



## A Systematic Expository Study on the General Epistle of JAMES

### **Study 12: THE UNTAMED TONGUE OF THE NATURAL MAN** **James 3:7,8**

James who is concerned about the character of a true believer sees the tongue in a position of pivotal importance. The profession of Christian faith that does not control the tongue is false and deceptive. James describes the tongue as a wild beast that needs taming - fierce, uncontrollable and dangerous. A major part of the evils of life arise from its uncontrolled activities.

There is the **lying** tongue - of all the evils of speech falsehood is central and damning to most men. Next, there is the **reviling** tongue. Then there is the **foul** tongue - the channel through which the impurities of an unclean heart discharge themselves. Then there is the **passionate, angry** tongue, the tongue that hastens to give voice to anger and hatred. Such a mischievous tongue is set loose, hurling missiles of hot and stinging words right and left, doing damage that may be impossible to repair.

There is also the **sarcastic** tongue that speaks with contempt and pride. The **abusive** tongue is often so harsh and loud, sharp, painful, cutting like a razor blade. The **flattering** tongue gives false praise and stimulates vanity. The **chattering** tongue is the tongue of the talkative whose words are destitute of any benefits. The **slanderous** tongue takes pleasure in trading with scandal and destroying others. **"But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil"**. The natural man is helpless; he cannot tame his tongue. He destroys himself as he destroys others with his tongue.

#### **THE POWERLESSNESS OF MAN TO TAME THE TONGUE**

*James 3:7,8a; Mark 5:4; Psalms 12:3,4; 5:9; 120:3,4; Romans 3:10-14; Matthew 12:34; Jeremiah 9:5.*

Man was created to **"have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth"** (Genesis 1:28). Even after the fall, much of this dominion was retained by man because it was not withdrawn by God. **"Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands"** (Psalm 8:6). So man has enough wisdom and power to tame and subdue **"every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea"** (James 3:7).

The tiger, the lion and other beasts have been subdued and tamed by man. Even serpents that carry venom in their mouths or a sting in their tails have been tamed and brought under control by man. In the sea, crocodiles and whales of all kinds have been tamed and trained to obey and entertain man. In the air, birds have been trapped and tamed by man. **"But the tongue can no man tame"**. This little member, having neither bone nor muscles cannot be subdued to the right use by the unregenerated man. No human power can permanently curb it and keep it under total control!

#### **THE POISON AND PERIL OF THE UNTAMED TONGUE**

*James 3:8b; Psalms 57:4; 52:2-4; 59:7; 64:3-8; 140:3; Proverbs 16:27; 2 Samuel 10:1-8,14,18.*

The untamed tongue (1) is evil, (2) is an unruly evil, (3) is full of poison, (4) full of deadly poison (James 3:8). It is not only evil, but an unruly evil. It can hurt and destroy more than the other parts of the body. The sword in the hand cannot hurt the absent but the tongue can hurt at a distance. If a person wore an armour of brass, yet the darts of the tongue will pierce it. It is evil, and does much harm; it is an unruly evil, and does irreparable harm. It is a world of iniquity; it is a fire - as bad as the fire of hell (or is it worse?); the fire of hell torments only the wicked but the fire of the untamed tongue torments all, both good and bad. An unruly evil! A deadly poison! The untamed tongue can afflict man with a miserable existence on earth and lead others to hell fire to suffer eternally.

## **THE POWER OF DIVINE TOUCH ON THE TONGUE**

*Isaiah 6:5-7; Jeremiah 1:9; Exodus 4:12; Psalm 45:2; Isaiah 50:4; Colossians 4:6; Psalm 14:1-3.*

Though the natural man cannot effectively and perfectly control his tongue, God can touch and tame our tongues as well as transform our hearts. The Prince of Peace, who during the millennial reign will tame the wildest beasts and make them as gentle and docile as a lamb, can tame our tongues by His power now if we fully surrender our hearts and tongues to Him. He at whose word the demoniac ceased his ravings, and the savage seas hushed their tumult - He who has the power to subdue all things unto Himself - can cause the lying tongue to speak truth and the reviling tongue to praise and bless. He can make the noisy passionate tongue to be silent and cause the foul tongue to utter purity. He can make the tale-bearing tongue to be still. With God all things are possible. Let Him touch, transform and tame your tongue.

*If you are blessed by these bible study outlines, we' d like to hear from you.  
You can email the [pastor@deeperlife-liverpool.org.uk](mailto:pastor@deeperlife-liverpool.org.uk) with your comments.*