

Hurtful Words

James 3:1-10; Ephesians 4:29

(black Bibles pages 1012, 978; Children's Bibles pages 1509, 1456)

James 3:1-10: Taming the Tongue

- Look at 3:2: "For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body."
 - Perfect speech = perfect man!? That's how 'telling' our speech is of who we are.
 - "For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."
–Jesus (Matt 12:34)
- Look at 3:9 for our specific sermon theme: "With it [the tongue] we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we _____ people who are made in the likeness of God."

Why do I say hurtful words?

- The shark image: you see the fin above the water, but it's what's lurking beneath the surface that matters. What's 'the sin beneath the sin'?
- Example: Why do you quarrel? See James 4:1-2

RBO: Repent – Believe – Obey

- This is the Christian life and personal growth
- We will think about [B]elieve primarily today

An extreme but important topic: verbal abuse

- Why is change rare among men who are abusive? Secular expert Lundy Bancroft says it's what they [B]elieve that holds them back. They feel justified. Their values that they believe justify them in their own eyes.

What do we [B]elieve about Christ and ourselves that should help us grow and cease using hurtful words?

How do we take steps to practically [O]bey, when we might not know what to say?

- Eph 4:29 is helpful!

Questions for further study

1. Read James 3:1-10, especially 3:2. Is this matter important in your life? Do you think the tongue is an accurate indicator of your spiritual state?
2. Remember the shark image. Why do you say hurtful words? What are the desires or beliefs lurking beneath the surface that result in your speech?
3. Repent-Believe-Obey. What do you actually [B]elieve about yourself or Christ that might be wrong and prevent you from growing? (How can you preach the gospel to yourself?)