

Taming the Tongue (Jas 3:1-12)

The Rev. Corinne Hodges, Sun., Sept. 13, 2009, SJOC

- I. Facebook
 - A. Why I did it
 - B. Why I resisted for so long: words
 - C. Words can get us in trouble—teachers, job applicants, we’ve got to choose them carefully
- II. James
 - A. Tongue=bridle horse’s mouth, rudder of ship, fire in middle of forest.
 - B. Controls us. Steers us. Has power over us.
 - C. Like small fire in forest, destroy not only us but others
 - D. All have seen cases of this—children, adults use words in hurtful ways—Lucia
 - E. None of us immune—all of us have regretted something we have said at some point—we all make mistakes
- II. Yesterday married friend/priest and fiancé
 - A. Words=communication key to relationships
 - B. Quality of our words
 - C. Easy to say lots & lots of words
 - D. But to say the right words, words that bless vs. curse, that’s a challenge
- III. Gary Chapman “The 4 Seasons of Marriage: Understanding & Talking about the Ever-Changing Cycles of Marriage”
 - A. Learn to Speak Your Spouse’s Love Language—5 ways to express love emotionally
 - 1. Acts of Service---actions speak louder than words,” ways to show love, doing
 - 2. Receiving Gifts
 - 3. Quality Time—undivided attention
 - 4. Physical Touch—holding hands, hugs
 - 5. Words of Affirmation—seems like easiest/least amount of effort, yet so many of us do not offer, words of love, appreciation
- IV. Jas talking about members of Christian community “body”
 - A. Teachers, those who instruct others how to live
 - B. Marriage just a start—many families, community
 - C. What kind of words do we send out into world?
 - D. 1. Words of help and healing, encouragement and affirmation, build others up
 - E. 2. Hurtful and angry, discouragement, put others down, tear them to pieces
 - F. Do we spend more time blessing or cursing others?
- V. Last week 8th anniversary of September 11
 - A. People who left their loved ones that day never to see them again
 - B. What were their last words to their family /friends?
 - C. What would we want our own last words to be?
- VI. The speech we choose to use should not be about quantity as much as quality
 - A. Peter in Gospel, good ex. He uses hasty speech, blurts out w/out thinking first—emotions get best of him
 - B. One area in which analogies in beg. of reading don’t quite work for me
 - C. The idea that the bridle is in charge of the horse, that the rudder leads the ship, takes us to the notion that we are not in charge of our tongues or mouths, but they are in charge of us. Poor excuse for using unloving, insensitive speech.
 - D. In end, true that our words can get us into trouble, set ablaze a great fire amidst God’s people, do more damage than good...but it does not have to be this way.
 - E. We can take control of emotions & words. Intentionally & deliberately tame our tongues, offer more words of appreciation & less of criticism
 - F. Through our speech, may we be the peacekeepers, affirming God’s goodness and hope in God’s people