

Maturity in Speech

James 3:1-12

- I. Potential misconceptions dealt with:
 - A. In the last section James insisted that words without works do not show us justified before men (vv. 12,14,16,18)
 - B. However, lest we come to the conclusion that words are not important, He calls for the demonstration of righteousness with our tongues as well.
 - C. We don't mature in speech by abstinence (closed mouth).
 - D. We don't mature in speech by making the tongue prominent (teaching).
 - E. We mature in speech by going to the heart of the issue, which is the issue of the heart (vv. 11-18; 4:8).
- II. Steps to Gaining Maturity (vs. 1-5)
 - A. Be quick to hear and slow to speak (v. 1a with 1:19)
 - B. Be aware that you will be held accountable for your speech (v. 1b)
 - C. Acknowledge that you will always have room to grow (v. 2a)
 - D. But strive to never stumble in speech and believe that that is an achievable goal (v. 2b)
 - E. Realize the incredible power that the tongue has upon your body for good (vv. 2c-4)
 - F. Realize the incredible power that the tongue has upon your body for evil (vv. 5-6)
 - G. Realize both its potential for building up pride and for destroying others (v. 5)
 - H. Realize that the tongue can enflame the sin nature (v. 6)
 - I. Realize that the tongue can be manipulated by Satan (v. 6)
 - J. Realize that we cannot tame the tongue in our own strength (vv. 7-8)
 - K. But have faith in the power of God's grace to do what you cannot do (vv. 10bff)
 - 1. Realize that "these things ought not to be so" in the "brethren" (v. 10)
 - 2. Realize that God has given you a new nature (vv. 11-12)
 - 3. Lay claim to the wisdom from above (vv. 13-18 with v. 1)
 - 4. Deal with the motivations that lead to ungodly speech (vv. 13-18)
 - 5. Lay claim to the indwelling Spirit (4:1-6)
 - 6. Submit to God and Resist the devil (v. 7)
 - 7. Measure everything you say by God's law and His opinion (4:11-12).