*Satan knows your name but calls you by your sin. God knows your sin but calls you by your name.*
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Prayer Study #487
JAMES CHAPTER THREE
First Love Ministries, Inc., of Perry, Georgia USA

James 3 Amplified Bible, Classic Edition (AMPC)
**The Teacher's Peril**

***3*** *Not many [of you] should become teachers (self-constituted censors and reprovers of others), my brethren, for you know that we [teachers] will be judged by a higher standard and with greater severity [than other people; thus we assume the greater accountability and the more condemnation].*

In the early Church teachers were extremely important. In Acts 13:1 they are ranked with prophets at the Church of Antioch, and they are generally regarded as second only to apostles and prophets (1st Corinthians 12:28: *And God has set some in the Church first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, thirdly Teachers…).* While apostles and prophets generally were always on the move, the teachers generally stayed and worked within a congregation.

Because of the importance of teaching the Word of God accurately to the new converts, teachers were held to a higher standard and promised tremendous problems and condemnation if they mishandled the Word of

God.

Unfortunately, there were many in the New Testament who did not adhere to accurately teaching the Word. There were those who tried to turn Christianity back to Judaism and who taught that circumcision and keeping the Old Testament law were necessary for salvation (Acts 15:1: *And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren and said, "Except you be circumcised after the manner of Moses, you cannot be saved.)* There were those who did not live what they taught (Romans 2:21-22: *You therefore which teach another, do you not teach yourselves? You who preach a man should not steal, do you steal? You who say a man should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? ....)* There were those who tried to teach before they really knew anything (1st Timothy 1:7: *Desiring to be teachers of the Law, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm).* Finally, there were teachers who taught unsound doctrine just to win approval and tickle the ears of the congregation (2nd Timothy 4:3: *For the time will come when they will not endure sound Doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears).*

The teacher in the Christian Church took the place of the Jewish Rabbis. The rabbis were

highly honored and respected. There was sometimes a danger in the rabbis becoming prideful and expecting to be given the highest place at a function.

The Christian teacher must be careful to always teach TRUTH, not their own opinions or prejudices. They also must live what they preach.

**The Universal Danger**

***2*** *For we all often stumble and fall and offend in many things. And if anyone does not offend in speech [never says the wrong things], he is a fully developed character and a perfect man, able to control his whole body and to curb his entire nature.*

The sense of this verse is of *one who slips up*. Everyone of us slip up and sin. Romans 3:10 and Psalm 14:1-3 tells us that there is *none righteous, no not one.* And Paul repeats this theme in Romans 3:23: *For all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God.*

Perhaps there is no sin easier to fall into as the sin that results from what we say. Jesus warned us in Matthew 12:37: *By your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.*

**Little but Powerful**

***3*** *If we set bits in the horses' mouths to make*

*them obey us, we can turn their whole bodies about.*
***4*** *Likewise, look at the ships: though they are so great and are driven by rough winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the impulse of the helmsman determines.*
***5*** *Even so the tongue is a little member, and it can boast of great things. See how much wood or how great a forest a tiny spark can set ablaze!*

James uses two metaphors here: First, the bit in the horses' mouths and secondly, the rudder of a ship. Both are small in comparison to the horse or ship, and yet they control the whole.

James is not saying here that we need to remain silent. The scripture is clear that we need to speak words of faith and righteousness (ex. Psalm 107:2: *Let the redeemed of the LORD SAY so!)*

**A Destructive Fire**

***6*** *And the tongue is a fire. [The tongue is a] world of wickedness set among our members, contaminating and depraving the whole body and setting on fire the wheel of birth (the cycle of man's nature), being itself ignited by hell (Gehenna).*

The tongue can cause great destruction but can also bring life. James is called the Proverbs of the New Testament. Let us look at a couple of examples from Proverbs: Proverbs 19:21: *Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and they who love it shall eat the fruit thereof.* (Christians who talk doubt talk "death." Those who speak the Word of God speak "life." Proverbs 6:2: *You are snared with the words of your mouth, you are taken with the words of your mouth.)*

**Beyond Taming**

***7*** *For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea animal, can be tamed and has been tamed by human genius (nature).*

***8*** *But the human tongue can be tamed by no man. It is a restless (undisciplined, irreconcilable) evil, full of deadly poison.*

Genesis 1:28 tells us, "*Have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.* Men are able to tame every wild creature in the sense of controlling and making them useful, but men cannot been able to control the tongue. The wonderful news, however, is that, while the tongue cannot be tamed by any man, it can be tamed by the Holy Spirit.

## Blessing and Cursing

***9*** *With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse men who were made in God's likeness!*
***10*** *Out of the same mouth come forth blessing and cursing. These things, my brethren, ought not to be so.*
***11*** *Does a fountain send forth [simultaneously] from the same opening fresh water and bitter?*
***12*** *Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine figs? Neither can a salt spring furnish fresh water.*

Within human nature is the saint and the sinner, the angel and the savage, the hero and the villain. All of us have a double nature, which can only be sanctified by God.

James is writing to a Jewish audience, and the Jews were well familiar with blessing God. Every time the name of God was spoken they were taught to respond "Blessed be he!"

When we curse men, we are in actuality cursing God because mankind is His creation made in His image. If the Lord has His way in our lives, we will not speak curses but only blessings.

## The One Who Ought Never to Be a Teacher

***13*** *Who is there among you who is wise and intelligent? Then let him by his noble living show forth his [good] works with the*

*[unobtrusive] humility [which is the proper attribute] of true wisdom.*
***14*** *But if you have bitter jealousy (envy) and contention (rivalry, selfish ambition) in your hearts, do not pride yourselves on it and thus be in defiance of and false to the Truth.*

In verse 13 James is speaking of a true teacher of the Word and his conduct. The true teacher should be wise and intelligent, noble and humble. The false teacher's life is characterized by bitterness and jealousy, rivalry and selfish ambition, and pride.

**The Wrong Kind of Wisdom**

***15*** *This [superficial] wisdom is not such as comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual (animal), even devilish (demoniacal).*
***16*** *For wherever there is jealousy (envy) and contention (rivalry and selfish ambition), there will also be confusion (unrest, disharmony, rebellion) and all sorts of evil and vile practices.*

Wisdom characterized by bitterness, jealousy, rivalry, selfish ambition and pride is not wisdom from God. It is humanistic and follows the doctrine of men and demons.

Whenever there is confusion, we need to step back and see if there is jealousy and

disharmony and other evil characteristics.

**True Wisdom**

***17*** *But the wisdom from above is first of all pure (undefiled); then it is peace-loving, courteous (considerate, gentle). [It is willing to] yield to reason, full of compassion and good fruits; it is wholehearted and straightforward, impartial and unfeigned (free from doubts, wavering, and insincerity).*

***18*** *And the harvest of righteousness (of conformity to God's will in thought and deed) is [the fruit of the seed] sown in peace by those who work for and make peace [in themselves and in others, that peace which means concord, agreement, and harmony between individuals, with undisturbedness, in a peaceful mind free from fears and agitating passions and moral conflicts].*

The characteristics of true Godly wisdom is purity, peacefulness, courteousness, reasonableness, compassion, good fruit that remains, impartial, sincere, full of faith, and wholehearted passion. These characteristics are found in the fullness of Christ and result from the work of the Holy Spirit with the Cross as the means to get there and with Christ as the Source.

The harvest or fruit of righteousness is peace and harmony. The harvest based on the Law

of Sowing and Reaping.

## I FOUND GRACE

O I FOUND GRACE, AT THE FOOT OF A RUGGED CROSS ON CALVARY.
I FOUND GRACE, GRACE WITH THE AWESOME POWER TO SET THE CAPTIVE FREE.
I FOUND GRACE, SUSTAINING GRACE
I FOUND GRACE, REDEEMING GRACE
YES I FOUND GRACE, FULFILING, INDWELLING GRACE, HIS LOVING GRACE
YES I FOUND GRACE, AMAZING GRACE TO MEET MY NEED.

I SOUGHT FOR WISDOM IN THE WAYS OF THIS WORLD
BUT NO WISDOM COULD BE FOUND.
I SOUGHT FOR MEANING IN THE WORDS OF GREAT MEN
BUT THEIR WORDS JUST LET ME DOWN.
NOT SEEKING JUSTICE FOR THE THINGS THAT I'D DONE
MY SOUL NEEDED MERCY AND I FOUND IT IN GOD'S SON.

GIVE UP THE SEARCH, IT'S A USELESS DREAM YOUR CHASING.
YOU'LL FIND NO PEACE UNTIL YOU SEEK HIS FACE
THE ANSWERS RIGHT BEFORE YOU AT THE FOOT OF THE CROSS
YOU'LL FIND THAT IT'S A HOLY PLACE.
CONFESS YOUR SINS AND LAY THEM ALL DOWN.
PICK UP YOUR CROSS AND LET JESUS TURN YOUR LIFE AROUND