

EPISODE NO. 350

James 3:1-18

Controlling Our Words

James, the half-brother of Jesus, wrote these words: 1 My brothers, not many of you should become teachers, because you know that those of us who teach will be judged very carefully. 2 We all make many mistakes. Who is so perfect that he hasn't made a mistake — said something he shouldn't have? Which one of you is able to control his whole body? 3 We put bits into the mouths of horses, so that we can make them obey us. When we control their mouths, we can control their whole body. 4 Look, it is the same with ships. Although a ship is very large and is moved by strong winds, yet only a tiny rudder guides the ship's course, and the captain's wish controls the rudder. 5 It is the same with our tongue. Though it may be small, it brags about great things.

Look, a big forest fire can be started by only a little flame. 6 The tongue is like fire! Even though it is small, it can be a world of evil among other members of the body; it pollutes the entire body. It can set the whole world on fire; hell starts the fire. 7 Mankind tames and has tamed every kind of animal in nature — beasts, birds, reptiles, and fish. 8 However, man has not tamed the tongue. It is wild and evil, full of poison which can kill. 9 How can we, with our tongues, praise the Lord God, our Father, and yet, using the same tongue, curse human beings who were made in the image of God!? 10 How can it be that praises and curses come from the same mouth!? No, my brothers, it shouldn't be like this! 11 Does good water and bitter water flow from the same fountain? 12 My brothers, can a fig tree produce olives? No. Can a grapevine yield figs? No. In the same way, it is impossible to have salt water and fresh water coming from the same spring!

True Wisdom Comes from God

13 Is there a person among you who is truly wise? Is he also intelligent? Then he should show his wisdom by living right. He should do good things wisely and humbly. 14 But, if you are jealous, full of bitterness, and have selfish ambition in your hearts, don't brag about it, and don't try to make the truth look like a lie. 15 That kind of so-called "wisdom" does not come down from God; it is the wisdom of the world, the wisdom which is not spiritual, the wisdom of demons. 16 And, if there is jealousy and selfish ambition, then confusion and every other kind of evil will be present, too. 17 However, the wisdom which comes from God is first pure, then peaceful, gentle, willing

to obey, full of mercy and good deeds, without doubts or hypocrisy. 18 And, the fruit of righteousness grows peacefully within the people who make peace.