

TAMING THE TONGUE

LESSON 5: JAMES ON BUSINESS

CORPORATE SITUATION ROOM

Joe has been with the same company for 20 years as a Design Technician, has become an expert in his field, and gained much respect around the office as a top producer. Joe has ceilinged out in his career in the 100 - person, family-owned company but he still really enjoys his work, the respect and recognition he receives. A young, hot-shot engineer with only 5 years of experience is hired and is assigned to be Joe's supervisor! He is very green but driven and very bright. The company owners have even asked Joe to "show him the ropes" and technically mentor him. Joe feels threatened and even bitter because now he answers to a young engineer who knows nothing about the company and is still limited in his technical knowledge.

- Q. How could the company leadership make this transition in a healthy way?
- Q. What are some of the sinful thoughts and attitudes Joe might have toward this young engineer?
- Q. How might Joe's attitudes and feelings come out in his words and actions as a teacher?
- Q. What would you say to Joe to help him gain perspective moving forward?

JAMES 3:1-12

Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. ²We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.

³*When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. ⁴Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go.*

⁵*Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. ⁶The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.*

⁷*All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, ⁸but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.*

⁹ With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. ¹⁰ Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. ¹¹ Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? ¹² My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

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- v. 1-3** Why should teachers be judged more strictly?
When should we speak as a teacher?
In what ways did the teachers of the law fall short in Jesus' eyes?
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- v. 4-6** In what ways do our words reveal our attitudes toward our co-workers and supervisors?
What other ways do we communicate our attitudes to others?
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- v. 7-8** How is it that we can control or tame all other creation but not control our own tongues?
What do you think is our real problem here?
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- v. 9-12** What do these verses say about the struggle going on within us?
What resources does God provide for us so we can keep a reign on our tongues?
Read John 7:38, Isa. 58:11. How is the Spirit-Filled Christian changed?

ATTITUDE CHECK

READ MATTHEW 23:13 -39

Seven Woes against teachers of the law and how they relate to the workplace.

The above passage can be summarized into seven judgments as spoken by Jesus Christ to the spiritual leadership of his time. The reasons for the seven woes pronounced by the Lord were as follows:

1. They shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; they were not even qualified by their character to enter and they wouldn't let others enter either (Matthew 23 VS 13)
2. Devouring widow's houses and making a show of their prayers (Matthew 23 VS 14)
3. They compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, they make him twofold more the child of hell than themselves (Matthew 23 VS 15)
4. The Scribes and Pharisees were blind guides, who wrongly taught the people that whosoever shall swear by the temple will not be bound by that vow/oath but that whosoever swears by the gold of the temple is bound and had a debt to pay (Matthew 23 VS 16)
5. The Scribes and Pharisees were very judicious in paying their tithes as instructed by the Lord in Malachi 3 VS 10, but they relegated the weightier matters of the law to the background (Matthew 23 VS 23)
6. Jesus pronounced a woe on the Scribes and Pharisees because they were more concerned about appearing righteous on the outside before men rather than observing genuine repentance from the heart (Matthew 23 vs 25-28)
7. Jesus rebuked the Scribes and Pharisees for making a show of building the tombs of the prophets and garnishing the sepulchers of the righteous (Matthew 23 vs 29-30)