

**SUMMARY OF SERMON BY ROB ANDERSON ON JAMES CHAPTER 3**  
**(12 OCTOBER 2008)**

**INTRODUCTION**

Rob dealt with the first 12 verses of the chapter, in which James, proclaiming a message to second generation Christians but one of relevance to the church in every age, calls attention to the power of the tongue. Although small, James called it "a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body."

Rob reminded us that the scriptures teach that the tongue also has the potential for good, depending on the state of our hearts.

"The heart of the righteous weighs its answers  
but the mouth of the wicked gushes evil." (Proverbs 15 : 28)

The pureness of our Lord Jesus' heart was observed by the temple guards who had been sent by the Pharisees and Chief Priest to arrest him:

"'No-one ever spoke the way this man does', the guard's declared" (John 7 : 46)

See also Luke 4 :22; and Luke 4 : 32.

Jesus said to the Pharisees:

"Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad for a tree is recognised by the fruit. *You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good?*" (Matt. 12 : 33 – 34).

Our speech is seen as a significant demonstration of our faith. Paul commends the Corinthians for excelling in speech (2 Corinthians 8 : 7).

So too, Rob also reminded us, are we encouraged to watch our tongues: "I will watch my ways and keep my tongue from sin" (Psalms 39 : 1). And again,

"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." (Tim. 4 : 12).

**WHAT JAMES HAS TO SAY**

The tongue is not mentioned for the first time in Chapter 3. As Rob pointed out, the tongue is mentioned in vs.26 of Chapter 1:

"If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless." (James 1 : 26).

We are reminded of him who.....

"committed no sin and no deceit was found in his mouth" : Isaiah 53 : 9.  
(Mentioned also at 1 Peter 2 : 22).

Teachers, James cautioned, are to be judged more strictly. So we should not readily presume to be a teacher : (3 : 1). In Paul's lists of those who held great gifts within the church, teachers come second only to the apostles and to the prophets. (1 Cor. 12 : 28; and see also Ephesians 4 : 11).

Although man has control of all kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea, "no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison." (3 : 8).

Writing to believers, James incredulously asks how it is that from the same source, the tongue, praise issues forth for our Lord and Father; "and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness." (3 : 9). This should not be, he writes.

### **APPLICATION**

James exhorts us to take great care in the use of our tongue.

### **KEY VERSE**

"We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check." (James 3 : 2).