

# Personal Holiness - Part 3

by William MacDonald

---

*William MacDonald emphasizes the critical role of disciplined speech in achieving personal holiness based on James chapter 3.*

**Duration:** 46:18

**Topics:** "Holiness"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of keeping our speech brief and watching our words. He shares a story about a lady whose dog died and the humorous chain of events that followed. The speaker also highlights the need for our speech to be worthwhile and edifying, avoiding corrupt communication. He references Ephesians 4:29 and Matthew 12:36 to support his points and reminds listeners of the importance of truthfulness in all aspects of life.

---

## Transcript

Watching those books, the bargains are going fast and I think you really have been taking advantage of the of the good prices in the bookstore. The shame of any of Mr. Phillips' books were left after the conference until a few days. You've been getting the ministry in part, you can get greater segments of it if you buy those exploring books.

I still have a few brochures left of the leadership training course out on the west coast. If any of you men are interested, please ask for one. I'll be glad to see that you get one.

In our time together, we've been thinking about the subject of personal holiness. And we've been taking up various areas of the Christian life where holiness is so very important. And tonight I'd like to take up the subject of the Christian speech, chapter three, the third chapter of James' letter.

First part of the chapter, James chapter three. My brethren, be not many masters or teachers really, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all, or in many things we all stumble.

Many men offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put bits in the horse's mouth that they may obey us, and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, with it soever the governor listeth.

Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth. And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity, so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and set us on fire the course of nature, and is set on fire of hell.

For every kind of beast, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind, but the tongue can no man tame. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father, and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be. Doth a fountain send forth the same place sweet water and bitter? Can the fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries, either of vine figs? So can no fountain both yield salt water and fresh.

Years ago, when you went to the doctor, one of the first things he'd say would be, stick out your tongue. And you think to yourself, well, it isn't my tongue, doctor, it's my stomach that's giving me the trouble. But they had that way of asking you to stick out your tongue, and they'd look at your tongue, and maybe they could tell something about your general health.

That's what James is saying here. James is saying, stick out your tongue, and let me see how your spiritual health is. And I don't know about you, but I feel a little reckless when I come to these passages of script, because I realize that the discipline of the tongue is one of the real difficult disciplines of the Christian life.

Now you can all stop listening, and I'll preach to myself in the first verse, where it says, don't be many teachers, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. That means that we shouldn't be unduly aspiring to teach, because a teacher is more responsible than others. It's one thing to get up and talk about the tongue, it's another thing to practice it, isn't it? To practice the control of the tongue.

And if we get up and talk about it, and we're not practicing it, God knows about that, and we will receive the heavier judgment. Now James admits that in every area of life, we all offend, we all stumble. But he makes the most astounding statement here.

He says, if any man stumbles not in word, the same is a perfect man and able to bridle the whole body. And that's an interesting thing. That says that if I can discipline my tongue, that discipline is transferable to any other area of the Christian life.

And that really surprises me. But I know it's true. Just think about that.

If you can discipline your tongue, if you can guard what you say, you can't bring under control. Thinking is special, steel is huge, and yet he says that in the rain, and then he gives the illustration, and yet the man that controls it is like that rudder. Control, and you can control, just even so that we don't often even think about it, do we? That means I don't achieve the sin.

Then he moves on to the sadness. Think of it. And then he goes on and trains and the humans.

We have to avail ourselves. Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olive berries, either a vine fig? Do you agree? But it's an amazing thing. James would say, my brethren, these things with regard to that ever righteous table.

My answer is this. God is truth and shame the devil. Even if the card of communication proceed out of your mouth, if you read that in the case, don't let any worthless communication proceed out of your mouth.

Should be saying tonight is awfully hard, and that has taken place. Details that will be of eternity. And you should have seen, you and I might call it muddy orange, but you know Sally, she always says things just right.

The ochre was to please the groom's mother. Oh, and their shoes? Mary, have you ever seen avocado colored lizard skin shoes? They rented them for the occasion, you know. Sally's mother told me that, and I guess we better not say too much about it.

You know how critical people can be. The bride's maids were outstanding in their orange dresses with lavender polka dotted ruffles. And the bride was pretty too.

It's the first time I've ever seen a bride carrying hydrangeas. But Sally certainly has a fowl all of her own. Oh, do you really have to leave, Mary? I wanted to tell you about the recession.

Maybe you and I can pay Sally a visit someday. That Hamadop might be able to put together a tape of men maybe talking about the latest ball game or something. They'll say, you didn't play so well tonight for the fact that you lost the game.

Well, I guess we didn't play so well tonight. What plans do you have for the future? Well, I think we'll try to play better in the future. Should be men will give an... Well, what an awful thing for men and women, unsaved men and women.

I remember when tape recorders first came in that you're going from table and unknown to the table, and the tape recorder was underneath at the table. And then I have an embarrassment when you just take and you don't know you're... Well, I have the tape recorder here. There's a little, there's another story.

Ma'am, the dog's dead. Sure you hear all the facts before you form your conclusions. Our speech should be worthwhile.

Number three, our speech should be edifying says in that same verse, Ephesians chapter four, verse 29, but no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but rather that which is good to the use of edifying. And that really means, and once again, I think this takes a tremendous discipline to be trying to negative wouldn't be edifying. Well, he was taking Ephesians chapter four, verse 29, seriously.

That leads me to ask you, what is gossip? Anyway, we hear the scene in an... And most of your modern verse to be able to speak the appropriate thing. And he leaned over her bed leaning on in the morning, leaning on her beloved. I remember I was going and it took me out of the sluice to speak at that might be able to pass on that beautiful.

We speak should be gracious words. Once again, the gracious words of Christians. And I think, I think of the apostle 26, a masterpiece of grace.

Acts chapter 26, handcuffed on his hands. And he's pleading his case. Acts 26, 28, and 29.

Said to Paul, greatest me to be a Christian. Paul, mania should be gracious. But then it says also, and it led to some years ago, they're in the car.

He listened until he couldn't take it anymore. And then he rebuked the student three and four. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not be once named among you.

It's become a thing, neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient, but rather giving a thank. And what the script serious teaches that our speech should be so immense. Oh, that command has anything to do with old leads to.

---

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/7/SID7828.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/william-macdonald/personal-holiness-part-3/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**