

^[3] Now if we put the bits into the horses' mouths so that they may obey us, we direct their entire body as well. ^[4] Behold, the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, are still directed by a very small rudder, wherever the inclination of the helmsman desires. ^[5] So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. Behold, how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! ^[6] And the tongue is a fire, the very world of unrighteousness; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell.

[James 3: 3-6]

As you read through Today's introductory passage, did you notice how the *PROBLEM with the TONGUE* is described in James 3:6? The *TONGUE* is said to be,

... a FIRE, the very world of UNRIGHTEOUSNESS....

The Greek noun here translated as 'unrighteousness' is the Greek noun ἀδικία (adeekeeah),¹ which can also be translated as 'wickedness', 'iniquity' or, 'evil'. So how do we handle this "world of UNRIGHTEOUSNESS" that comes into our lives by use of our "TONGUE"?

The Holy Spirit moved James to say that we have learned how to make 'horses' who are stronger' than us "obey us" by 'putting' "bits into the horses' mouths so" that we may "direct their entire body"...

[James 3:3]. James is also moved to illustrate this by calling our attention to the "ships" of that time saying that even "... though they [were] so great and [were] driven by strong winds, [they were] still directed by a very small rudder, wherever the inclination of the helmsman [desired]" [James 3:4].

James is then moved to liken these two illustrations to your "*tongue*" which he says, "is a small part of the body". James is then moved to metaphorically say that yet the "TONGUE", even though it "is a small part of the body... it boasts of great things" [James 3:5^(a)].

James then gives a third illustration as to how large things can arise from small things, saying, "Behold, how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire!" [James 3:5^(b)].

In these three illustrations, the Holy Spirit through James is teaching us that by regulating the *WORDS* our *TONGUES* speak, we can also regulate the things which occur in our life! This is the same lesson which the wiseman teaches us in Proverbs 21:23 where he is moved to say,

The one who guards their mouth and their tongue, guards their soul from troubles.

For this to occur, our *TONGUE* must first give way to the desires and purposes of God. For, as Romans 8:28 says, we need to remember,

*... that God causes all things TO WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD to those who LOVE God,
TO THOSE WHO ARE CALLED ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE.*

Even though your *TONGUE* is such a small part of your body, it often determines the direction in which your whole life is going or will go! In the same way that the fate of a ship is dependent upon being

¹ "Unrighteousness" is the Greek noun ἀδικία (adeekeeah), Strong's Greek noun number 93.

properly guided by the helmsman; so is the direction of your life determined by the PURPOSE of God, your 'Helmsman'.

IF you are a disciple of Christ Jesus, you must remember that even though your TONGUE is a small part of your body, it is a very *powerful* part. "As goes your TONGUE, so goes the direction of your *LIFE!* For this reason, you must turn your life over to the Great Helmsman, God and ask Him in *PRAYER* to *HELP* you *CONTROL* your TONGUE!

Jesus said in Matthew 15:11 that it is,

"Not what enters into the mouth [which] defiles someone, but what proceeds out from the mouth, this defiles someone."

Therefore, in the same way that pouring a thimble of black paint into a gallon of white pollutes the whole gallon; it is what the TONGUE speaks which can pollute the whole of your life!

In the same way that a blazing forest fire can be started by throwing a cigarette on the ground, so the sins of the TONGUE can spread throughout your life, setting the course of your life on fire as it "*defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of [your] life...*" [James 3:6^(a-b)!] Remember, James 3:6^(c) goes on to teach you that this "*FIRE... IS SET ON FIRE BY HELL.*"

Remember, it is always possible for your flesh to ignite the TONGUE into a *RAGING INFERNO* (please read Romans 7:8-24)!

I hope you have seen in Today's Thought the potential deadly nature of your TONGUE which so calmly lies within your mouth. Always remember one way to avoid the spark which can ignite your TONGUE into a raging fire is to "*... be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God*" [James 1:19^(b)-20]

Lord willing, please meet me here again Tomorrow when we will consider how our FAITH is "Tested by one's *SELF-CONTROL – to be ABLE TO TAME the TONGUE.*

Will you please now join me in prayer?

O LORD, Today I again give You thanksgiving for warning us the tongue is a fire, the very world of unrighteousness. And that if we do not tame it, the tongue can defile our entire body, and set on fire the course of our life. I also thank you that the fire of the tongue is set on fire by hell. I thank you for reminding us Today You will cause all things to work together for good if we love you and are called according to Your purpose if we allow You to be our Divine Helmsman to direct our lives. I give you this thanksgiving and praise as I ask this in the name of Jesus my Lord. Amen!

Please meditate and pray on these things!

Louise and I pray this will help to both enlighten and encourage you to **know in a greater way** the **One** Who promises in His Word to never leave you nor forsake you [Hebrews 13:5; Deuteronomy 31:6,8]!

EVEN THOUGH MY TONGUE IS A SMALL PART OF MY BODY, HOW I USE IT CAN DETERMINE THE DIRECTION MY WHOLE LIFE WILL GO; THEREFORE, I TURN THE HELM OF MY TONGUE OVER TO GOD, MY DIVINE HELMSMAN! – tom.