



1 Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers and sisters, because you know that we will be judged more strictly. 2 For we all stumble in many ways. If someone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect individual, able to control the entire body as well. 3 And if we put bits into the mouths of horses to get them to obey us, then we guide their entire bodies. 4 Look at ships too: Though they are so large and driven by harsh winds, they are steered by a tiny rudder wherever the pilot's inclination directs. 5 So too the tongue is a small part of the body, yet it has great pretensions. Think how small a flame sets a huge forest ablaze. 6 And the tongue is a fire! The tongue represents the world of wrongdoing among the parts of our bodies. It pollutes the entire body and sets fire to the course of human existence—and is set on fire by hell. 7 For every kind of animal, bird, reptile, and sea creature is subdued and has been subdued by humankind. 8 But no human being can subdue the tongue; it is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse people made in God's image. 10 From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. These things should not be so, my brothers and sisters. 11 A spring does not pour out fresh water and bitter water from the same opening, does it? 12 Can a fig tree produce olives, my brothers and sisters, or a vine produce figs? Neither can a salt water spring produce fresh water.

## A World Of Iniquity

1. What warning is given to teachers (3:1)?
2. Why will teachers “be judged more strictly” (3:1)?
3. In this context, what does it mean to *stumble* (3:2)?
4. Define *perfect* (3:2) [Gr. *teleios*].
5. What is the comparison between our words and a forest fire (3:5)?
6. Why does James mention birds and beasts (3:7)?
7. Why is the tongue “a restless evil, full of deadly poison” (3:8)?
8. What harm is done by “the same mouth” giving both blessings and cursing (3:10)?