

# The Power of Words, pt 2

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[0:00] The spiritual impact in a time like that can be huge, and I'm so, so thankful. So thankful for them. If you find your place in your scriptures, let's go ahead and stand together.

James chapter 3. And I'll begin reading in verse 1. We'll see how far we get this morning. But we'll begin reading in verse 1.

It says this. 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 also to bridle his whole body.

If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well.

Look at the ships also, though they are so large and are driven by strong winds.

[1:04] They are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things.

How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire. And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness.

The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body. Setting on fire the entire course of life. And set on fire by hell.

For every kind of beast and bird and reptile and sea creature can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no human being can tame the tongue.

It is a restless evil full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father. And with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessings and cursing.

[2:05] My brothers, these things ought not be so. Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water? Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives or a grapevine produce figs?

Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water. Father, we hear your word this morning. You've spoken. And our prayer is that we would respond in faith and in obedience today.

Not only seeing the indicators of a changed or transformed heart. But Lord, also knowing that there is with that a responsibility for believers in our sanctification.

To respond to your wisdom and to hear your wisdom and do. And so Lord, I just pray this morning that you would help us to be not only a hearer of the word.

But to be doers of the word. To be changed by the presence of the Son in our life. As the Holy Spirit gives us strength and power.

[3:11] And everything that we need for life and godliness. And so Lord, I pray that you'd bless us this morning as we pursue you. As we have worshipped in song. As we have heard testimony about you at work among our students.

And now as we open up the word together and hear you speak. So Lord, just be with us as we continue in this time together. May Christ be exalted.

And may we be changed. It's in Christ's name we pray. Amen. Amen. Amen. James chapter 3. What a great, great passage of scripture.

As I was thinking about this, I was reminded of the story that was told of the man that was out fishing on the pier.

Some of you are fishermen. You love to fish. I understand that. This guy had been on the pier for hours. Hadn't caught anything. Just as two women walked out on the pier, he finally pulls in a fish.

[4:19] And it wasn't very big. In fact, it was really small. And one of the women took it upon herself to rebuke this guy. And say, aren't you ashamed of yourself?

It's so cruel of you to just pull out this little fish. Aren't you embarrassed? And the man, without even looking up. Because obviously he was probably a little discouraged anyway.

He said, ma'am, you may be right. But if the fish had kept its mouth shut, he wouldn't have been caught. And I thought about that because really this is the issue.

So much of what James is talking about here in James chapter 3. But really so much in this whole epistle. He's dealing with a lot about the tongue.

Because the tongue is actually such an indicator of the state of the heart. And also, it's one of those areas to maintain in our sanctification.

[5:24] As we grow in our relationship with the Lord. So it's both an indicator and it's really instructive. Somebody once said, actions don't always speak louder than words.

Your tongue can undo everything you do. And it's true. I look around in our country today. And I can't help but mention, of course, the nonsense going on with the Olympics and its opening.

And just the repulsive, I think, nature of that opening ceremony of the Olympics.

Obviously, it is filled with, if you haven't seen it, it is filled with all kinds of debauchery and images of transgenderism and homosexuality. Which is bad enough.

But the homosexual man that designed this opening time, opening ceremony, mixed those images of such debauchery with a picture of the Christian heritage that France also has to be inclusive of all people.

[6:40] And so created a scene to imitate Da Vinci's Lord's Supper setting. And in so doing, having a bunch of transgender and homosexual people to depict Christ and the disciples.

And a mixing of these images. Now, on the outset, I'll say a couple of things. One, I'm not celebrating the iconic value of the picture of the Lord's Supper.

In that we don't want to make graven images of the Lord. I'm not celebrating that. To depict the Lord in pictures like that can be a sinful thing.

So I'm not necessarily pointing that out. That's not the issue here. The lost people that have portrayed this don't necessarily know about the icons and their value and replacing that with Christ. But what they do know is that they're mixing the imagery of Christ with some very sinful, clearly evil practices.

[7:50] Which are mixed also, not just with the transgenderism and homosexuality, but with children involved. So that now it's all mixed, this child grooming kind of stuff with the debauched living and just a terrible picture.

And so on the one hand, I want to denounce that. Because it is just so... Ideas of Christianity.

Whether or not he was using the icon or the Da Vinci's picture or not. He was clearly and intentionally mixing the ideas of something very evil with the Son of God.

To which I will respond, I'm against it. And I'll never be for it. Now, I'm not against the athletes that have trained all the last four years to be competing in these things.

I'm not against them. That's not the point of this. But the point is, this whole picture is a picture of evil. And that itself is a picture of evil.

[9:05] But the other part of this is that Christians are not outpaced enough to turn it off. So for me, I'm like, where is the voice of Christianity speaking up and saying, this is evil.

And I'm not going to support this. And so I know the posts already that have come out, other Christian people saying, oh, but we're making a big deal about this. Evil people are going to be evil. Evil people. And they are. But Christian people are going to speak truth. And we must. And so I don't know what that has to do with the sermon.

But it needed to be said. I think we're living in a world that is just giving such mixed messages. And the reality is the things that we say are important.

Our words are important. Our founding fathers put together the Constitution of the United States. And the first foundational freedom that is articulated is the freedom of speech.

[10:16] Why? Because they recognize that this idea of speech is critical. It's so important. Because if you speak truth, it affects things.

And if you speak things that are untrue, it affects things. We believe in the end the truth wins out. If you let the truth speak, it wins. They realize experientially if people don't have the right to speak out against tyranny, tyrants will control the world.

So you've got to speak up against it. And you have to have the freedom to do that. When Nazis rose in Germany, much of the rise and much of the maintenance of Nazi ideology had to do with speech.

It was through propaganda and through censorship. Propaganda promoting certain ideas, communicating them in so many ways, and the shutting down of communication.

Because they understood if you control speech, you influence the whole. Joseph Goebbels in Germany controlled the media arts.

[11:29] He controlled radio, the broadcasting, speeches that were made, loudspeakers in public. All of these things were controlling the message.

Because they understood if you control speech, you influence the whole. Any ideas that conveyed anti-Nazi ideas were censored.

Newspapers, radio, motion pictures, theater, books. The burning of books was huge at some of these Nuremberg rallies in 1933.

They understood that if you control speech, you influence the whole. The voice of the church was silenced. Catholic priests and Protestant pastors alike, like Martin Miemöller and Dietrich Bonhoeffer, sent to concentration camps and ultimately executed.

Why? Because they understood the reality of this principle, that if you control speech, you influence the whole. And we see it in our country right now, even among Democratic Party leaders opposing viewpoints, controlling posts, influencing social media to suppress and throttle opinions, because they know that if you control speech, you will influence the whole.

[12:53] We learn to speak and we learn the power and influence of speech from the time we are an infant.

These children in this room that are hearing, all the things they're hearing in this room are being influenced today. As some studies have shown, as they've done MRI scans of babies, when emotional sounds are played, such as laughing or crying, but also and especially when they hear a human voice, those scans will show and prove that even babies will exercise in their temporal cortex, the place in your brain where all of your advanced skills are being worked out, semantic processing, language, etc.

Even in their infancy, the same areas of their brain are being stimulated. It's fundamental to who we are. This idea of speech is critical.

Someone pointed out that it takes a baby two years to learn to talk, and it takes the rest of us 50 years to learn to shut our mouths. Amen? Amen. The issue is serious.

And the Scripture is not ignorant to this. In fact, as you read through the Scripture, you realize how important, how powerful speech is.

[14:24] And your speech, in particular, as you're a believer, is something that you've got to pay attention to because of the potential for it to do great things.

You can boast, as he said in this passage. Great things. You can start a huge fire. There's great realities to this that can be for good or for evil.

You control your speech. You can influence the whole. And whether that's a nation or whether that's your life or whether that's a church. It's the same.

The encouragement that James is giving. The encouragement that James is giving in this text is that if Christ Jesus is the influence of your life, he's going to affect the whole.

The words that he has said are so powerful that we need to hang on every word. And that as we apply the truth of Christ to our life, then it will affect us and our words.

[15:28] And so now you'll see the indicator of the condition of our heart based on the words that we say. And you will see how to instruct your heart based on how you treat the words that you say.

For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble, what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body. We put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us.

We guide their whole bodies as well. Look at the ships also. Though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. And so also the tongue is a small member and yet boasts great things. When it comes to the application of God's word, wisdom, we see that the response to the wisdom of God is our faith. We have faith in God. He has spoken. And now we make application of that and it directs our life. It affects the whole. Here he is talking about a living faith that transforms us.

[16:44] God's word is informing us with the purpose of him transforming us. If we're not transformed, then our faith is dead.

And that's the point that he's making here. So as we've been taking the mirror of God's word and looking at our life, we've been looking at this and saying, okay, there's a lot of practical application here.

What does my life look like as I look into the word? As I look into the wisdom of God, as I compare myself to these realities. And the compelling question that it raises for us is what or who is going to be the greatest influence of your life?

What is the greatest influence of my life? And what is going to be the greatest influence of my life? Because if he controls my words, he controls the whole.

Our text gives several examples here that show us that Christ must be the greatest influence of our life. And encourages us in this.

[17:55] If it's not true, then allow this to be true. If it is true, then celebrate this and realize that Christ is king. He's Lord. And so the text walks through several examples.

We started last week with the example of teachers, but I'm going to put it in now in context of at least three. Maybe I'll get through three of them today. Three examples that show us that Christ must be.

Our influence. So we're beginning in verse one. Again, just back to verse one, chapter three.

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers. This is the first example that he gives. The example of the teacher. And here's the truth. I need Christ to instruct my words.

Because I need Christ to instruct me to maturity. I need him to instruct my words. And the issue here is him instructing me toward maturity.

[18:58] The tongue has been defined here. Even in verse two. Him expanding this to say, for we all stumble in many ways. If someone does not stumble in what he says.

When he's talking about the tongue. He's talking about our speech. The words that we say.

Whether in the context of a teacher. Which is the prime example that he's using first.

But this is applying to all of us. In all the context of our life. Our words are important. And Christ's words must be the guide for my words.

He's using the example of teacher here. As someone that's going to lead people in a direction. And notice how he says it. It's going to keep them from stumbling.

Stumbling. So this keeping from stumbling is not just tripping. But it's tripping with the idea that someone's going to go off course. And off the path.

[19:58] Someone's going to go astray. And it's because of the words that we say. And in context. You've got to think. James has been talking about this in the context of suffering.

And how we respond to suffering. And am I going to blame God for the suffering in my life? Am I going to blame him for the crisis of my life? Or even my sinful tendencies.

Am I going to say these things. And ultimately blame God for all of this? Will my words end up leading someone astray? And the example that he gives here is of this teacher.

This primary example. You see here in the life of a teacher two factors. And that is responsibility and accountability.

Responsibility in the role that he's playing in leading. That's what it means to be a teacher. You're directing with words. And you're guiding through words. This word that he uses here gives us our idea of didactic.

[21:04] Something that's teaching. Didaskalos in the original language. It just means to communicate with words. To guide someone. To teach them. In order for them to move from one place to another. And with that he

gives the idea that there is a high amount of accountability.

In the life of a teacher. As we talked about last week. High accountability. So you see him say this in verse one. For you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.

So here's your first example. The example of the teacher. Psalm 119.11 says. How can a young man keep his way pure? And he answers it.

Your word I've hidden in my heart. That I might not sin against you. I have an ultimate teacher in my life. And that is Christ.

It's what it means to be a disciple. That I'm a follower of Jesus. I'm a student of his. I'm following him. So although the immediate application of this certainly would speak to teachers.

[22:08] As we said last week. And give great warning to teachers about being careful about what they say. Knowing that we will hear. Have a greater judgment. We need to understand that in the context of all of this.

He's pointing to our need for our ultimate teacher. My words have to be guided. Even if I'm a teacher in the church. My words have to conform to the teacher.

Jesus said in John 13.13. You call me teacher and Lord. And you are right. For so I am. Luke 9.23. Great verse. That we should know as a disciple. If you don't have it memorized this verse. I encourage you to memorize this verse. He said to them all. If anyone would desire to come after me.

Let him deny himself. Take up his cross daily. And follow me. What does it mean to be a disciple? It means Christ is my teacher. If I don't have Christ in my life.

[23:08] Christ is not guiding my words. And therefore my words are of great accountability. I'm going to answer for these things. I need a teacher to guide me.

And Jesus is that teacher. He is the ultimate guide of my life. The question that it begs for you is. Are your words controlled by Jesus? Is he the teacher of your life?

Is he your instructor? Are you listening? And are you growing toward maturity? He says. For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says.

He is a perfect man. That meaning. Completely matured. He's the picture of completion. And now you compare that to what he says toward the end of this.

We tame all kinds of animals. But no man can tame the tongue. So what's the issue here? The whole point of this is to show our inability to ultimately control ourselves.

[24:10] Even though we have the responsibility to control ourselves. Which means I need Christ. I need the ultimate teacher in my life. To be able to enable me to teach.

And be held accountable to the things that I've learned. And been transformed in. I need Christ to instruct my words. I need him to instruct me toward maturity.

So that I can be complete. We are incomplete without Christ. But in Christ. We're complete. Teachers. It's a great example.

I need Christ to instruct my words. Because I need Christ to instruct me to maturity. Number two. The example of the horse.

This is what we're moving to today. This is such a powerful example in here. This is a cumulative effect that he's giving. One example after another.

[25:06] It's just one hammer blow after another. After another. I need Christ to instruct me. I need Christ to direct me. And in this example of the horse.

The truth is this. I need Christ to direct my words. Because in that I'll see. That I need Christ to direct my will. My will is the question here.

You see it in the horse. And this is such a great example. In verse three. He says. He said. After he uses this example. The bridle. Talking about the teacher being able to bridle the whole body.

Which means his own body. But ultimately in the context of the assembly. Even the body of believers. The body of the church. And now he. It's like it sparks this whole cascade of examples.

Now the teacher's not the only example. Now the horse is an example. Think about a horse. He's saying. Think about this. The bridle. Boy this brings up all kinds of imagery. And changes his mind.

[26:05] As he's under the inspiration. Of the Holy Spirit. And he's saying. Wow. The bridle is. It's such a picture. Of what God is doing in this. For we all stumble in many ways.

If anyone doesn't stumble. He's a perfect man. Able to bridle the whole body. Verse three. If we put bits into the mouths of horses. So that they obey us. We guide their whole bodies as well.

Horse. You look through the scripture. And horses. Exemplify certain qualities.

First you might say. That they. Exemplify strength. A horse and its strength. I mean. If you've been around a horse. You know this. You know how strong they are. They. They.

If they want to do something. They're going to do something. It's a horse. We talk about our cars this way. And how much power they have. Right. I mean. Guys. Want to know. What's the horsepower.

[27:04] Right. Because we understand this idea. The strength. Is characteristic of this. Through the scripture. You see this. Example. Even in the Old Testament. When a king's strength. Is being described.

It's how many chariots. Does he have. And how many horses. Because this is the strength. Of his army. And it's a. Identifier of wealth. And his power. And his strength. The horse itself.

Is identified. As something that's strong. And. And. And. And. That can be good or bad. The negative side of this. Is seen in examples.

Of false faith. In the Old Testament. A horse. Like in Psalm 20. Verse 7. Some trust in chariots. And some trust in horses. But we trust in the name.

Of the Lord our God. This trust in horses. The trust in the strength. Of that. You're. You're. You're trusting in that strength. And you're not trusting in the. Strength of the Lord.

[28:02] Your faith. Is in. The externals. And not on the. The unseen. And that kind of what James. Has been talking about. You're.

You're relying on. Things that you see. God wants to be the focus. Of your heart. Strength.

A horse. A horse can be seen. As something strong. That way. It can also be. Strong. In.

Headstrong. Kind of ways. Psalm. 32. Verse 9. Be not like the horse.

Or a mule. Without understanding. Which must be curbed. With bit. And bridle. It may be. That James has this very passage. In mind. As he's saying these things.

And. And the scripture. Is just coming alive. In his mind. As he's talking about. The control of the tongue. Be not like the horse. Or the mule. Without understanding. Without understanding. You need wisdom.

[28:57] Ask of God. Who gives to all liberally. This whole idea. Is being conveyed here. That horse must be. Curbed. Bit and bridled. Or it will not stay.

Near you. He's. Stubborn. He's resistant. Resistant. To instruction. Like anybody you know. Like.

Like. Like yourself. Like us. Don't be like that. The psalmist is saying. And you see the two words.

That are. That are key here. In the example.

Of the horse. The word. Obey. And the word. Guide. What's the goal. Of this bit. And bridle. It's. So that. The horse. Will obey.

And. And by this bit. It's going to be. Guided. Guided. And so the. The rider. Now is. Envisioned. Is. And he's described. As the we. In this verse.

[29:51] We. We sit on this. This horse. And we guide it. By a bit. And bridle. But the picture here. Is. Is that there's a rider. On a horse. And he's wanting this horse. To go from one place.

To another. And he's wanting to guide. That horse. And therefore. He puts the bit. In the horse's mouth. So that. He can guide this thing. To where he wants it to go. And.

He's working. Against. The rider is. The rider's working. Against. The will. Of the horse. And so the rider. Has a will. He wants.

The horse. To obey. And he wants. The horse. To do. What he's. Wanting it to do. And he's got an instrument. That he's using. And that's the bit. I think this is beautiful.

I was. In northwest China. As we were serving. Doing. Doing mission work. And. It was a common thing. To see. There.

[30:48] In some of those areas. The predominant. Transportation. Was. A donkey cart. And. And. So. I took. I took. I took. I took a picture.

At the bazaar. One time. The marketplace. And there were probably. 200 donkey carts. There. Donkeys. Their carts. Some of the carts. Up in the air.

Some of the donkeys. Tied up. But. Some still attached. And. I just put the caption on it. Walmart parking lot. It was the common.

Means. Of transportation. For so many of those people. But. What was the disheartening part. Was to see. These Muslim men. Drive these donkeys. Because they would have a long whip.

And they would just. Whip these things. Like crazy. And they didn't have a bit. In their mouth. They had a harness. On them. And they would just. Beat these things. Bloody.

[31:43] And you'd sit there. And. And we would often say. Man. The worst possible existence. In the universe. Is to be a donkey. In Xinjiang. Just the worst.

Because they're having to. Beat it. Drive it. And you would see. The stiff neck donkey. Just. Just bow up. And he would just. Take the blows. And he would not move. And.

And that guy. Would just be. Beating that donkey. Or horse. Sometimes it was a horse. Most often. Donkeys. There's an old saying. A good horse. Should seldom.

Be spurred. It's because. You're trying. To guide the horse. If you were one of these. Muslim men. You're beating the horse. Into submission. But the idea.

Is to actually. Guide the horse. With this bit. It's not. A cruel thing. To use the bit. And the bridle. It's actually. A good thing. For the horse. It.

[32:38] Leads him. It's not. As painful. As the whip. It guides him. To where he needs. To go. You see. An example. Of this. Even in C.S.

Lewis's work. In his. Chronicles of Narnia. As he. One of the books. That we read. To our kids. The horse. And his boy. And if you haven't. Read those books. To your kids.

I encourage you. To do that. Those are just. Some great. Memorable times. With our kids. Growing up. Reading through a chapter. Two of those at night. And then being. Hanging on edge.

Waiting to hear. How the story is going to end. And in that book. It was. The horse. And his boy. And the idea was. This. This particular horse. By the name of Bree.

Is a. Is a main character. In the story. And he's just this picture. Of freedom. And identity. And pride. And he's doing. He's a war horse. And he's a talking horse.

[33:33] And so. He's looking down. On all the. The horses. That can't talk. And he's a war horse. So he's arrogant. He's proud. And he's prideful. And all these things. And he goes through this.

This. As the story unfolds. He goes through some times. Where he's afraid. And he's fearful. And he's running in the night. Scared. Doesn't know what's going on. And doesn't realize. That it was Aslan. That was leading him.

Through the darkness. And in this. He's so embarrassed. Because Aslan comes. And Aslan's supposed to be. The picture of God. And Aslan comes. And he's so. Breathed. This talking horse.

Is so ashamed. He's been so prideful. And in this moment. He recognizes. That Aslan's been leading him. Aslan's been guiding him. Aslan has been the authority.

In his life. And all of his fear. Was for nothing. Because Aslan. Was actually guiding. And was actually in control. And now he's just. Broken over it. And all of his pride.

[34:28] Is just shattered. In a moment. And it's one of those. One of those moments. Where he. It's captured in the quote. That he says. He says.

To Aslan. He says. I would rather be eaten. By you. Because he's a lion. Right. He's a horse. I would rather be eaten. By you. Than fed. By anybody else.

This is the end. He said. And in that. He's describing. This brokenness. That he comes to. As this. Proud and arrogant. Kind of horse. And this is the picture here.

That we're seeing. In. In us. I am. The one with my words. That are so often. Not where they should be. And the problem is. So often. I'm seeing myself.

As the rider. I'm the rider. And I'm going to get control. Of my tongue. And I'm going to control. My tongue. And make it do. What it's supposed to do.

[35:27] And that's not the picture. That he's giving. You're not the rider. You're the horse. You're the donkey. I'm the donkey.

I need a bit. In my mouth. An instrument. To control me. And guide me. Because God's desire. Is to get me. From one place. To the other. And he's the rider.

I'm wanting to go. My own way. I'm wanting to say. What I want to say. I'm wanting to say. The things that are on my heart. Instead of allowing.

God to be. The rider. Like I'm allowing. God to be. The instructor. Too often. I'm the instructor. I want to be. The one saying. What is. I'm the one.

Wanting to give. The direction. Instead of allowing. Christ. To be the instructor. Of my heart. And thus. My mouth. Allowing Christ. To be the rider.

[36:26] That's why I said. Just a few lines. Before. Be doers of the word. And not hearers. Only. Deceiving yourself. There's a deception. In this. You're thinking.

That you're the rider. And you're not. Think of the elements. Of this. The small part. That's in focus. It's the control focus. It's the mouth.

It's the tongue. Of the horse. It's the mouth. That's being guided. To words. The thing. That's being controlled. In this case.

Is the horse itself. It's going to guide. The whole horse. The whole body. Or your whole life. There's the bit.

That's the controlling. Instrument. That's being used. By the rider. What is it? It's the wisdom of God. He's been talking about it. The whole time. The wisdom of God.

[37:18] Ask for it. He gives to all men. Liberally. You need wisdom. For the crisis of your life. You need wisdom. For the faithlessness. In your life. Ask of God. Seek God. His wisdom.

Is available for you. It's the bit. That the rider uses. To guide you. As a horse. He's working against. The will of the horse. He's working against. My will. My words. Are an indicator. Of the problem. Of me.

Holding on. To the reins. Of my words. It's a heart issue. The point is. You're not the instructor. Of your will. You're not the rider.

You're the horse. You're to surrender. To the instructor. You're to surrender. To the rider. I need Christ. To guide. My will.

[38:19] I need him. To break. My will. That was one of the best. Pictures. I ever saw. Was. A guy. Preaching. On horseback. And. As he's. Got this wild horse.

That's tied up. In the middle of a corral. And he's preaching. From horseback. At this men's event. And. And he's talking. About this. Horse. In. In connection. With the human will. And.

And he's just. Describing. This male horse. Which is just. Going crazy. Out there. As it's tied up. And over and over. He's just. Keeps reading scripture. And pointing to the. The will. And then pointing to the horse.

And then he starts. Going over to the horse. And he starts doing some things. And he starts getting it. To where he can put the bridle. On the horse. And then he gets it. To where he can put the saddle. On the horse. And in a 30 minute time period.

He takes this unbroken horse. And finally breaks it. It gets up on the back of it. And rides it around the. The corral. And the statement that he says in that.

[39:15] Is one of those truths. That I. Will say over and over and over again. Because it's so applicable to me. A horse. He said. That hasn't.

Been broken. Cannot. Be used. James is saying. This is the indicator. Your words.

You're not speaking truth. Or you're speaking things that are untrue. You're saying things that you shouldn't say. And you're not saying things that you should say. Those are just indicators of the condition of your heart.

Is the instrument panel on your car. As you're looking at the instrument panel on your car. Man. You can tell that. That there is a problem in your car. But the problem is not the instrument.

The problem is an internal problem. So when the heat gauge is going off. It's like. Hey. My instrument's not bad. There's something wrong inside.

[40:12] That the engine's overheating. Or the gas gauge is down on the E. It's an indicator of something. Right. You've got to stop and get some gas.

It's telling you there's a problem. You're running low. And sometimes it's telling you the speed you're going. And it's telling you how fast you're going. It's an indicator. Of deeper problems.

Your words. Are the instrument panel. And the deeper problems are heart issues. Of faith. And obedience. Are you going to obey.

The Lord. Like a horse. And then like a ship. And this one. I thought this was just beautiful too. Because he's expanding it. Going a little different direction. It's not only do I need. Christ in my life. To instruct me. I need Christ in my life.

[41:11] To direct my will. Like the horse. But I also need Christ in my life. To guide me through the challenges. And now. He shifts from the horse. Which is a great example.

Of that struggle against my will. But now he's moving it to the ship. And it's a struggle against the elements. It's against the things outside. This was struggling against my will.

And an internal struggle. This is going against the crisis. And the hardships of my life. That he described in chapter one. Count it all joy. My brothers.

When you fall into trials. Of various kinds. And so now he's giving you the picture. Of the crisis. The wind and the waves. That are against you. How many of you have had wind and waves.

In your life. You immediately know. What he's identifying there. All through scripture. We see the example. Of that word that he's using here. Is the word driven.

[42:09] And notice how he says it. We put bits into mouths of horses. So that they may obey us. We guide their whole bodies as well. Look at the ships. Also. Though they are so large.

And are driven by strong winds. Well didn't he just use that word. That whole phrase. Just a few verses. Before. If anyone does not trust the Lord.

If anyone. Doesn't have faith. If he doesn't believe God. He's like the wind. Or he's like the. How did he say it? In.

Chapter one. Oh where's the wind and waves. I didn't write it down. Hold on.

I'm getting there. What is it? Verse six. Chapter one.

[43:11] Yes. Sorry. Thank you. If any of you lacks wisdom. Let him ask of God. Who gives generously to all without reproach. And it will be given him. But let him ask in faith. With no doubting.

For the one who doubts. Is like the wave of the sea. That is driven. And tossed. Tossed by the wind. For that person. Must. Must not suppose. That he will receive anything.

From the Lord. Is a double minded man. Unstable. In all his ways. Driven. Here. This word. This word. Is used. About driven. By the wind.

Like a sail. That's filled. And being pushed along. The elements. External. Pushing. That same word. Is used to describe. Demonic forces. In the gospels.

In Luke. Eight. A man being. Driven. By the demons. That driven. Being moved. It describes.

[44:06] Oars. In the water. That are propelling. And moving. A boat. Towards something. Every ship. Would. These larger ships. Would have two rudders. Connected. With a crossbar. One man.

Moving those. And so in this case. It's the external. It's the elements. It's the challenges. It's a crisis. Outside. It's not just my will. That God is working.

On. It's me. In the middle. Of the crisis. Of my life. And learning. To trust God. And the words. That I say. When I'm in crisis. When I'm in trials. Will I question God.

When the trials come. When the difficulty comes. What's driving. My tongue. Can I control. My speech. Is my. My speech. Controlled. Because. The factor here.

Is the same. If you control speech. You're going to influence. The whole. And it's an indicator. Of the whole. Warren Wearsby said. Both the bit. And the rudder. Must be overcome.

[45:01] There are contrary forces. The bit. Must overcome. The wild nature. Of the horse. And the rudder. Must fight. The winds. And currents. That drive.

The ship. Off its course. You see it. In examples. Like Matthew 14. 29. Peter. Gets out of the boat. He's on the water. Jesus sees.

When he sees the wind. And the waves. He's beginning to sink. And he cries. Lord save me. And Jesus reaches out his hand. Says. Oh you of little faith. Why did you doubt?

Crisis. The wind. And the waves. You see it in Jonah. In the Old Testament. Jonah 1. 4. The Lord hurled a great wind.

Upon the sea. And there was a mighty tempest. In the sea. So that the ship. Threatened. To break up. Who brought the storm? God did. The reality is.

[45:57] The crisis things. In our life. God's still in control of. He's guiding us. And he's. His word. Is going to guide us. Through those storms.

And enable us. To see. The reality of his presence. In those times. And when we speak. Our word. Should be a reflection. Of this. The disciples.

Are. In a boat. The storm comes. And they're scared. For their lives. It says. And behold. Matthew 8. Behold. There arose.

A great storm. On the sea. That the boat. Was being swamped. With waves. Jesus was asleep. They went. And they woke him. Saying. Save us Lord. We're perishing. And he said to them. Why are you afraid? Oh you of little faith. He rose. And he rebuked. The winds. And the sea. And there was a great calm. And the men marveled. Saying. What sort of man. Is this.

[46:50] That even. The winds. And the sea. We obey him. He's the pilot. Of the ship. He's the captain. Of the sea. He's the. He's the captain.

Of our souls. We are commanded. In Ephesians 4. 14. To no longer be children. Tossed. To and fro. By waves. And carried about. By every wind of doctrine. Human cunning.

Craftiness. Deceitful schemes. Etc. The reality. The reality for us is. I need Christ.

To guide my words. And that's just the small picture. Of Christ. Guiding me. Through the challenges. That I face. I need him.

I thought of. The example. Of the German. Bismarck. You know. Battleship. So big. Impregnable. The armor.

[47:46] On the ship. So much. That they would. The Germans. Would say. In World War 2. It is the. Unsinkable ship. You can't. Sink. The Bismarck. And.

They were probably. Right. If you attack it. In normal ways. But the reality. For the Bismarck. Was the way. That they ended up. Taking the ship. Down. Was. They torpedoed.

The rudder. And when they. Damaged the rudder. The ship. The ship. Was a sitting duck. And so they just. Pummeled it. Until the ship. Burned. Notice.

The reality. That James. Says here. Though they are. So large. They're driven. By strong winds. They're guided. By a very small rudder. Wherever. The will.

Of the pilot. Desires. So yes. In a small way. Your tongue. Controls. Your body. And. And has an influence.

[48:42] On your body. But the idea. Here. On the big picture. Is. You're not the captain. It's a.

It's an issue. Of maturity. It's an issue. Of reality. We're being guided. If we're. If our words. Are edifying.

If our words. Are in line. With the scripture. Then it's going to show. As an indicator. Things that are right. Or wrong. In our heart. It can be pushed off course.

By elements. You. Today. Might have circumstances. In your life. Trials. That you're going through. Difficulty.

That you're facing. Whether it's relationships. That you're in. Or a job situation. Or some health things. That you're going to. Going through. And these crisis moments.

[49:39] Are leading you. To say things. They're leading you. To respond. And you can see. Where your heart is. In a lot of those responses. Because some of those responses.

You already regret. You've said things. That you. Shouldn't have said. You've said things. In ways. You shouldn't have said them. It's all indicating. The condition of your heart.

Christ wants to be. The king of your heart. He wants to be. The instructor. He wants to be. The rider. He wants to be. The pilot. And if he's in control. If he. Is in control.

Of your tongue. It's going to be. The indicator. That he's in control. Of your life. The indicator. That the direction. Of your life. Is changed. You're not who you used to be.

You're not everything. That you could be. You're not everything. That you want to be. But thank God. You're not who you used to be. There's a direction. In your life. That's affected. By the presence. Of Jesus.

[50:33] In you. He's affected. Your tongue. In such a way. That shows. The direction. Of your whole life. It's just one way. But oh.

What a picture. It is. Psalm 32. 8. Psalmist said. These are the words. Of the Lord. I will instruct you.

And I will teach you. In the way that you should go. I will counsel you. With my eye upon you. God's going to give you. The direction. Of your life. If you'll trust him.

And you'll believe him. In Isaiah 30. Verse 21. Your ears. Shall hear a word. Behind you. Saying this is the way. Walk in it. And when you turn to the right. Or turn to the left.

In a still small voice. And he's speaking. Through his word. The primary means. Of God speaking. Is through the. Inerrant. Infallible.

[51:29] Word of God. He's going to speak. And direct your life. And as you make. Application of that. The Holy Spirit. Will enable you. To understand. With great wisdom.

How to apply it. In the circumstances. Of your life. As you become. Not only a hearer. But a doer. You're going to do.

What Proverbs 3. 5 and 6. Commands you to do. Trust in the Lord. With all of your heart. And don't lean on your own understanding. In all of your ways.

Acknowledge him. And he will direct. Your paths. And so as you do. A self-evaluation. In your life. As you're going. Through the crisis. And the challenges. Of your life. Or as you're struggling.

Against your own will. You look at. Verses of scripture. That deal with your mouth.

[52:25] And you say. Where am I? With the Lord. Ephesians 4. 25.

Therefore having put away. Falsehood. Let each of you. Speak truth. With his neighbor.

For we're members. Of one another. Am I speaking truth? First Thessalonians 5. 11. Therefore encourage. One another. And build one another up. Just as you are doing.

Am I encouraging others. With my words. Hebrews 10. 24. Let us consider. How to stir one another. With love and good works. Not neglecting. To meet together. As the habit of some.

But encouraging. One another. All the more. As we see the day. Drawing near. Am I gathering. With believers. To encourage. Other believers. Am I confessing. My sin.

With my mouth. Like 1 John 1. 9 says. If we confess. Our sins. He's faithful. And just. To forgive us. Our sins. And cleanse us. Of all unrighteousness. Have I forgotten. How to confess.

[53:21] Is my mouth. Not functioning. In the ways. That it should. Under the control. Of the Holy Spirit. James 5.

16. Therefore confess. Your sins. To one another. And pray for one another. That you may be healed. Has my mouth. Just forgotten. How to work. Do you feel. The tension.

Of your will. When you're in a group. Of people. And it's time to pray. And you're thinking. I don't want to pray out loud. I don't want to. I don't want to say anything. I'll let somebody else.

Do the praying. And you've got this. Internal struggle. Going on. Instead of. Heeding the command. Of scripture. That you are. To be a praying person. And whether that's. Privately. Or corporately.

You should be engaged. In those things. This is maturity. This is a struggle. Against your will. Sometimes. Because of the circumstances. Of your life. And maybe things. Are difficult.

[54:14] Are you able. To offer. Correction. When others. Need correction. In their life. Are you too timid. To say anything. I don't want to talk.

About this Olympic stuff. I just want to be friends. With everybody. Galatians 6.

1. Brothers. If anyone is caught. In a transgression. You who are spiritual. Should restore him. In a spirit of gentleness. You. Should speak. You should say something.

A brother in Christ. Falling away. In this. In. From the faith. Or struggling. In sin. You cannot be silent. This is an indicator. Of your heart.

And where your heart is. This is an indicator. Of a whole lot of things. Soft answer. Turns away wrath. The harsh word. Stirs up anger. Are all your words.

Just critical. All the time. Gracious words. Proverbs 16. 24. Gracious words. Are like a honeycomb. Sweetness to the soul. And health to the body.

[55:14] Can you encourage. With a word. Lying and deceit. Proverbs 12. 22. Lying lips.

Are an abomination. To the Lord. Colossians 3. 9. Do not lie to one another. Seeking that you have put off. The old self. With its practices. Some of you spouses. Lie to your spouse. All the time. Like it's just a normal thing. Some of you lie to your parents. On a regular basis. It's just. Well. It's just a little thing.

It's. It is. It's a little thing. That just indicates. A big problem. Gossip and slander. It's an issue of the mouth. It's words. Proverbs 16.

28. A dishonest man. Spreads strife. A whisperer. Separates close friends. Is this the characteristic. Of my life. That I'm always. The whisperer. About things.

[56:08] That should be kept silent. Can't control. My tongue. James 4. 11. Do not speak evil. Against one another. Brothers. The one who speaks evil.

Against a brother. Judges his brother. Speaking evil. Against the law. Ephesians 4. 29. Let no corrupt communication. Come out of your mouth. But what is good for building up. As fits the occasion. That it may give grace.

To those who hear. Proverbs 12. 18. The tongue. Of the wise. Brings healing. James 3. 5. The tongue. Is a small member. Yet boasts great things. If you control speech.

To influence the whole. We need to be a people. Who. Are changed. The presence of Jesus. In our life. Indicating. Transformation. Because he's the teacher. He's the writer. He's the pilot. Lord help us in this.

[57:15] Because according to James. Among the believers there. There are some things. That ought not be. Maybe this morning. We need to just. Even in this invitation time.

Just. It needs to be a little repentance. On our part. We need to speak some things. To God. And say. Lord. I've sinned against you. By saying things.

That I shouldn't have said. And I've sinned against you. By not saying things. That I should have said. Lord. Control my tongue. Guide me through your word.

And as I hear your word. Let me have faith. To trust you. And obey. So that I can be. Not just a hearer. But a doer.

So that I can show. The transformation. That comes in living faith. And be changed. And can lead others. To be changed.

[58:11] Amen. Father. We come before you today. And Lord. We. We struggle with these things. These are. These are. In our face.

Kind of. Practical teachings. For some. It may indicate. That they don't know. There's no transformation. The direction of their life.

Is not in this direction. There's excuses. For how we talk. And what we say. And what we do.

There's excuses. For what we don't do. And what we don't say. And there's no desire.

On our part. To change. And all that is. Is an indicator. Of a deep problem. And an absence. Of faith. In you.

And so Lord. There may be some. That examine their life. Looking into the mirror. Of your word. And they're saying. You know what? I need a relationship. With Jesus. Because. I need. I need the desire.

[59:07] Of my heart changed. So Lord. I pray. That you would. Open eyes. That you would help. Some to see their need. For you. And that they would. Turn from sin.

Surrender their life. To you. And be changed. And for others. This morning. That are. That have been changed. They have the desire. In their heart. They. They are struggling.

In an area here. In an area there. And saying some things. Maybe they shouldn't have said. I'm so glad. We have an advocate. Jesus Christ. The righteous.

Who makes intercession. For us. And if we confess. Our sins. With our mouth. Believing in our heart. Lord.

You make change. And so I pray. This morning. That if we confess. We know. That you're faithful.  
And just. We pray. That you forgive. And that you cleanse us.

[60:02] Heal us. Help us. To be a people. Who are identified. Not just by  
what we say. About our faith. But how we live.

Our faith. Out. So Lord. Be with us. To that end. It's in Christ's name. We pray. Amen. Let's all stand  
together. As we have. Amen.