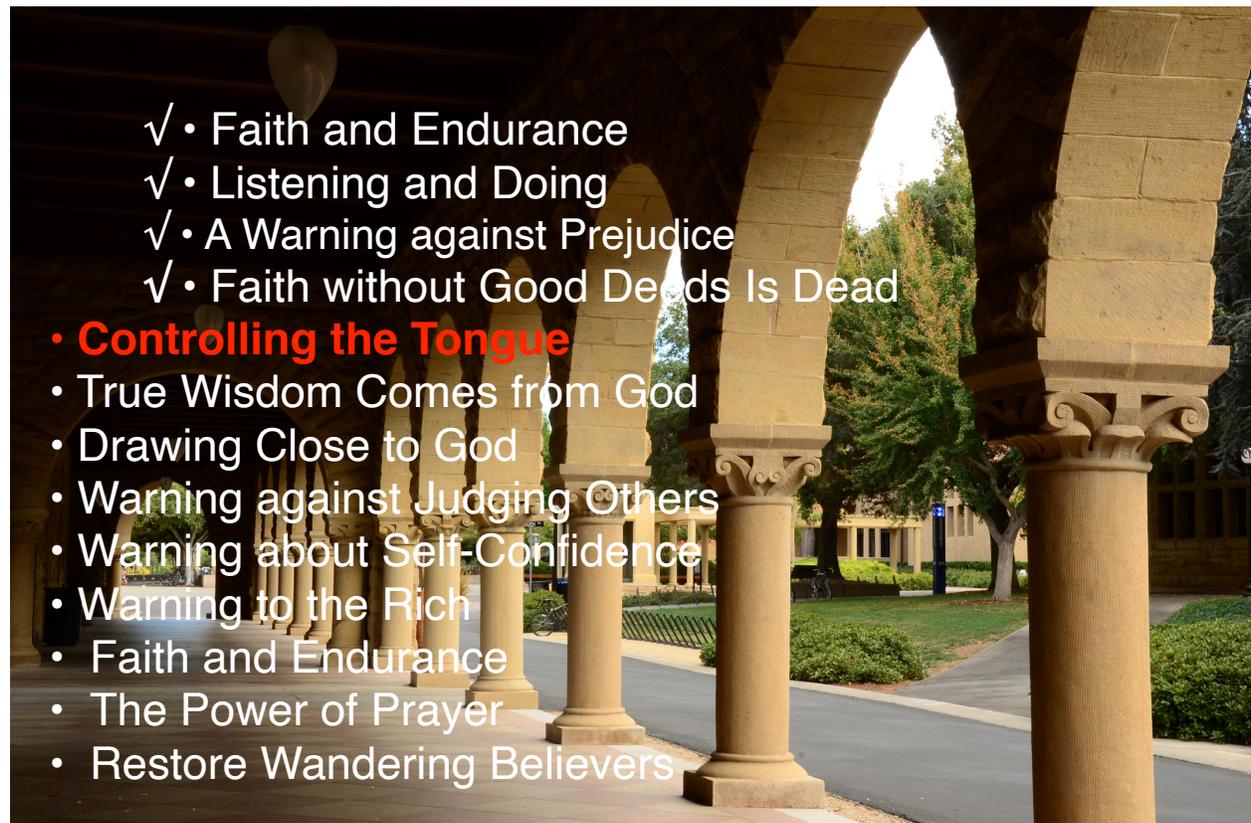


Pathway Visalia Men's ministry: April 5, 2021-"Controlling the Tongue"

On the first Monday of every month, our Pathway Men's ministry meets at 6:30 pm. Our next meeting will be on April 5th. This last meeting we covered James 2:8-26. For those who were unable to attend and for anyone that is interested, here is an introduction of the Book and what we will be discussing over next several months. I pray that you will be able to join us. It is such a blessing to share with one another.

James is such a wonderful book and it covers so many pillars in the Christian faith.



THEME:

- 1: Servant approach to trials vs. an "entitled approach".
- 2: Servant approach on how we treat others vs. an "entitled approach".

- 3: Servant approach in how we speak and relate to others vs. an "entitled approach".
- 4: Servant approach in how we relate and use money vs. an "entitled approach".

Application: How do my actions mirror the faith that I proclaim? Do I apply what is taught at church on Sunday and Wednesday? Good questions to ask ourselves to take personal inventory.

MARCH STUDY-REVIEW

17 So you see, faith by itself isn't enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless. *[inoperative and ineffective]*. 18 Now someone may argue, "Some people have faith; others have good deeds." But I say, "How can you show me your faith if you don't have good deeds? I will show you my faith by my good deeds." *[that is, by what I do]*.

The balance of faith and good works is very important, because we can see religions that emphasize good works BUT these folks are not saved.

QUESTION: If you were sharing this truth to an unbeliever--what would you say?

QUESTION: Can you give an example of faith that is backed up by works?

19 You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror. *[in awe-filled terror—they have seen His wrath]*!
20 How foolish! Can't you see that faith without good deeds is useless?

QUESTION: How do you try to balance your faith and works?

QUESTION: Share a time when you were out of balance --what did you do to right your self?

QUESTION: Vs. 19 states "the demons believe this (there is one God), and they tremble in terror". Sobering truth!-Knowing this, how should you be more diligent to put action to your faith.

QUESTION: What can you do to build up your faith?

21 Don't you remember that our ancestor Abraham was shown to be right with God by his actions *[of obedience which expressed his faith]* when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see, his faith and his actions worked together. His actions made his faith complete. *[reaching its maturity when he expressed his faith through obedience]*. 23 And so it happened just as the Scriptures say: "Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith." He was even called the friend of God. 24 So you see, we are shown to be right with God by what we do, not by faith alone. *[that is, by acts of obedience a born-again believer reveals his faith]*

25 Rahab the prostitute is another example. She was shown to be right with God by her actions when she hid those messengers and sent them safely away by a different road.

QUESTION: With the sobering warning about teaching--What do you think would prompt a person to teach God's Word?

QUESTION: Is James warning against sharing God's Word? Where is that balance?

QUESTION: Remember that James 3:1-starts a section on controlling what we say-What is our responsibility as congregants when we hear a teacher/pastor teaching incorrectly?

QUESTION: How does this warning impact what you talk about?

QUESTION: Since what comes out of our mouths starts in our hearts, what should we do to limit things that we regret ever saying?

2 Indeed, we all make many mistakes. For if we could control our tongues, [never saying the wrong thing] we would be perfect [fully developed in character, without serious flaws] and could also control ourselves in every other way [taming his human faults and weaknesses].

QUESTION: Why do you think James says "if we could control our tongues we would be perfect"?

QUESTION: James is making a point of how we walk in this life. We are not perfect but are you seeking to be better today than you had been in the past?

QUESTION: What tools do you use to keep yourself on the right path in your walk with Christ?

3 We can make a large horse go wherever we want by means of a small bit in its mouth. 4 And a small rudder makes a huge ship turn wherever the pilot chooses to go, even though the winds are strong. 5 In the same way, the tongue is a small thing that makes grand speeches. But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire. 6 And among all the parts of the body, the tongue is a flame of fire. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself.

QUESTION: Think of the devastation that has occurred during the past wildfire seasons. James is equating what we say to the damage that a wildfire can cause. Have you ever rationalize your conversations as "no big deal"?

QUESTION: What can each of us do to improve in the area of what we say?

QUESTION: What do you think is the primary motivation for a person to speak ill of someone, to interrupt someone, to put down someone, or to simply spend your words unwisely?

7 People can tame all kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and fish, 8 but no one can tame the tongue. It is restless and evil, a [undisciplined, unstable] full of deadly poison.

QUESTION: Share a time when either you or someone else spoke unkindly and you can see the root of restlessness and evil behind it?

QUESTION: Since the Word is here to guide us, what specifically can we do to increase our sensitivity in our conversations.

QUESTION: We are living in a time where the world is increasingly judging speech. How can we as Christians speak the truth of the Gospel in love?

9 Sometimes it praises our Lord and Father, and sometimes it curses those who have been made in the image of God. 10 And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right! [for we have a moral obligation to speak in a manner that reflects our fear of God and profound respect for His precepts] 11 Does a spring of water bubble out with both fresh water and bitter water? 12 Does a fig tree produce olives, or a grapevine produce figs? No, and you can't draw fresh water from a salty spring

QUESTION:-"for we have a moral obligation to speak in a manner that reflects our fear of God and profound respect for His precepts"-How do we do this?

QUESTION: Are there specific prayer needs for you to help you to grow in this area?