

PUTTING FEET TO FAITH

Part V: *Watch Your Mouths*

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Passage to Ponder—James 2:17–18

“In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, ‘You have faith; I have deeds.’ Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds.”

Today’s Text: James 2:1–12

Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. ² We 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. When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. ⁴ Or 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. ⁶ The 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, ⁸ but 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.

If you profess publicly to follow Jesus, you are a _____. For those you interact with on a daily basis who do not know Jesus, _____ are their teacher. By your words and actions you are _____ teaching people about who Jesus is, and you're either doing a good job, or a bad one! (V. 1–3)

God is saying that he has given you a _____, a cynic might say, “If God is all knowing—why would he give us control over such a potentially damaging tool?”

God's word tells us that this powerful tool was created to make a hugely _____, but like anything—without God our flesh can take this tool God intended for good, and we can use it for evil.

You would never use a dangerous tool without first reading the manual! God's word gives us the instructions on how to “watch our mouths.”

Four instructions:

1. Don't settle for _____. (V. 3–6)

- God didn't save your life and give you a purpose and calling so that you could settle for half way. Our tongues have the power to get us where God _____ us to go or set us _____.

2. Stop _____ what God is trying to _____. (V. 9–12)

- We cannot _____, _____ and _____ the things God has given us or the people he has created, and then praise Him with the same mouth.

3. Remember your words leave a _____. (V. 11–12)

- God is asking us to _____ as He has called us to live, and to let the _____ of our lives _____ to Jesus.

4. Tell yourself, “It's not about _____.” (V. 13–16)

- So much of what we speak that is _____, comes from a place of _____.
- Sow in _____. Reap in _____ which is _____.

When I set myself aside and ask “How would Jesus respond to this person or situation”, I fight back against the selfishness that seeks to take control of my tongue and use it for the opposite.