

YOUR WORDS WILL BUILD UP OR TEAR DOWN.

One of the central themes in James is consistency. Followers of Christ should see their thinking patterns, speech, value system, and self-image continually looking less like they once were and more like Christ.

Inconsistency manifests itself in different ways:

1. Double-mindedness - 1:5-8
2. Uncontrolled speech - 3:1-12
3. Worldly wisdom - 3:13-28
4. Arrogance - 4:13-17

Speech & Consistency:

- Teaching the Bible is a **dangerous** calling – 3:1

Q: How do you avoid judgment from incorrectly teaching the Bible?

A: Teach the distinctions between fundamental doctrines and the various theological positions within the “tent” of historic Christianity. Fundamental doctrines (virgin birth, infallibility of the Bible, bodily resurrection, return of Christ, salvation by grace through faith, deity & humanity of Christ) we hold in the closed hand but others we hold in the open hand (head coverings, forms of church governance, music styles, etc.).

- **Taming** the tongue is a tall order – 3:2-10
 - We all stumble in many ways – 3:2
 - Controlling the tongue is top shelf maturity (‘perfect’ the result of trials and faith being tested - 1:4).
 - Small bits control powerful horses – 3:3
 - Small **rudders** control massive ships – 3:4
 - Small tongues create big **fires** – 3:5
 - Small tongues create big **pollution** – 3:6
 - Small tongues are set on fire by **hell** – 3:6
 - Various animals have been tamed by humanity – 3:7
 - Small tongues are a restless evil – 3:8
 - Small tongues are full of deadly **poison** – 3:8

- No human being can tame the tongue – 3:8
 - Small tongues bless God and **curse** people – 3:9
 - These things ought not to be so! – 3:10
- **Absurdity** of inconsistency – 3:11-12
 - Fresh and salt water from the same spring? – 3:11
 - Fig trees produce olives? – 3:12
 - Grapevines produce figs? – 3:12
 - Salt water produce fresh water? – 3:12

Application:

- Become a follower of Christ through repentance and faith in Christ.
- Allow God to transform your vocabulary by changing your mind/heart by meditating on Scripture and loose your tongue with Gospel content.

Psalm 141:3

Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips!

Ephesians 4:29

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.

Proverbs 18:21

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.

Proverbs 12:18

There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

Proverbs 15:4

A gentle tongue is a tree of life, but perverseness in it breaks the spirit.

Proverbs 21:23

Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps himself out of trouble.

- Since you’ve received forgiveness from God, seek reconciliation with those who have been wounded by your words. Tell them you’ve done wrong. Offer no excuses. Humbly ask them to forgive you. Be humble even if they don’t.