

## BRIEF PERSPECTIVE ON THE THINGS WE SAY

Apparently, there were teachers in James' days who thought that teaching was 'restricted' to saying the right things and they gave little thought to how they lived their lives or what they were saying about their fellow brothers and sisters. Although they had desires to teach, their motives were impure and consequences were 'disorder and every evil practice'.

James wrote to correct their wrong teachings. Thank God for godly and Spirit-inspired teachers.

One can infer that some aspired to be teachers but these people lack the discernment that right understanding of the truth of God is transformative. The truth of the Word of God, when understood and applied correctly changes a person's life. This transformation is none the more evident from our speech.

Jesus gave us an insight on the connection between our heart and our speech when He said that we speak out of the abundance of our hearts.

So, the things we say are not just the things we say but a reflection of the condition of our hearts.

## BRIEF PERSPECTIVE ON THE THINGS WE SAY

### WARMING UP

1. What is the most heart warming thing that anyone has ever said about you?
2. Mark Twain said that he can live two months on a good compliment. What about you?

### INTO THE PASSAGES

#### **Read James 3:1, 9, 13- 16 - Teaching the truth vs. Living the truth**

3. Why did James say that teachers will be judged more strictly?
4. What can we infer from verses 13-16 on the behaviour of some of the teachers in James' days?

#### **Read James 3:3-7 - Contrast between small and big**

5. From the passage, what is 'small' and what is 'big'?

#### **Read James 3: 7-8, Matt 12:34, Luke 6:45 - What controls the tongue and what controls the heart?**

6. Since the tongue cannot be tamed, what part of us can we control?

#### **Read Prov 4:23, Matt 22:37, Matt 6:21 - - What we can do**

7. What must we guard our heart against?
8. Who should be the focus of our hearts?
9. What is one thing we can do practically to direct the focus of our hearts?

### MOVING FORWARD

In the digital age where we are bombarded by so much information (TV, Internet) and much of them are frivolous, not helpful or worse, unscriptural.

While not all things are bad, the sheer volume can crowd out the voice of the Spirit in our lives.

Determine to spend more time with the Lord so that our hearts won't be overwhelmed by the things of the world. And our speech shows the true condition of our hearts.

### LIFE TOGETHER

Each time we meet, ask each other where your treasure is.

## BRIEF PERSPECTIVE ON THE THINGS WE SAY

These notes are primarily for the Into the Passage portion, and are to be used just as guidelines or commentary notes. Most of them are my own thoughts, so take that with a grain of salt. Let the Word of God lead you to truth, not these notes.

### INTO THE PASSAGES

**Read Acts 9:1-9, 26:1-11 - Vertical Component (Christ removed our baggage)**

3. Why did James say that teachers will be judged more strictly?

**James explained that a person who truly understood the truth is the one who has been transformed (verse 13). A transformed teacher teaches with his words and life, without a judgemental attitude, leading to praise and glory to God. But a teacher who taught with ulterior motive will generate disorder and evil practice (James 3:16), disrupting an entire community whom Jesus has given His life for. These teachers with such 'wisdom' will be judged severely.**

4. What can we infer from verses 13-16 on the behaviour of some of the teachers in James' days?

**See note to question 3.**

**Read James 3:3-7 - Contrast between small and big**

5. From the passage, what is 'small' and what is 'big'?

**The tongue is small, and the words may be few but the destructive consequences of wrong words (especially in the context of cursing a fellow brother to bring discord) are great.**

**Read James 3: 7-8, Matt 12:34, Luke 6:45 - What controls the tongue and what controls the heart?**

6. Since the tongue cannot be tamed, what part of us can we control?

**We can guard our hearts because our speech is but an overflow of what is in our hearts.**

**Read Prov 4:23, Matt 22:37, Matt 6:21 - - What we can do**

7. What must we guard our heart against (Prov 4:23)?

**Anything that seeks our affection, thoughts and energies other than Jesus.**

8. Who should be the focus of our hearts (Matt 22:37)?

**The Lord Jesus Christ.**

9. What is one thing we can do practically to direct the focus of our hearts (Matt 6:21)?

**Our heart is where our treasure is. Devote what is precious to you to Jesus. For some of us, we need to give Jesus our time. Yet for others, we need to give Jesus our money. Our career, our children, etc...**