

Sunday AM - Session 2 – 6/10/2012
"Careless Babble" - James 4:11 b

Reading:

Read James 4:7-11

Great minds discuss IDEAS

Average minds discuss EVENTS

Small minds discuss PEOPLE

The tongue remains hidden for the most part, but when it does manifest itself, so often it has devastating power. The tongue can express or repress, release or restrain, enlighten or obscure, adore or abhor, offend or defend, affirm or alienate, build or belittle, comfort or criticize, delight or destroy, be sincere or sinister. The tongue can zerox the good, or x-ray the bad.

In James 3:3-12, he uses 6 different words to describe the tongue in how it's such a small member, yet it is very powerful.

1. He uses the bit in a horse's mouth by a trainer as a metaphor for controlling the tongue.
2. He uses a rudder of a ship to describe how the small tongue can have a large effect, as in a rudder changing direction of a huge ship.
3. He compares the tongue to a raging fire.
4. He compares how men can tame large and dangerous animals, yet no man can tame the tongue.
5. He compares the tongue to a spring that can't produce both bitter and fresh water, yet the tongue can both bless and curse.
6. He uses fruit to show that the same mouth can bring both blessing and cursing, while a fig tree cannot produce olives nor a vine produce figs.

Review on part A of verse 11:

KATA = down + LALEO = speak; this means literally to speak down, translated *speak evil*.

ME - negative adverb = *no* or *do not*, combined with the imperative verb KATALALEO (*DO NOT SPEAK DOWN*); this means do not *speak down* on someone, or slander them. This means STOP DOING what you are already doing.

The tongue can be a blessing or a curse; God has given us this little instrument, usually enclosed, but when it is unbridled it can do so much damage.

The second line of this a part is to avoid misuse of the tongue toward one another *of the same kind*; we know this because of the next noun in the verse - BROTHERS (adelphoi).

Often ministers are speaking evil of other fellow ministers. Just because ministers are not in agreement is *never* an excuse for slander.

Ephesians 4:41, Colossians 3:8 - uses the word BLASPHEMA - to bring to ill repute, a strong form of personal mockery, abusive speech that will injure the reputation. In Titus 3:2 Paul says to BLASPHEME no one.

1 Corinthians 5:11 speaks of association with brothers who among many other things use injurious speech using the Greek Word LOIDORAS - Hurling hurtful words.

Don't adopt a judgmental, critical attitude. We are all capable of this; we think negatively of other people, and try to cast them down with our speech.

Now, look at the next (b) part of this verse:

"The one speaking against a brother or judging his brother speaks against the law and judges the law."

This same word KATALALEO is used in a slightly different form (KATALALON) than in the (a) part (KATALALEITE).

We are so gifted at putting others down so easily because of the influence of our sinful natures. STOP TALKING IDLY, EXCESSIVELY, FOOLISHLY, BABBLING or CHATTERING. James is saying STOP IT NOW.

1. This part of the verse says: "The one speaking against a brother or judging his brother speaks against the law..." The word for speaking against is the same root word KATALALEO. The word LAW is a noun without a definite article, emphasizing the qualitative aspect of the word LAW. This is the law of freedom, the law of love.
2. The meaning of the word LAW is determined by its context, which is revealed back in James 1:25 – 2:12, where it talks about the *law of freedom*. How *incredibly blessed* we are to have freedom to study God's Word without serious persecution at this time!
3. Freedom is a function of God's Grace.
4. Slander, on the other hand is maligning and judging the principle of the Grace life. This is the law of love, as we see in Romans 12:10, 1 Corinthians 12:25 and in Galatians 6:2, God wants us to love one another, bearing each other's burdens. We see this in Ephesians 4:2, 25, Col 3:13 1Thessalonians 5:15, Hebrews 10:24, 1 Peter 4:8 and 1John 4:7,11
5. Sins of the tongue become an attack on the privacy of another believer. The life of a mature believer is one in which the tongue is under control.