptures and then he was buried according to the scriptures and according to the scriptures he rose again he according to the scriptures he would rise again and then according to the scriptures he did rise again according to the scriptures one day he's coming again and we're going to be judged by every word every word no escape do you know christ is he your savior did he save you from sin is he your lord master of your life is he the teacher father we come before you this morning our prayer is that you you would help us in our self-examination as we look into the mirror of your word i pray father that for some it would reveal that they are not a student of yours but that they would realize that they are their own teacher they're their own student they have not submitted to your lordship they have not sought your forgiveness they have not turned and been changed and because of that lord they don't belong to you lord they need to see it and they'll only see it in this reflection of your word and you'll help them to examine and see the reality of their soul and i pray father that you would reveal that today and some here today are believers in christ and they're walking with you and they're they're trying to speak your truth and they're trying to proclaim the gospel and they're living for you and their their life is is in order it's not perfect but man it's in order it's in the right direction and as they examine themselves lord you're you're giving them a sense of peace that they're on the right track that there's encouragement in this that i i'm in the right direction the trajectory is moving rightly lord we just rejoice in that and i pray that that would continue and they'd be strengthened and that your words that are so influential would become their words and that they would become influential for

you but lord there are some believers here today that and they're struggling in some areas in their life that don't reflect you don't reflect your wisdom and the words of their mouth have not been inspired by you they've said some hateful things they've said some hurtful things they've said some things that they wish they could take back and today lord i pray that they would lay [60:48] that at the altar and seek your forgiveness if we confess our sins he's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us of all unrighteousness and today i pray lord that as they offer that to you that you'd be faithful and just love in the 60s and today you've partmen saver rs Thank you.