

# **James 3: Speech & Wisdom**

James 3 is the word of God,  
not the word of men.

James was the penman for the  
Holy Spirit's divine truth.

21 *Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.*

22 *But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.*

23 *For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:*

24 *For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.*

25 *But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.*

James 1:21-25

# James 3: Speech & Wisdom

Four sermons, 3.25 hours, preached in 2007, 8-page outline.

<https://letgodbettrue.com/sermons/index/year-2007/james-3/>

# James 3: Speech & Wisdom

Proverbs 22:11 audio/text commentary, 9:57, summarizes James 3.

<https://letgodbetrue.com/proverbs/index/chapter-22/proverbs-22-11/>

## James 3: Speech & Wisdom

James is most practical book in the New Testament.  
Proverbs is Bible's most practical with much of speech.  
But you must be a doer of the word and not just a hearer.  
Speech and wisdom here work toward your perfection.  
Content is similar to "Excellent Spirit" but expository.

## James 3: Speech & Wisdom

Jesus was perfect with God-given speech / wisdom.  
We want to follow our Lord Jesus as close as possible.  
He taught about both and had His apostles write more.  
We show His grace and prove salvation by these two.  
You may influence others much by the two factors.

## James 3: Speech & Wisdom

Speech usually means talking, but there is more. Never forget texts, emails, tweets, social media, etc. James 3 should be applied to all your communication. This wisdom is relational perfection, not knowledge. Perfection: godly speech, pure heart, peaceable.

My brethren, be not many masters,  
knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.

James 3:1

- **Master** = ruler and teacher ... not an employer here.
- Desire to teach brings risk ... they are judged harder.
- Wise men generally prefer to be taught ... not teach.
- Three of God's greatest did not want it ... M ... J ... P.
- God protects hearers by judging teachers Himself.
- God warned teachers ... Num 18:1; Mal 2:2-3,9; Matt 23:14.
- Avoid much talking due to its risk ... even teaching.

For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

James 3:2

- Why avoid teaching (3:1)? ... For in many ways we all offend.
- Hear Jesus, *Drink ye all of it* ... context here before / after.
- We all offend by speech ... for it is the hardest to control.
- We all offend by speech ... so ruling it well is perfection.
- But no man can perfectly avoid speech sins or bodily sins.
- We reduce word sins by ruling spirit like a bridle (Jas 1:26).
- To the degree we rule words ... we can rule all lusts. *Glory!*

Behold, we put bits in the horses mouths,  
that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.

James 3:3

- The mouth is so wild ... ruling it leads to perfection (3:2).
- If a man rules his speech ... he can rule his whole body.
- **Bit** = piece of metal in the back of a horse's mouth/lips.
- By reins attached to the bit ... a rider directs the horse.
- By a small bit ... in its mouth ... a 1200lb horse is turned.
- God taught men to have dominion over horses by a bit.
- James 3 teaches to rule our speech ... so we can rule all.

Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

James 3:4

- These are large sailing ships moved worldwide by the wind.
- They are a second example of the Spirit's small-large lesson.
- Our tongue is a small part ... but ruling it can rule the body.
- **Helm** = ship steering wheel. **Rudder** = an underwater blade.
- A ship's captain can easily direct the big ship by small parts.
- By your rule of the small tongue ... you can rule all of you.
- Let us use more attention and strictness to rule our speech.

Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things.  
Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!

James 3:5

- Just like the bit and the helm ... your tongue is small.
- If you will rule this little part ... you can rule all of you.
- The Spirit's new lesson here is big sins by a small part.
- Only a fraction of our body ... it says monstrous things.
- Like Smokey Bear ... a campfire can burn down a forest.
- This third metaphor (bit/helm) is big sins by little tongue.
- Your little tongue can burn reputation, people, religion.

And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

James 3:6

- A little fire can burn down much (3:5) ... the tongue is a fire.
- Your tongue is a destroyer – a world-sized supply of sin.

# A World of Iniquity! (1)

Backbiting

Blasphemy

Boasting

Clamor

Cursing

Debate

More!

# A World of Iniquity! (2)

False accuse

False witness

Filthiness

Flattery

Foolish Talking

Jesting

Lying

# A World of Iniquity! (3)

Perjury

Railing

Scorn

Sedition

Seduce

Slander

More!

## A World of Iniquity! (4)

Sow discord

Answering again

Talebearing

Whispering

Complaining

Swearing

Etc.!

# All Kinds of Damage! (1)

Alienation

Arguments

Bitterness

Confusion

Contentions

Enmity

Fights

## All Kinds of Damage! (2)

Grudges

Heresies

Pain

Strife

Suspicious

Wars

Etc.!

And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

James 3:6

- A little fire can burn down much (3:5) ... the tongue is a fire.
- Your tongue is a destroyer – a world-sized supply of sin.
- It defiles the whole body by leading to many other sins.
- Words are key in fornication, suretyship, marital strife, etc.
- Grievous words stir up anger ... fighting words cause strife.
- Bitter, harsh words cause grudges, fights, or wars years later.
- Depravity and the devil use the tongue to burn us (3:14-15).

For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents,  
and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:

James 3:7

- God gave man wide dominion in Eden ... and he has used it.
- Man has tamed and trained lions, tigers, elephants, etc.
- Man has tamed and trained birds like falcons and parrots.
- Man has tamed and trained serpents or reptiles but less.
- Man has also tamed and trained dolphins, sea lions, whales.
- Much effort, patience, rewards, punishments have worked.
- But our depravity in speech is worse than irrational creatures.

But the tongue can no man tame;  
it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

James 3:8

- But our depravity in speech is worse than irrational creatures.
- As James began, no man can totally tame or train his tongue.
- Wild animals like lions are tamed/trained ... but not speech.
- Who can get his tongue under control to always speak right?
- The tongue is unruly – unable to be ruled ... like a brute beast.
- The tongue is full of deadly poison – words that hurt and kill.
- Words have poisoned and killed reputations and relationships.

*There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword:  
but the tongue of the wise is health.*

Proverbs 12:18

*Death and life are in the power of the tongue:  
and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.*

Proverbs 18:21

*The words of a talebearer are as wounds,  
and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.*

Proverbs 18:8

*Their throat is an open sepulchre;  
with their tongues they have used deceit;  
the poison of asps is under their lips:  
Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:*

Romans 3:13-14

*Pleasant words are as an honeycomb,  
sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.*

Proverbs 16:24

## *Is the Tongue Untamable, Unruly, Evil, and Full of Deadly Poison?*

*When Isaiah saw the LORD, what bothered him?  
Sarcastic ridicule, especially of children, is poison.  
Foolish talking and jesting are not convenient.  
Whispering and slandering destroys much.  
Flattery, insincere praise for advantage, is sin.  
Speaking evil of those in authority is a great evil.  
Contention and debate are usually unacceptable.  
Complaining and murmuring are very wicked.  
Vowing without keeping the vows is horrible.  
Sowing discord is a sin God hates and abominates.  
Answering again to those over you is condemned.  
Railing and reviling is harsh and profane speech.  
Scorn is sneering rejection of correction/instruction.  
Sedition is speaking against established authority.*

Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men,  
which are made after the similitude of God.

James 3:9

- Recall untamable, unruly, and full of deadly poison (3:8).
- As Christians, we bless and praise God our Father often.
- Once we take His name in our mouth, we are bound to Him.
- How can we then curse men, since God made them like Him?
- How can we then curse men ... especially brethren in Christ?
- Christians must not speak piously in church but harsh out of it.
- This kind of hypocrisy and contradiction is diabolically profane.

*If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar:  
for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen,  
how can he love God whom he hath not seen?*

I John 4:20

Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing.  
My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

James 3:10

- This kind of hypocrisy and contradiction is diabolically profane.
- Such carnal and compromising conduct disgraces Christianity.
- Praising God with your glory is good ... encourage men similarly.
- Know that the watchers have perfect hearing of all your words.
- James would not make the point here unless you can correct it.
- Christians should not engage in such contradiction in speech.
- Let your consistency in speech commend your godly character.

# Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?

James 3:11

- James has condemned hypocritical speech to God and man.
- Water fountains are not so ... they are either sweet or bitter.
- A fountain or spring known for sweet water will always be so.
- A fountain or spring known for bitter water will always be so.
- A fountain or spring cannot have both ... neither should you.
- Christians should consistently have godly, healthful speech.
- Let all others at all times know our words will be good, right.

Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries? either a vine, figs?  
so can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

James 3:12

- It is the nature of a tree, fig or olive, that determines its fruit.
- It is the nature of a grapevine or fig tree that determines fruit.
- It is impossible for trees or vines to bear fruit contrary to nature.
- In the same way, from earlier (3:11), fountains yield one water.
- If you are a baptized Christian ... let your words always show it.
- We cannot by place, circumstances, or mood change our words.
- What if we always spoke graciously and never odiously? *Glory!*

## What Are a Few Speech Rules We Need?

*You will give account for every idle word (Matt 12:36-37).*

*Gracious words prove hearts and win kings (Prov 22:11).*

*Two ears and one mouth means to listen twice as much.*

*Your words are not your own – God hears each (Ps 139:4).*

*Confess sinful speech and beg God for His help (Ps 141:3).*

*Cut your words in half – reduce quantity greatly (Pr 10:19).*

*Slow down to hear and think first (Pr 15:18; 28:13; 29:20).*

*Only speak kindly with grace to build up hearers (Col 4:6).*

*Protect reputations by words and hearing (Pr 11:13; 25:23).*

*Not jesting and foolish talking but thanksgiving (Eph 5:4).*

*Be a tree of life making everyone better (Prov 15:4; 16:24).*

*Blessing and happiness is by words (Pr 21:23; Ps 34:12-13).*

*Your tongue is your glory when it glorifies God (Ps 30:12).*

*Learn the certain words of truth for others (Pr 22:17-21).*



# Conferences Held so far:

- **1<sup>st</sup>** conference – 3 days

**July 2024 – main speakers**

**- Abuoma (Nigeria)**

**- Donald Chimbini (Zambia)**

**Host – Glory Baptist Chebangang, Kenya**

## Topics:

1. Perilous Times – 2Tim.3-4:
2. The Modern Signs and Wonders
3. The Great Commission



# Conferences Held so far:

**2<sup>nd</sup>** conference – 3 days

**April 2025** main speaker

**Donald (Zambia)**

Host – Glory Baptist Chebangang

## Topics:

1. The Great Church
2. The Great Commission
3. Our Great Salvation

# • **Mini- conference – 1 day**

**1<sup>st</sup>** - August 2025

**speaker –David Ngetich**

**Host –GB Chebangang**

## Topics:

1. Comparisons Between KJV and Modern Versions
2. Five Phases of Salvation

# • **Mini- conference – 3 days**

**2<sup>nd</sup>** - **December 2025.**

**Speakers: David, Dominic, And Roy**  
Host - Litein Church

## Topics:

1. Our Baptist Church history
2. True Worshippers in Church
3. Music Instruments in Church
4. Gospel Preaching in Church
5. Altar Calls, Women in Church, Hebrews 4:12



## The Big Three – I Corinthians 14:15

"What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also" (I Cor 14:15).

- N.T. music requires the part that relates to God ... *spirit*, not *body*.
- N.T. music requires the part that thinks ... *the mind*, not *the heart*.
- Even inspiration by the Spirit was to be subordinate to the mind.
- Instruments are unrelated to both spirit and the understanding.
- If we can fulfill singing by a machine, then we can praying as well!











Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

James 3:13

- Change: *speech to wisdom* ... eager teachers (3:1) must show it.
- Instead of words of wisdom ... works of wisdom are far better.
- This section, 3:13-18, is precious, a commentary on Prov 22:11.
- **Conversation** = manner of life or lifestyle; it is not conversing.
- **Meekness** = humble and submissive, patient and unresentful.
- Noble and true princes of God show wisdom by godly conduct.
- If you covet the best gifts ... then use the more excellent way.

But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts,  
glory not, and lie not against the truth.

James 3:14

- *But* ... bitterness, envy, and fighting prove a devilish fool.
- **Bitter** = burning grudge. **Envy** = hostility. **Strife** = conflict.
- Jews in context were like this ... boasting / cursing (3:5,9-10).
- These are in the heart – thoughts – before words or actions.
- Puffed up in vanity ... do not glory or lie you have the right.
- If you have the three vices, you are not qualified to teach.
- Ambition and contention against others are devilish pride.

This wisdom descendeth not from above,  
but is earthly, sensual, devilish.

James 3:15

- If you have the three vices, you are not qualified to teach.
- Any knowledge you have is corrupted by devilish thinking.
- This is truth ... you are not heavenly, but earthly ... hate lies.
- This is truth ... you are not religious, but lustful ... hate lies.
- The three vices prove you are under the influence of Satan.
- We are not ignorant of his devices ... relational insensitivity.
- Test wisdom ... do you get along with offenders and inferiors?

For where envying and strife is,  
there is confusion and every evil work.

James 3:16

- Resenting others and contentions are corruption of soul.
- Godly men get along in peace and unity without the two.
- These two things grieve the Spirit and give place to Satan.
- These two corrupting factors result in two terrible results.
- Resentment and fighting ruin judgment and embrace sins.
- Envy and strife end order, peace, godliness, tranquility.
- Instead there will be agitation, grudges, offences, violence.

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

James 3:17

- Heavenly wisdom has pure ambitions/attitudes in your heart.
- “Pure” for doctrine ... misses context and heart to justify strife.
- The reasoning here is heart integrity not doctrinal correctness.
- Heart motives and relations proved (in 2007) ... here are verses.

Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this,  
To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction,  
and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

James 1:27

*Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.*

*Cleanse your hands, ye sinners;  
and purify your hearts, ye double minded.*

James 4:8

*Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth  
through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren,  
see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:*

I Peter 1:22

*Flee also youthful lusts:  
but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace,  
with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*

II Timothy 2:22

*He that loveth pureness of heart,*  
*for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend.*

Proverbs 22:11

*Blessed are the pure in heart:  
for they shall see God.*

Matthew 5:8

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James 3:17

- Heavenly wisdom has pure ambitions/attitudes in your heart.
- “Pure” for doctrine ... misses context and heart to justify strife.
- The reasoning here is heart integrity not doctrinal correctness.
- Heart motives and relations proved (in 2007) ... here are verses.
- Peaceable – loving peace, making peace – opposite envy/strife.
- Gentle ... not harsh or severe ... not like *Zeruiah* or *Thunder*.
- Easy to be intreated ... does not resist when solicited/corrected.

But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.

James 3:17

- Full of mercy ... would rather forgive and overlook transgressions.
- Good fruits ... the godly results of charity, kindness, or forgiveness.
- Without partiality ... will respect and love all to despise cliques.
- Without hypocrisy ... integrity and sincerity in fact and perception.
- This is heavenly wisdom that marks a man/woman with character.
- This is the opposite of the earthly, sensual, and devilish wisdom.

And the fruit of righteousness is sown  
in peace of them that make peace.

James 3:18

- Righteousness is crucial ... nature and proof of God's kingdom.
- Righteousness is crucial ... here it is the fruit of peacemaking.
- Peace here does not compromise righteousness but yields it.
- Man's wrath – *envy and strife* – works not God's righteousness.

*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;  
and all these things shall be added unto you.*

Matthew 6:33

*For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink;  
but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*

Romans 14:17

*Wherefore, my beloved brethren,  
let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:  
For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.*

James 1:19-20

And the fruit of righteousness is sown  
in peace of them that make peace.

James 3:18

- Righteousness is crucial ... nature and proof of God's kingdom.
- Righteousness is crucial ... here it is the fruit of peacemaking.
- Peace here does not compromise righteousness but yields it.
- Man's wrath – *envy and strife* – works not God's righteousness.
- We endeavor to keep unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
- Peace repeated ... peaceably making peace for righteousness.
- One of God's greatest callings is to be a peacemaker (Matt 5:9).

Paul wrote Timothy a verse that nicely summarizes what we just reviewed here in verses 17-18.

*Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace,  
with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*

II Timothy 2:22

Chapter 3 gave us much practical wisdom ...  
*godly speech, a pure heart, and peacemaking.*

Chapter 1 told us to be doers of the word,  
not just hearers ... *so we must obey chapter 3.*

Your tongue is your glory when it is used for  
the glory of God and the profit of others.

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# For Further Study

- An Excellent Spirit (2025) ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/sermons/index/year-2025/an-excellent-spirit-1/>
- Proverbs 12:18 Commentary ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/proverbs/index/chapter-12/proverbs-12-18/>
- Proverbs 18:21 Commentary ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/proverbs/index/chapter-18/proverbs-18-21/>
- Proverbs 22:11 Commentary ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/proverbs/index/chapter-22/proverbs-22-11/>
- Other Speech Proverbs ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/proverbs/index/proverbs-by-topic/speech/>
- Ruling the Tongue (2000) ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/sermons/index/year-2000/ruling-the-tongue/>
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- Swearing and Oaths (2004) ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/sermons/index/year-2004/swearing-and-oaths/>
- Marital Speech (2018) ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/sermons/index/year-2018/marital-speech/>
- Sons of Zeruiah (2002) ... <https://letgodbettrue.com/sermons/index/year-2002/sons-of-zeruiah/>

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