

Computer Generated Transcript - We're going to continue on this morning in our in our study of James my wife's home sick I'm going to take this stuff out of my pocket because she always reminds me and she wasn't here to tell me to take the stuff out she doesn't like the way it looks in my pockets so Mandy if you listen later I did it OK. I just completely lost my train of thought All right we're going to James we're in chapter three we've been studying through James. This last several weeks and and looking what James has to say to us trying to trying to decipher what what all of these things are all of these different. Teachings that he gives And so again I want you to remember a few things as we launch into this James is a pastor in a church in Jerusalem as he writes this James is the brother of Jesus OK again with all of the the things in weirdness that that brings along with it I mean can you imagine being the brother of the only perfect person to ever walk on the face of the earth right I mean all of these different things that that come into play as a result of that James is writing to a scattered persecuted church All right this is already happened where the Christian church has been attacked in the violently in Jerusalem and they have spread throughout. Spread throughout the known Roman Empire at this time and James writes this letter to these believers who are being persecuted and his one of his primary purposes in writing this letter is to teach them about what mature Christianity looks like right not just like. How do we say a prayer to Jesus like he's teaching them mature Christianity and now I want you to understand all of those intrigue level things are important but that's not James purpose in this this thing he's right in the people who already know stuff about it they know the basics of the faith and he's writing to them about how to become a mature believer what mature faith in Jesus Christ actually looks like and I don't know if you've noticed so far I know some of you have read through this letter. A couple of times as we've been going through this have you noticed that James like if you read through the New Testament there are several times where you see lists of sins right like these big long lists of things that were to avoid and I'm not trying to make any sort of light of those lists those are important Have you noticed in his list of things of maturity he hasn't done that yet. Like when he talks about maturity in Christ he hasn't just given us lists of sins because I think James already just takes it for granted that you're not doing that stupid stuff. And you need to grow in another way you need to grow further so many times I think as Christians we get this messed up we look at the list of sins and we kind of start getting those out of our lives and we're like OK I'm mature now. And she was like Well you figured out the basics good job you're not supposed to be sleeping with people who you're not married to where to go right you're not supposed to be tipped over drunk every night good job we're getting there James just assume. That that stuff is good like he just assumed not he doesn't assume those things are good he assumes that you've already got that figured out. And he's writing these people who are being persecuted about what maturity looks like it's so far he's covered two topics right what what are the two main things that we've talked about the last two weeks one of the two just like he's gotten really specific about things one of those two things well faith by what faith is always going to bring about good works right if you're just talking about your faith the demons do that awesome. That's literally what he said as we looked through it last week he's like great you have the faith of a demon. If all you ever do is talk about it and it doesn't make you take any next steps. Faith is always going to require us doing something. Going out and producing good works what's the other thing you guys remember last week that's good now you've got to think two whole weeks ago I know that can be difficult prejudice judgment deception right he talked about how these people are coming in and based on a snap judgment based on the look the way that they look you treat them differently. You talk about that that's pretty difficult. Right how many of you I'm not asking you to raise your hands I just want you to think OK so you don't have to raise your hand in the last week how many of you did that. You looked at somebody made a snap judgment about who they are based on nothing more than how they look and it changed how you would have treated them. Right most of us if we're on if I went back a month probably everybody would be like yeah I did that. This is difficult but he says mature face we have to carve that out. Right and then he's just going to continue with another really simple thing this week OK we're going to be in James Chapter three if you haven't already turned there were going to be in James Chapter three and I read out of the New

Living Translation most weeks if you've got an electronic version and you like to learn to read those same words that the pastor is going to read and that's what I want to read out of if you've got your own favorite translation that is absolutely fine there's a lot of good ones out there. But James Chapter three he dives into this this next thing all right and so one of the reasons is like again as we as we dive into scripture we have to be thinking about scripture and be understanding what it's saying one of the reasons that James writes what he does is because he just is he's you know he's writing to a group of people that he knows are struggling with this. So as he's writing these things James is going to start talking about all of these things as he's talking to Christians who are facing persecution he writes this really simple thing that they have to watch what they say and their tongue is going to get him in trouble this is like the furthest thing from simple I've been sarcastic at this point this is absolutely difficult you're already under persecution your lives are on the line which you really have to do is watch what you say and to give us you know this this picture James actually gives a six word picture in this brief portion of Scripture. To talk about the power of the tongue all right in chapter three we're going to start in verse one it says Dear brothers and sisters not many of you should become teachers in the church for we who teach will be judged more strictly indeed we all make mistakes for if we could control our tongues we would be perfect. Could also control ourselves in every other way we could make of a large horse go wherever we want by means of a small bit in its mouth and a small rudder makes a huge ship turn wherever the pilot chooses to go even though the winds are strong so he starts out and he says not everyone should be a teacher right so what he's dealing with and what we know from from now that it's history we look back there were lots of people in the first century as especially in these times as persecution was happening Apostles were dying and you know as as these things were happening the leadership of the church from the beginning is now starting to be persecuted and be killed or be imprisoned there's all kinds of willing people who want the authority of being a teacher. Right they step in they're like yeah looks really good I really want to be the one in charge. And James says you know not measured not very many of you should aspire to that because you know you're in charge but you're held to a higher standard. For a number of reasons when you speak about something right. We're called to this we're called to to to practice what we preach if we don't practice that it's hypocrisy how many times have we seen in the last few years where a teacher of the faith has been up in front of people for years talking about what they believe and then all of a sudden it comes out that they have not been living what they've been preaching. And it's wounding it's damaging in so many different ways now that is not to say that teachers are expected to be perfect or expected to do is be honest right I'm going to be honest right now and I'm going to tell you as we dive in to the whole thing of controlling the tongue I don't know if there's anything in my life that gets me in more trouble today than my mouth. Right and most of you are like I have experienced that right. Now I seriously. I don't know if there's anything in my life today that gets me in more trouble that would cause me to do more things that I do not believe bring glory to God in my mouth I mean this is an area where I struggle regularly and I would venture to guess unless you're a mute so do you and if you're immune you probably know sign language and you struggle with your hands not your tongue this is difficult. What we're talking about today just like what we've been talking about the last several weeks James isn't just giving us easy lifts James is giving us a very serious very significant ways to show we're mature right and he's to start to talk about that we are in it is important all right and he dives in and he gives us this idea of the bit in the router right and then these two things and I want you to understand our tongues have the power to direct and that's what a bit in a writer does write those two things they direct our tongue has that power so when he's talking about these things or these things these three different powers our tongues have the tongue has the power to direct both the bit and the rudder must overcome contrary forces how many of you have ever ridden horses you've ever ridden horses how many of you were bigger than the horse that you rode How many of you were stronger than the horse that you rode Yeah right so like oh man and you don't know how strong. These animals are huge. They're huge they're big they're powerful you know what the dangerous thing about a horse to me is it has its own mind. Like it has a brain it knows what it wants to do and the way that you direct

a horse. Is with a tiny little thing that sits in its mouth right now if you get onto a horse and it's very well trained I guarantee you you won't do this with a young horse but if you get onto a horse and it's very well trained and it's mature you can direct it with your knees you don't need you don't you know you don't need the bit so much anymore but almost no one rides with out of it all but very well trained but you don't find that in the young animal you find that in a very mature animal that has been trained and been ridden often. But the way that you control the horse most of the time with a bit. You can direct this animal that's bigger than you stronger than you and faster than you by controlling its mouth. Right you have the power to direct in the same way a rider has the power to direct write a rider has this ability how many of you have ever been on a boat and it got to where you know you shouldn't still be on the boat right I mean like you're on the boat it's like yeah I should have gone in a long time ago and the winds start to blow and the waves start to wave What do they do roll How do you control your boat right with the rudder with the motor where we have the benefits of motor now. In the day all they had was a rudder and that rudder would take them through storms. Contrary when waves to safety. Because it has the power to direct. But both the bit and the rudder must be under an experienced strong hand experienced horseman knows how to keep his feet under control the experience pilot. Courageously steers the ship through the storm Jesus Christ controls and tongue we allow him the direction of our tongue. Control comes. Things start to get easier death than life are in the power of the tongue Solomon tells us and Proverbs eighteen twenty one David says set a watch oh lord before my mouth keep the door of my lips inclined not my heart to any evil thing and psalm chapter one forty one David knew that the heart is the key to right speech out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks Matthew Chapter twelve thirty four Jesus Christ says that to us. You ever noticed how like if you have been around somebody. And you're talking and things are going on and all of a sudden something happens that wasn't expected and one of those words comes out. Right I know none of you have ever done that but somebody were with someone else. Right and that happens and they're like where did that come from I don't even know where that came from yes you do what's in there comes out. That's what the Bible teaches us whatever is in there comes out. I know that's not always fun to hear but if you're struggling with those kind of things what's in here comes out. Particularly in adversity the power of life and death. In our mouth what controls are mile. What is revealed by our mouth your heart. Now listen I'm not saying that if you swear one time you're going to hell and you're the worst Christian in the world don't run that to the end of things but maturity means we begin to control or tone. And what is inside. Is oftentimes revealed by our mouth. In hard times right so when you're looking at me like I want to get out of here it's only going to get worse before it gets better OK so just take a deep breath because we're not this is like one of three right now OK. Out of the abundance of our heart our mouth speaks so here's my thing with all of that if you don't like what's coming out of your mouth fill your heart was something different. This is not rocket science right this this is difficult. But it's not hard to understand if you don't like what's coming out of your life fill it was something else. Change what's going in. And what comes out will be different we know this right I mean how many of you have ever made a terrible pot of coffee. Anyone only three of you OK good you guys are all excellent coffee makers how many of you have ever made dinner. Didn't taste great. Right you made something and you got that you were like oh. Not how I meant for that to happen how many of you repeated that recipe exactly you like man that tasted awful Let's keep doing it. Right some of you are like yeah I don't care what it tastes like as long as the runs the body work good most of us if we don't like the way something change tastes we're going to do something different right it's no different with our heart. If we don't like what's coming now change what's going in. If we want to change we're going to have to change. It's required you can't keep doing the exact same things and expect some different result we have to change in the same way that a runaway horse or a ship wreck. Can mean injury or death our tongue has the power to cause life or death. Let's make sure that it is under the right hand and the right control we offer. Our time and make sure that right things are coming out and I am telling you this is something I struggle with. Something that most of us struggle with in verse five he continues on in the same way the tongue is a small thing that makes

grand speeches. But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire and among all the parts of the body the tongue is a flame of fire it is a whole world of wickedness corrupting the your entire body it can set your whole life on fire for it is set on fire by hell itself people can tame all kinds of animals birds reptiles and fish but no one can tame the tongue it is a restless and evil full of deadly poison. So what this is saying is you can't fix it all on your own it's an impossible task we can control all kinds of things. But it's an impossible task to control your tongue on your own. We're shown here a second power the power to destroy with a fire in the animal or fire begins with just a small smartest small spark. But it can grow to destroy a city. At eight thirty pm on October eighth eight hundred seventy one. A small fire started in a barn in Chicago. And many of you if you studied history at all know that that fire spread over one hundred thousand people were left homeless seventeen thousand five hundred buildings were wrecked over three hundred people died. It cost the city over four hundred million dollars. That was in eighteen seventy one do some math with inflation and figure out that number most of us have seen fires raging across Montana and California and the West the last few years some of those fires started naturally some of them start small there was a the largest fire in Montana to date there's bigger ones since then but to that day when I was a youth pastor in Montana happened because a camper flicked a cigarette into the woods and it burned like ninety five or one hundred to some like that of like hundred thousand acres because somebody flicked a cigarette into the woods. You know that if you are the one that they trace a fire to you have to pay for all the damages but that's a true story giant fires don't usually start giant. They're small and they spread. There's a power to destroy our words can start fires where there is no wood the fire goes out so where there is no tell there are the strife stops as coals are to burning fire as wood is to fire so contentious man is to candle strife that's Proverbs Chapter twenty six percent twenty through eleven. Like a fire but some good heat things up David wrote I said I will take heed to my ways and I sin not with my tongue my heart was hot within me while I was musing The fire burned then I see should I speak with my tongue some chapter thirty nine one through three David was saying I'm angry. I'm frustrated. I need to watch what's coming out of my mouth so in my anger I don't say something stupid. I could learn a lot from that. How about you you ever have that experience of the saying something in anger. And as soon as it comes out of your mouth you're like there's no getting that one back. I mean we can apologize we can make restitution but there's no putting the words back yet and you know it is soon as it comes out of your mouth and David is saying. That's not OK James is saying. My tongue is a fire fire spreads and burns it will destroy as long as there is fuel in his path not only his tongue like a fire but it's also like a dangerous animal. It's restless. It seeks prey it pounces and kills really great illustrations that we're getting here from the Bible right. James reminds us that animals can be tamed and for that matter fire can be tamed when you tame an animal you get a worker instead of a destroyer when you tame fire you generate power. The tongue cannot be contained by man or cannot be tamed by man however it is set on fire by hell itself and James three six but you know what God is bigger. The tongue cannot be tamed by man but the tongue can be tamed by God Have you ever just studied the life of Peter man you talk about a dude that talked before he spoke in the Bible there is not a better example talk before he thought not spoke can't talk before you speak but isn't it amazing how when we see Peter encounter the Holy Spirit encounter resurrected Jesus restored by Jesus himself full of god. The way he talks just changes. Because he matures because he gives God control. Because he'll loused God to be the abundance in his heart that his mouth speaks. And there is a lot to be learned. From that. Verse nine James continues on. Sometimes it praises our Lord and Father and sometimes it curses those who have been made in the image of God. And so blessing in cursing come pouring out of the same surely my brothers and sisters this is not right there's a spring of water bubble out with both fresh water and bitter water there's a fig tree produced all of us or a great vine produce figs no. And you cannot draw fresh water from a salty spring. James says that there is power to the light in the time. The words of a man's mouth are deep waters and the wellspring of wisdom as a flowing broke Proverbs eighteen for the mouth of a righteous man is a well of wife proverbs ten eleven water sustains life water cleanse is just like in these fountains right the tongue is delightful because it's like a tree right

he talks about the tree here in Bible lands trees are vitally important if you think about it in the desert of the Middle East trees are not common right trees here are in abundant resource right walk outside over there and trying to count don't. Do I mean just trying to. There are trees everywhere. In the Middle East however that is not the case there are small Many times there are stunted It is a valuable commodity. And he compares our tongue to that commodity. They help feed the hungry soul the lips of the righteous feed many Proverbs. Ten twenty one the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life that's when Jesus tells us in John chapter six for sixty three as we share God's Word with others we feed them and encourage them along the way but James issues a warning a warning a fountain cannot give forth two kinds of water the tree cannot bear two different kinds of fruit we expect the found to flow with sweet water we expect the tree to produce the right kind of fruit if the tongue is inconsistent something is wrong with our heart and I want you to hear that again if the tongue is inconsistent there is an inconsistency in our heart that we need to allow God in I am not just talking to you this morning I am talking to myself This is a struggle. This is real James says we praise God with our tongue and then we we heard that which he has made in His own image that's people some of you will experience this today you are here. And you praise God this morning. And you're going to go out to eat and that stupid waiter is going to be taking all kinds of time and why do they have to do this and why do they have to that than. Speakers. That simply and that quickly if you will be the waiter they don't know you want your kids why can't you figure life out. Just be like me you're fifty they're ten some of you might have been more mature at ten than you are fifty but I want to move on these are difficult things. It is so easy to curse the image of God. It is so easy to run down. His prized creation. We don't even think you think about a lot of days and they deserved it do your job better and I want to talk to you like that we justify it in all kinds of ways. Again I'm not trying to just talk to you. This is something that we all struggle with if there is an inconsistency in our tongue. We need to check the inconsistency in our heart because God does not have full control and if you want to be a mature believer it's not just about keeping lists. About learning how to control what comes out of your mouth we're not to treat people differently based on appearances. Our faith is to be accompanied by actions and work to be a people marked by controlled speech that brings honor to God His creation. That's easy right those three things are the easiest things to do of all time. No they're not they're incredibly difficult and that's why it's called maturity not how to be a baby Christian if you're in this place and you you're just getting on to this road of Christianity and you're like trying to figure out all this stuff this all takes time you know I don't want anybody in this place if you've been serving Jesus for eighty years or this is your first time in church you don't need to go home today and be like All right well clearly I can never say anything wrong again or I'm not mature and God. James has already talked about this we talked about this in the first couple of weeks these are processes that's why so many times in the Bible they use words like strive or they use illustrations like a race right that we purse or veer in these things it's not about we come to the altar one time we pray we go home everything's all better and we're never going to make a mistake again I wish that's how it was that would make things a lot easier for me but that is not my experience in life. This is a process of maturity allowing God to have control of your tongue many of us are good when things are going well right many of us do a good job of speaking life when things are going well but man when the wheel comes off and the storm starts to brew and you feel anger and selfishness start to come. Look out world. You never know what's coming out and the sign of maturity is not only to have a controlled time when things are good. But when the storm is raging this is not easy. This is not simple this is however sure. This is the goal. The smallest I'm going to read a quote from my study here the smallest But largest troublemaker in all the world is the time. The smallest But largest trouble maker in all the world is the sun but it does not have to be a trouble maker God can use our tongues to direct others into the way of life to delight them in the trials of life the tongue is a little number but it has great power. You can speak of life you can speak death we share the words of life and who Jesus is and what his words is tremendous change for the good happens. When we speak death. What a terrible shame that is this is a difficult thing and I said I would really wish as we've been going through this that you can just

take some of these things and make them really light. But you just can't. Because James is writing to people about how to be mature they're through the light stuff and they're on to these heavy things. And if we want to be mature in the faith like I said maturity has nothing to do with our age right some of you in here. Like I said different times in your life you may have been more mature than you are right now because we've allowed maturity to come in and since then we've allowed maturity to escape us it's not about just being older. It's about being more like Jesus. Let's not settle for immature fame let's not just make excuses. It's not that big a deal anyway this is difficult. I'm going to I'm reiterating again this is probably my greatest struggle as a follower of Jesus. Now not in my whole life but right now who has control over your time. And you allow him to be set on fire by hell itself. Are you allowing God to control that some of you need to change how you talk to people. Do you talk to people like they're dumb they're insignificant or they don't know as much as you some of you are cruel I've been all those things probably not alone. It's not OK. The mark of maturity is allowing God to carve those things out. The mark of maturity is speaking life. Blessing. Allowing God to work through our tongue to build. A very. Difficult but it's right it's difficult but it's right and James says I want to I want to make sure I come back to this James says in this letter you're not capable of it on your own. If you try and do this all by yourself I guarantee you you will fail. Because I'm so smart and I know that because if it's in the Bible I trust it and James says we can't do it. Only God can bring about a permanent change in this area. All right so we're going to transition here. I know we we remember Jesus in our in our communion time this morning I know we've been talking about him controlling our tongue but I want you to know in this place. Jesus Christ came to this earth just like we talked about in communion two thousand years ago he lived he taught he loved people he lived a sinless life and ultimately he allowed himself to be killed in our place. That we could be made right with God but that was not the end of the story of Jesus had just died lots of people have died for what they believe in. That is not what makes Jesus unique that is not what makes him the conqueror of sin. What makes Jesus the conqueror of sin is that he conquered death and sin with it. And he rose that we could be made right with our father with God not to just have sins covered but to be made right before God. And if you're in here and you have not chosen that life saving soul cleansing. Jesus you want to give you a chance in just a moment to do this I'm going to we're going to I'm going to give you a chance to pray we're not going to call you up I want you to know we are going to I want to pray with you if that's you if there's anybody in here that's fine if not then we're going to move on to the second part and here's what it is how is your time. Are the words coming out of your mouth life or death. Or is it a mixed bag or both. It's a mixed bag or both You're probably in good company. But it means there's growth to be had I'm going to challenge you to not leave this place without talking to Jesus first. I'm not even to have you raise your hand or stand up because I know that at least once in the last month or two everyone in this room have screwed up in some way with the words and come out of your mouth. I know it's true because this is difficult. You talk down to somebody you've put somebody down you whispered behind their back gossip you did whatever in the last month two months we all struggle with this we can be better. Because Jesus better not because you're awesome. I like you but it's only God is going to bring about the change so much courage you if you need to go you can go if you're just like you know what I'm done. I'm going to lock the doors. You can go. And I would challenge you not to leave this place without giving got a minute. Just search your heart. Offer it to him all over again and allow him to start control our time. OK so that's good bye hasn't closed your eyes we're going go back to that first question is there anybody in here you've not chosen Jesus. With this morning you know you need to you've never chosen him before or maybe you chose him but you walked away and you've been doing your own thing and you know this morning. And things are not right between me and God. And this morning you're ready to ask his forgiveness. To let him guide your life. Or anybody in here and all want you to raise your hand I just want to pray three but you know that that's you I'm not going to wait long you don't want to motivate by guilt or awkward ness and I want to give you a chance if that's you. All right Mark can you turn on some polite music back there for me. I'm going to pray and then we're going to be done like I said. I'm going to encourage you to not leave until you get and got shot so you

10-28-18

give him a just a moment. To work in your life for some of you that might take longer than others and that's OK We don't have to be like somebody else but I want to encourage you not to leave without asking God honestly how my doing here. How can I grow here. Here it is God take control of your. Jesus your. I thank you for your word even these parts that are hard for me I think you got that you didn't. Die for me to be OK. You didn't just die for me to live in mediocrity. But you have called me to maturity. And you make it possible. Jesus you know that this can be a struggle for me. I pray right now that you forgive me. For you guide me in this. Or that you speak for me in this God not to try and chase after some false man made idea of what this looks like but got to find you. In your past for this in my life. And I pray you speak to everyone here. Help us to reflect you better. Help us to be more in love with you. God you're good. Trust you to do what your word says we can't. Just control or. You never pray in the.