

James 3:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

Analysis

For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. We all stumble (ptaio, πταίω) in many ways. If someone does not stumble in word, he is perfect (teleios, τέλειος), able to bridle the whole body. Speech control indicates mature self-mastery because the tongue directs life.

Reformed sanctification views speech as barometer of heart health. James ties tongue-control to holistic holiness, linking this section to earlier admonitions.

Historical Context

Church conflicts, doctrinal disputes, and persecution-related anxieties made speech volatile. James pastoral experience taught him that bridging divides began with speech discipline. Paul's exhortation in Ephesians 4:29 similarly calls for edifying words. ",

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. Where do your words most often cause stumbling?
2. How can you invite accountability for your speech?
3. What habits help you bridle your tongue?

Interlinear Text

πολλὰ	γὰρ	πταίει	ἄπαντες	εἴ	τις	ἐν	λόγω	οὐ
in many things	For	offend	all	G1487	G5100	in	word	not
G4183	G1063	G4417	G537			G1722	G3056	G3756
πταίει	οὗτος	τέλειος	ἀνήρ	δυνατὸς	χαλιναγωγῆσαι	καὶ		
offend	the same	is a perfect	man	and able	to bridle	also		
G4417	G3778	G5046	G435	G1415	G5468	G2532		
ὅλον	τὸ	σῶμα						
the whole	G3588	body						
G3650		G4983						

Additional Cross-References

James 1:26 (Parallel theme): If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain.

Proverbs 13:3 (Parallel theme): He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.

Matthew 12:37 (Word): For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

1 Peter 3:10 (Parallel theme): For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:

Psalms 34:13 (Parallel theme): Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

Proverbs 20:9 (Parallel theme): Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?

Ecclesiastes 7:20 (Parallel theme): For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.

Romans 3:10 (Parallel theme): As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

James 1:4 (Parallel theme): But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

1 Kings 8:46 (Parallel theme): If they sin against thee, (for there is no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near;

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