

## **James 2:14-26 ENCORE**

- 1)** Perhaps James continues the illustration of the poor man coming into the assembly (v.1-6) by further identifying him as a believer in need of food and clothing (v.15-16). Someone in the congregation offers the standard Hebrew farewell, “Depart in peace,” but offers no tangible expression of help. What are some things modern Christians do or say to avoid assuming the Biblical responsibility of meeting the needs of others?
  
- 2)** Is James somehow suggesting that helping the hungry is a prerequisite to salvation?
  - a.** Explain your answer:
  
- 3)** Put verse 18 into your own words:
  
  
- 4)** All faithful Jews believed the Shema (a creed based on Deut. 6:4: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord.”). Israel’s monotheism (belief in one God) separated them from the polytheistic beliefs (belief in many gods) of surrounding nations and was the source of great spiritual pride. Does belief in one God make you right with God (v.19-20)?
  
  
- 5)** What did James mean when he said that the “demons believe”?
  
  
- 6)** If you were witnessing to an unsaved person and he told you that he did believe in God but did not see his need for salvation, what could you say to him?
  
  
- 7)** Even though Abraham and Rahab were very different (Abraham was a Jew and a godly man; Rahab was a Gentile woman who had been a harlot) both possessed a dynamic faith that produced obvious evidences of a genuine conversion.
  - a.** Explain the meaning of verse 21.
  - b.** Explain the meaning of verse 24.
  - c.** What was it about Rahab that demonstrated the presence of saving faith in her life?
  - d.** Why should Rahab’s inclusion in this passage be a great encouragement to you today?
  
- 8)** Read 1 Timothy 3:16. In what way was Jesus justified?
  
- 9)** What do you think is the meaning of the word justified in verse 21?
  
- 10)** How do we know Abraham’s justification by works does not refer to his salvation (v. 21)?
  
- 11)** How would you answer the person who argued from James 2:21 that our works or our behavior does play an important role in our salvation (Justification before God)?
  
- 12)** What does James say in this passage about a person who claims faith but whose life is void of fruit?
  
- 13)** In the overall pattern of your life, do your actions vindicate that you do, in fact, possess saving faith? Explain your answer.

## **James 3:1-12 The Unruly Tongue LA**

**Monday (v.1-2)** Isn't it interesting that James singles out teachers first? Why do you think that is? He is clearly talking about those who teach in the church. Part of the reason James singles out teachers is that teachers usually do a lot of talking. It is critically important that teachers in the church teach only what is right or correct doctrine (teaching). Notice though that James doesn't necessarily have simple doctrine in mind here. Rather he is talking about a use of the tongue that shows maturity. You could paraphrase it this way; if you are a teacher show that you are qualified to teach by demonstrating a mature use of the tongue. From a negative we might say; if you habitually use your tongue in an ungodly way you are disqualified to teach.

**Tuesday (v.3-4)** One of the reasons I love the book of James is that James uses wonderful illustrations. Today we have two fitting illustrations 1) a horse with a bit in it's (of all things) mouth and 2) a large ship which is easily turned by a small rudder. How does this help you understand how your whole body might be controlled by such a small thing as your own tongue?

**Wednesday (v.5-6)** Isn't the Bible a masterpiece of literature? We wouldn't expect any less, it is God's Word. The little tongue "boasts great things." A tiny fire (envision a match or cigarette) can light a huge pile of wood on fire. The people in south Florida or Southern California know something about this. Every year fires devastate huge plots of trees and homes. You know when those wild fires are lit they are very hard to extinguish and most of the time the damage is irreparable. In the same way, once the words are out of your mouth there is no way to reel them back in. You can only go forward and deal with the devastation. Does this help you understand the awesome power of your words (tongue)?

**Thursday (v.7-8)** James gives us another illustration – the taming of animals. If you think about it that really is an awesome thought. God has placed mankind in a role of dominion on the earth. We have (by God's design) been able to tame or subdue any kind of animal. How is it then, that mankind has been unable to tame or subdue his own tongue? It would seem from our accomplishments that it is not for lack of ability – we have been able to tame some powerful animals (lions come to mind). It must then be that most people have a lack of desire.

**Friday (v.8-10)** Notice that the book of James is full of what I like to call "illogical inconsistencies." This one is obvious and awesome. How can you use your tongue on Sunday morning to sing loud praise to God, or during the week to witness what a great God we have & serve then the rest of the time use that same tongue to curse, back-bite or run down men (people) who are made in God's image. That is totally illogical! Not to mention sinful. "My brethren these things ought not to be so."

**Saturday (v.9-12)** James continues the masterful use of illustrations. He is now using contrast and comparison to help us see the illogical inconsistencies in our lives. Blessing is contrasted with cursing, a spring giving both fresh and polluted water a fig tree bearing olives and a grape bearing figs. In the created order the things which James mentions do not happen. What does that tell you about using your tongue to tear down? James tells us to examine our "spring" if you owned a well that poured out undrinkable water, would you still try to drink from it on certain days? Probably not, because you know that the water is undrinkable. Do you see how it is illogical (and sinful) to use that which was made to praise God to hurt and run down those who are made in His image?