

JAMES 3 – WEEK 3

WARM-UP

Inviting James to speak to us through an attentive reading of chapter 3.

Imagine you were part of the early church meeting in your friend's home. Your leader declared that they received a letter from James, the brother of Jesus and church leader in Jerusalem. You are eagerly anticipating the message from James.

Read the text slowly and constantly listen for that word that God has prepared for you.

We want to try our hardest to be neutral and intentionally listen. Exercise humility by receiving the Word, instead of analysing and criticising it. Try to resist letting your opinions and preconceptions of James 3 influence your reading or listening. Seek to understand the message of the passage or the 'plain' reading or hearing it.

A. Read

Either for one person to read the entire chapter or a few people to read one or two paragraphs each.

Try to read with emotion.

B. One minute of silence

C. Each member to read out (not explain) the phrase or verse that impacted, convicted, challenged or inspired them, e.g. 'we who teach will be judged more strictly'; it makes great boasts.

D. Go around a second time if people want to read out other phrases or verses.

OVERVIEW

James' warnings about teaching; our communication and true wisdom apply to more than preachers and teachers in churches. They apply to all believers with all forms of communication and our hearts.

READ CH 3:1-2 in at least three versions, eg NIV, NLT, Message

Q1: Today, we 'teach' (inform, influence, inspire, challenge) through conversations, emails, social media posts,) etc.

Pastor Andrew mentioned:

Examples of "faults" when speaking:

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| • vague/unclear | • inappropriate |
| • untrue | • mean/abusive |
| • illogical | • misspeak |
| • confusing | • misrepresent |
| • incomplete | • misinterpret |
| • offensive | • misapply |
| • biased | • boastful |
| • ignorant | • retributive |

- A. Mention a few 'faults' that you struggle with?
- B. What might be the opposite to these 'faults'? Mention 'helpful' speaking that you can practice?
- C. When are you tempted to presume to teach others? Consider all your communication - conversations, emails, social media posts?
- D. How can your 'teaching' be helpful more than harmful?

Q2: Exercise self-control to avoid boasting, evil, sin, slander, judging, and harming with our words/communication. "the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts."

READ 3:1-12

- A. Allow one minute of silence for reflection on a recent occasion when you harmed another by your words. **No need to share.**
- B. Look more deeply and try to identify what might be at the core or the spring (v11)? Consider unmet needs and longings; wounds; unresolved hurt; anxiety; fear; pride; attitude of independence from God, etc
- C. Mention to the group the core issue that flowed out as harmful words.
- D. What will you do to address the core issue?

Q3: Two Kinds of Wisdom –

READ 3:13-18

False Wisdom	True Wisdom
Bitter envy and selfish ambition v 14	deeds done in humility v 13
disorder v 16	Peace-loving, submissive,
evil practice	Good life, pure, good fruit v 17
Cursing, demeaning others	Full of mercy, impartial, sincere

- A. Allow one minute of silence for reflection on a recent conflict that might have revealed your envy or selfish ambition. **No need to share.**
- B. Look more deeply and try to identify what might be at the core or the spring (v11)? Consider unmet needs will longings; wounds; unresolved hurt; anxiety; fear; pride; attitude of independence from God, etc
- C. Mention to the group how true wisdom can help you resist envy or selfish ambition.
- D. Specify actions you will do differently next time you are tempted or triggered?

Q4: Why we need Jesus to save us and to be our role model

Left to ourselves we are a spring of deadly poison, envy, selfish ambition and boasting. We cannot save ourselves.

Jesus is the only human being who perfectly and consistently depended on God and surrendered to Him. He was never at fault with his words and never harmed others.

Jesus alone can rescue us from ourselves and meet our deepest longings.

Read John 7: 37-39

Surrender to Jesus and pray for the filling of the Holy Spirit that we might be 'rivers of living water' and channels of true wisdom and peace-making.