

## *Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript*

### **Stop Kidding Yourself**

**James 1:19-27**

#### **Part Ten**

The theme of James is “Tests of Living Faith”! This epistle was written so that we might know whether we are saved or not saved. The first test that we find in this epistle is the “The Response to Trials test.” This test is found in **James 1:2-18**. We have now begun to consider the second test which is “The Response to the Word test” in **James 1:19-27**. A proper response to the Word involves a “proper reception” in **VV. 19-21** and a life characterized by “active obedience” in **VV. 22-27**.

As we have explored this area of “active obedience,” we have looked at the “demand for it” in **VV. 22-25** and we are now looking at specific “illustrations of it” in **VV. 26-27**. The very first area that we have looked at is the speech area. Let us look at **V. 26**, “**If anyone thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man’s religion is worthless.**” One area that active obedience must be manifested is in the area of our speech: the way we talk, the way we communicate. If we find ourselves being unchanged by the Word in this particular area, we are in trouble. A religion that does not transform the heart, and thereby the tongue, James tells us, is totally worthless in the sight of God.”

What does it mean practically for us to bridle our tongue? Certainly it would involve putting off certain speech patterns while putting on others. Over the past several weeks we have been considering a few areas of speech that need to be put off or abandoned.

Blasphemous speech involves an intentional and defiant dishonoring of the nature, name, or work of God by word or action. Last week we gave you certain examples of how this might be done even by professing believers. In addition to this area of speech, another area of speech that we mentioned last week that needs to be abandoned is filthy speech.

Filthy speech is anything inconsistent with the modesty of a saint. And again like we did with blasphemous speech, we gave to you last week certain examples of how this might be done by professing believers. The very last area that we addressed last week was lying speech.

Lying speech is any speech that is consciously attempting to mislead or deceive another. We talked about this at length last week, giving examples of how professing believers might fall into this snare.

Complaining speech is any speech that expresses a spirit of discontent with the way things are.

Boastful speech is any speech that robs God of what is due him in respect to glory, honor and praise.

Angry speech is any emotionally driven communication which originates from the flesh that impels us to hurt or destroy that which angers us.

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Careless speech is any speech that does not produce any good result.

I would like to now move on to another aspect of what I believe to be involved in the bridling of the tongue. That is in the areas of speech that need to be put on, that need to be embraced, that need to be added. In helping me to do this I would like to use the ACRONYM .... A-C-T-S . As we consider each letter of the ACRONYM, I will give you an area of speech and apply it to our communication with God in prayer and then take the same letter and apply it to our communication with man in our everyday conversations.

We will begin with the letter A

In respect to our communication with God, a very important part of that speech is ADORATION. I know that adoration is not the exclusive property of God. I know that people can express adoration for people other than God. But even though this is true, adoration is a necessary part of our communication with God. Adoration is defined as: “The act of paying honor, as to a divine being: WORSHIP.” Therefore, we know that when we express adoration for a particular person it is simply that. It is adoration, or in other words, the act of paying honor. But when adoration is personally expressed to the Lord, it becomes worship and this expression of adoration or worship is absolutely essential for Christians who are seeking to bridle their tongues.

We see this in the OT in **Deut. 6:13** when it tells us “**You shall fear only the Lord your God; and you shall worship Him....**” We see this truth confirmed in **Matt. 4: 10** when Christ responds to the testings of Satan by saying, “**Begone Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.’**”

Our English word “worship” means “worthship”, denoting the worthiness of an individual to receive special honor in accordance with that worth. In a broad sense, our worship of God can include anything that is offered to Him as an expression of service to Him, as God, such as we see in **Mt. 4:10** In a more narrow sense, worship is the expression of pure adoration to our Lord, the lifting up of our redeemed spirit toward Him in contemplation of His holy perfection. Certainly this is primarily done through words either spoken or sung.

What then is adoring speech as it applies to our communication with God? Adoring speech is the outflow of our redeemed spirit contemplating God’s holy perfections addressed to Him in prayer.

We see many examples of worshipful speech in the Scriptures. They are common within the **Psalms**. Listen to the words of David in **Ps. 63** “**O God, Thou art my God; I shall seek Thee earnestly; My soul thirsts for Thee, my flesh yearns for Thee, In a dry and weary land where there is no water. (2) Thus I have beheld Thee in the sanctuary, To see Thy power and Thy glory. (3) Because Thy lovingkindness is better than life, My lips will praise thee. (4) So I will bless Thee as long as I live; I will lift up my hands in Thy name. (5) My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth offers praises with joyful lips. (6)When I remember Thee on my bed, I meditate on Thee in the night watches,**

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**(7) For Thou hast been my help, And in the shadow of Thy wings I sing for joy. (8) My souls clings to Thee; Thy right hand upholds me.** What is David doing in these verses? He is worshipping God . He is through this prayerful communication to the Lord honoring Him FOR WHO HE IS.

In reflecting on this whole area of bridling our tongue as an expression of active obedience to the clear teachings of God’s Word, it involves not only the putting off of certain speech patterns but also the putting on of certain speech patterns. And I believe that one of the speech patterns that must be put on in respect to God is ADORATION or in other words worshipful speech either spoken or sung.

Should we be satisfied in doing this once a week when we come to church here at Valley Bible. Certainly this is a wonderful opportunity to come together in corporate worship, but certainly we should not limit our expressions of adoring speech simply to those times when we are together here each weekend. Rather, we should take advantage of the opportunity to do this anytime we come before Him in prayer. What does **Ps. 100** tell us? **“Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth. (2) Serve the Lord with gladness; Come before Him with joyful singing. (3) Know that the Lord Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture. (4) Enter His gates with thanksgiving, and His courts with praise.”**

How are you doing? Consider your prayer life for a moment. Do you take the time when approaching the Lord in prayer to honor Him through what you are saying? Do you take the time to tell Him how much you love Him? Why you love Him? Do you take time to praise Him for who He is and for that which sets Him apart from all others? Or do you just rush into His presence with certain specific needs that you have before dropping off to sleep at night? What are you doing?

I am sure that some of us feel very inadequate to put into the words the we ourselves feel but what can be very helpful is to use the words others to help you to express your heart.

When we come to prayer we can be helped if we would like take the words of others. For instance you can use the words to the song, “Great is Thy Faithfulness” as you begin to talk with the Lord. **“Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father! There is no shadow of turning with Thee; thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not: As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be. Great is thy faithfulness, Great is thy faithfulness, morning by morning new mercies I see; All I have needed Thy hand hath provided Great is thy faithfulness Lord unto me.”** You could go to a song like “And Can it Be that I Should Gain?” **“And can it be that I should gain an interest in the Savior’s blood? Died He for me, who caused His pain, For me, who Him to death pursued? Amazing love! how can it be That thou my God, shouldst die for me? Or you could use a reading such as found on page 324: “We praise thee, O God: We acknowledge thee to be the Lord. All the earth doth worship Thee, the Father everlasting. To Thee all angels cry aloud; the heavens and all the powers therein. To Thee cherubim and seraphim continually do cry: “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth. Heaven and earth are full of the majesty of Thy glory.” The glorious company of the apostles praise thee.**

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**The goodly fellowship of the prophets praise Thee. The noble army of martyrs praise Thee.”** Certainly these are all helpful but there certainly could be no better offering of worship that we could give than our own stumbling, halting words of praise. So let us not believe that we have to be eloquent, but let us know this ..... We need to be about bridling our tongue so that our speech might be used to express adoration of the Lord.

Now let us turn our attention to the letter A again, but this time not in respect to God, but in respect to man. As we are seeking to bridle our tongue, we should seek to build into our speech pattern as it relates to God, “adoration” and as it relates to man, “appreciation.” Appreciative speech is any speech that communicates to people we value them for who they are.

Are we called to express appreciation as it relates to man? I believe that the answer would be, ‘Yes’! What does **1 Pet. 2:17** tell us? **“Honor all men; love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.”** Notice the word, “Honor.” What does this mean? The word translated “honor” (TIME) primarily means “valuing.” We are being called in essence to value all men.

And you might say, “Even sinners?” And the answer is “of course sinners.” Sinners are still the objects of God’s love; He seeks to save them at infinite cost to Himself. God urges the saved to have the same loving attitude toward them as His own. We should treat all men with the dignity they deserve as those who have been created in the image of God. God has commanded us to honor all men, to value all men. I would believe that one of the ways that this could be done, not the only way but one of the ways, is through our speech and more specifically through expressions of appreciation for what we see in them that is good. If there is something praiseworthy in people, we should not be shy about telling them.

Do we see this in the Scriptures? Do we see people being honored for those things in them that are worthy of praise? And the answer is of course, Yes! This is done frequently within the Scriptures. Not to long ago we studied the Epistle of 1 Thessalonians. Do you remember the first chapter and how Paul addressed them? **“(2) We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers; (3) constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father; (4) knowing, brethren beloved by God, His choice of you; (5) for our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction; just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake. (6) You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the Word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit, (7) so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. (8) For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything. (9) For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, (10) and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, that is Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come.”** What is Paul doing in these verses? He is honoring them with his speech. Is this a terrible thing to do? Of course not! It is a wonderful thing to do. It is an encouraging thing to do. It is one of the ways that we can express obedience to the command to honor all men.

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How are you doing in this area? Let us consider your spouse. Are you commending your spouse for those areas of strength you see in them. If your answer is no perhaps you need to stop focusing on yourself and what is going on in your life and spend some time reflecting on this very simple question: What do I appreciate in my spouse? And then purpose, when the opportunity arises, to express to her the appropriate area of appreciation.

How about the area of your children? Are you commending them for the areas of strength that you see in their lives? If your answer is “no”, perhaps you need to stop focusing so much on all the areas in which they are falling short, to take some time and acknowledge those wonderful qualities that perhaps you have been neglecting.

How about the area of parents? Are you commending your parents for the good things that you have seen in them? Now as a child it might not cross your mind that they need this. But you need to remember that parents can be very hard on themselves and beat themselves up pretty good. It sometimes can be such a wonderful encouragement to hear a few kind words from their child.

How about your friends? What would happen if you took time to say to one of your adult friends sometime that you so much appreciate the sacrifices that they have made for you? Or what would happen if you turn to one of your teen age friends and say something like, “You know, I just wanted to tell you that you are some one people can count on.”

Let's take this a little further. We not only have the opportunity to honor people by expressing appreciation to them personally, but we can also honor them by expressing appreciation for them to others. Do we find this practice in Scripture? Again the answer is categorically yes. In **2 Cor. 8** we again look at Paul and his speech and find him doing exactly what I have just shared with you. Listen to his words beginning in **V. 1** “**Now, brethren, we wish to make known to you the grace of God which has been given in the churches of Macedonia, (2) that in a great ordeal of affliction their abundance of joy and their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality. (3) For I testify that according to their ability, and beyond their ability they gave of their own accord, (4) begging us with much entreaty for the favor of participation in the support of the saints.**” What is Paul doing here as he is communicating with the Corinthians? He is expressing his appreciation of the churches of Macedonia. He is what? He is honoring them. I find it wonderfully refreshing to hear about the good deeds and the positive attributes of others; their good works, their great attitudes, or wonderful heart.

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### CONCLUSION

James was written so that we might know whether we are saved or not saved. One of the tests that James gives us to help us make this determination is the “ Response to Word test.” This involves a proper reception that will invariably result in active obedience. An area of our lives that certainly will be impacted as the Word works itself out in our lives through active obedience is the area of our speech.

Those who are saved, as they study the Word of God, will be striving to bridle their tongue. This will involve them putting off certain areas of speech. They will certainly be striving to put off blasphemous speech, filthy speech, lying speech, complaining speech, boastful speech, angry speech and careless speech. But they will also be striving in their speech to express adoration in respect to God and they will be striving in their speech to express appreciation in respect to man.