

3. The **crown of glory** is awarded to pastors who faithfully study and communicate Bible doctrine to their congregations. The evaluation is strictly about the accuracy of his message, if what he teaches is clearly presented, doctrinally accurate, and exegetically supported.

This pastor's modus operandi is reflected by his emphasis on doctrine. He is prepared academically and theologically sound based on the literal analysis of Scripture which is reflected in his oral presentation to his assigned congregation.

1 Peter 5:2 Feed the flock of God among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion but willingly under God's direction, not for personal gain but from enthusiasm.

v. 3 And do not lord it over those entrusted to you, but be examples to the flock.

v. 4 Then when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that never fades away. (EXT)

Final Synopsis:

1. Believers are commanded to grow in grace and the knowledge of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 3:18)
2. The place where this spiritual growth is to take place is in a local church.
3. Believers are commanded to "stop habitually forsaking the command to assemble themselves together in the church." (Hebrews 10:25)
4. By comparison to eternity, the time we have on this earth to grow in grace is limited to just a few decades on average.
5. This earthly residence is the base of operations for the believer to grow in grace all the way to spiritual maturity.
6. It is by means of the regular assembly that others are encouraged and motivated to attend and join the others as effective witnesses for the Prosecution in Lucifer's case before the Divine Court of Appeals.
7. The esprit de corps that is gradually developed among those who consistently gather together is a source of encouragement for others to join the assembly.
8. The system by which the believer is enabled to make his spiritual advance begins with attendance at the local church where doctrine is being taught on a consistent basis.
9. The purpose for this consistent assembly is clearly stated in the two following passages:



James 5:8 You too be patient; facilitate [aorist active imperative of στηρίζω (*stēρίζō*)] your soul's doctrinal inventory, for the Rapture [παρουσία (*parousía*)] of the Lord is imminent [intensive perfect active indicative of ἐγγίζω (*engízō*)]. (EXT)

Hebrews 10:25 stop habitually forsaking the command to assemble ourselves together in the synagogue/church, as is the consistent behavior of certain reversionists, but encouraging them through your consistency; and even all the more as you see the day of the Rapture [ἡμέρα (*hēméra*)] being imminent [futuristic present active participle of ἐγγίζω (*engízō*)]. (EXT)

10. If the Rapture is imminent and could occur at any moment, then the believer is instructed to assemble himself together for the purpose of spiritual growth.
11. When the imminency of the Rapture is clearly understood, then attendance at the assembly of believers indicates the urgency of acquiring as much doctrine as possible should its arrival occur during their lifetimes.
12. You may ask the question, “Do I believe the Rapture is about to occur?” Don't know. Imminency indicates that it is the next prophecy to be fulfilled on the divine agenda.
13. When it does occur, it will do so without warning as is indicated by this verse:

1 Thessalonians 4:16 The Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. (NASB)

14. “The dead in Christ will rise first.” This means they conceivably will hear these three things occur since they are returning from heaven in interim bodies toward the locations of their human bodies' remains.
15. But what about “we who are alive and remain?” Are they going to hear these commands that take place way up in the air? Remember, this event is global. It will take place rapidly as the entire population of Church Age believers, dead and alive, will be assembled for their rapid transfer into the Third Heaven.
16. Ergo, there is in all likelihood no dependable warning about the execution of this final prophecy that concludes the Church Age.
17. That being the case, it is both advisable as well as urgent that the believer in Jesus Christ take seriously the opportunity each day provides to continue his spiritual growth toward maturity so that he may reap the rewards indicated by the winners in Revelation, chapters 2 through 3.



We now return to our study of the Letter of James where we left off at chapter 3, verse 7:

James 3:7 For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles, and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. (NASB)

James 3:7 The four taxonomic categories or Genera among living creatures are beasts [animals: θηρίον (*thērion*)], and birds [πετεινόν (*peteinón*)], reptiles [έρπετόν (*herpetón*)], and creatures of the sea [fish: ενάλιος (*enálíos*)]. (EXT)

James 3:8 But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. (NASB)

1. This verse is a continuation of verse 7 but it is introduced by the adversative conjunction **δέ (dé)**: “but.” It forms a contrast between man being able to subdue and control wild and untamed “living creatures,” but unable to tame and control his own tongue.
2. This is asserted by the phrase “no one can tame the tongue.” Interestingly, the Greek puts the noun, **γλῶσσα (glōssa)**: “tongue,” first: “but the tongue no one is able to tame.”
3. By placing the word “tongue” first it deprives it of its case which normally is accusative and is usually the object of the verb, which here is the present active indicative of **δύναμαι (dúnamai)**: “able.” In the NASB it is the word “can.”
4. Ordinarily, the noun “tongue” would occur at the end of the sentence. James places it first because it is the thing he wants to emphasize. It is like putting an implied exclamation point on it: “The tongue no one is able to tame!”
5. The verb “tame” is the aorist active infinitive of **δαμάζω (damázō)**: “To reduce to stillness or quietness; to subdue or tame.”
6. James then expands on the tongue’s negative impact in two ways. The first is, “it is a restless evil.” The word “restless” is the adjective **ἀκατάστατος (akatástatos)**: restless is fine but it also has the meaning of being “unstable.”
7. Synonyms of “unstable” include: “unbalanced, of unsound mind, mentally ill, deranged, demented, disturbed, unhinged, volatile.”⁵
8. This disturbing set of definitions for the deranged is followed by the noun, **κακός (kakós)**: “evil.” This asserts that this man’s mind–set is “full of deadly poison.”

⁵ Oxford American Writer’s Thesaurus, 3d ed., comp. Christine A. Lindberg (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 955.



9. This phrase begins with the adjective, **μειστός (*mestós*)**: “full” and defines how this evil is to be characterized. It is followed by a long, compound, multisyllabic adjective suggesting what it takes to describe this problem: **θανατηφόρος (*thanatēphóros*)**.
10. This compound is composed of the noun, **θάνατος (*thánatos*)**: “death,” and **φέρω (*phérō*)**: “to bring.” Together they result in the adjective, “death-bringing.”
11. What brings this death is the noun, **ἰός (*íos*)**: “the venom that serpents inject from their fangs.”
12. We have done some minor commentary on the Genus **έρπετόν (*herpetón*)**: “reptile,” including two venomous species of snakes, the family Vīpéridae: rattlesnake, cottonmouth, copperhead, and bushmaster and the family Elápidae: Black Mamba, Coral, King Cobra, and Death Adder.
13. The viper has folded front fangs; it strikes, inserts venom, and withdraws. The Élapid has fixed front fangs; it strikes, bites, inserts venom, and chews and often repeats the last two steps.
14. It can be confidently stated that both species are “full of death-bringing poison.” James speaks metaphorically when he writes that the restless tongue does the same thing which no one can tame.
15. Occasionally venomous snakes run out of venom and thus out of ammo. Shortly, their venom sacs are reloaded.
16. On rare occasions, the tongue of the death-bringing reversionist goes silent while his soul conjures his next oral assault on its next victim.
17. The serpents’ venom is replenished through natural process and is the major component of his defense department’s ordinance against suspected enemies.
18. The death-bringing venom of the reversionist emerges from a reservoir of mental-attitude arrogance and hatred against anyone he decides needs a good, old-fashioned chewing out in the fashion of an Élapid.
19. The analogous venom of the reversionist is the result of mental attitude sins. His venom sacs are systematically refilled by the constant production of arrogance and hatred from the cosmic systems.
20. His mental-attitude sins produce the venom while the tongue functions as the fangs.
21. This habitual behavior pattern is expressed in numerous ways. The advanced reversionist, having lost touch with reality, is mentally deranged. Therefore, he can vacillate between apparent cordiality toward others and then suddenly spin on a dime by expressing hostility.

(End JAS3-85.Rev. See JAS3-86.Rev for continuations of study at p. 311.)



22. Such a person is obviously unstable, but his fluctuating behavior patterns cause others to never quite know where they stand because they never know what personality trait will emerge next.
23. The venom of the unstable believer has an arsenal of ordnance to deploy: gossiping, criticizing, maligning, judging, et. al., while assigning all sorts of sins and indiscretions to the poor bloke caught in his crosshairs.
24. A mature believer has the stability of soul to allow these assaults to bounce off his doctrinal armor. To do so provides an example of the situation James is describing and wishes to prevent.
25. In fact, James introduces chapter three with the example of how a believer ought to behave:

James 3:2 For we all fall into sin in many ways. If anyone does not sin in what he says, he is a mature believer, able to restrain his tongue by bridling his entire body with his volition.
(EXT)

1. The volition of this believer has the power to make a good decision from the inventory of doctrines in his *kardía*. This is a problem-solving device that empowers the believer to regulate his entire body and most importantly his tongue.
 2. This is made possible by his volition complying with his conscience to apply doctrine in his soul as the working object of his faith.
 3. The sin nature may tempt him to say something verbally, but his conscience restrains and overrides that temptation thereby suppressing the lust patterns of the sin nature.
 4. By suppressing the desires of the sin nature, the believer has bridled his entire body with the result that his tongue is not used to utter sinful comments.
 5. The soul therefore avoids uttering a sinful remark and thereby maintains the filling of the Holy Spirit.
 6. This is an example of how the Royal Law and the law of freedom function so that the believer is able to “love his neighbor as himself.”
26. Such a response expresses unconditional love for his adversary. He transfers the adjudication of the assault over to the Supreme Court of Heaven while maintaining poise and grace.



27. The illustrations given in verses 7 and 8 continue James’s exposition about the overwhelming impact the untamed tongue can have and the ramifications of its cosmic assaults from the venom sacs of the reversionists’ free will.
28. James continues his dissertation on the tongue by discussing the dichotomy illustrated by the inconsistencies of its use.

James 3:9 With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God. (NASB)

1. A dichotomy is defined as “a division into two especially mutually exclusive or contradictory groups of entities.”¹ The pronoun “it” refers to the tongue. It is reflexive and should be translated, “By means of this, i.e., the tongue.”
2. The instability of this believer’s volition is again addressed by James. First, he writes that with the tongue, this reversionist uses his volition to verbally “bless our Lord and the Father.”
3. The word “bless” is the present active indicative of the verb, **εὐλογέω (eulogéō)**: “we bless, praise, extol, glorify.” The direct objects of these encomiums are cited as, **κύριος (kúrios)**: “Lord,” and **πατήρ (patḗr)**: “Father.”
4. In James’s context, he establishes that his primary and overriding concern is the flagrant, unbridled use of the tongue to communicate human viewpoint, human good, and evil in his criticism of others.
5. Overwhelmingly, these excoriations are laced with venom that contains gossip, criticism, accusations, argument, false finding, sins, and behaviors directed toward other believers.
6. Somewhere in the process, this spiritual reprobate occasionally realizes that his castigations are ill-received, rejected, and rebutted—sometimes done argumentatively and in other times by clear, biblically-based responses.
7. For various reasons, by a guilt complex, by a desire to publicly portray spirituality, or an effort to take the spiritual high ground, the antagonist uses his tongue to arrogate Christ and God as witnesses on his behalf.
8. This is hypocrisy of the most dangerous order. One must not use God to support sin. Use of the tongue to criticize a fellow believer is an overt, verbal sin. The latter is bad enough; the former is blasphemous.
9. When aggrandizing his comments by implying support by God and Christ is a dangerous game to play. For example, take this tactic and combine it with Matthew 7:1–2 and the confluence of divine wrath is sure to follow.

¹ Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed. (2014), s.v. “dichotomy.”

