

Talk Is Cheap
Week 6: Words are Costly

1. Welcome

- Greet first-time visitors and online community
- Acknowledge the challenge of being a one-sided conversation from the pulpit

2. Introduction to James 3

- Focus on James 3 as a charge to pastors and church leaders
- James 1:19-20: Quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger as the backdrop
- Context: James speaks specifically to teachers, particularly pastors and elders

3. The Role of Teachers and Accountability

- Warning to those who aspire to be pastors/elders
- Emphasis on the stricter judgment faced by teachers (James 3:1)
- Leaders are held accountable for how they use their words

4. The Importance of Maturity

- Maturity in faith begins with controlling the tongue (James 3:2)
- Controlling words is a sign of spiritual maturity
- James' call to leaders to reflect on their role and responsibility

5. The Power of Words

- **Illustrations:**
 - The bit in a horse's mouth (James 3:3)
 - The rudder of a ship (James 3:4)
 - The small spark that sets a forest ablaze (James 3:5)
- Words have the power to control the direction of life, both individually and corporately
- The tongue, though small, holds immense power in leadership

6. The Danger of Uncontrolled Words

- The tongue is a fire, set on fire by hell (James 3:6-8)
- A warning of the destructive power of unchecked speech
- The tongue can be full of deadly poison, and leaders must exercise great care

7. The Inconsistency of the Tongue

- The hypocrisy of blessing God and cursing others made in God's image (James 3:9-10)
- Words should reflect our hearts and align with God's design
- The importance of respecting the Imago Dei in everyone

8. Evaluating the Source of Our Words

- Illustrations: Sweet and bitter water from the same spring; figs and olives (James 3:11-12)
- Our words reflect the condition of our heart
- The fruit of our speech reveals our inner spiritual state

9. The Impact of Words in Leadership

- How words define and shape the culture of the church
- Leaders' words hold great responsibility in building or destroying
- The charge to use words to honor God and reflect His image

10. Conclusion

- Call to action: Evaluate how we use our words, especially in leadership roles
- Reminder: Talk is cheap, but words are costly
- Prayer for wisdom and self-control in speech