



August 21, 2022

Raquette Lake Chapel Sunday Blast

Two Kinds of Wisdom

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. ... the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.
(From this week's scripture James 3:1-18)

James' Consistent Message ("The Taming of the Tongue")



Repeatedly in James we hear the admonition to follow true wisdom, not the wisdom of the age. James 3 offers us some insight into the incredible difficulty of taming the tongue. How we speak to others is not a trivial matter. It is at the heart of faithfully responding to God with integrity, and undisciplined speech poses a constant threat. Worship can be undermined by the tongue that degrades others while praising God.

Contemporary Wisdom About Speech

"Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never harm me."

This is taught to children by well-meaning parents and is heard on playgrounds daily. But, the words themselves are contradictory: if words can't hurt us, why do we even bother to say this?

James reinforces the reality we already know: words can hurt and even cripple. Equally hurtful are words not said, for instance, to people who need comfort...while those around them remain silent. This is true for spoken words and "keyboard words," words in text messages and email. People who would be polite and respectful in person, feel free to say the most outrageous things online. We should hold our online interactions to the same high standard as we do our spoken conversations. Once spoken, words cannot be taken back. The text message can't be recalled. Damage has been done.

The Message of James Chapter 3 is Very Clear!

Chapter 3 is a relentless warning about the power of human speech and the difficulties controlling it. What is not clear in this chapter is a solution for the problem. Perhaps James would have us simply hold up this human condition so we can reflect on it – and reflect on the call for us to behave with integrity. James reminds us – again – to ask ourselves: "To whom do you hold allegiance - God or the world?"

Integrity, trust, truth - all important ON BOTH SIDES of our relationship with God. Scripture repeatedly reminds us to trust in God. Perhaps we need to also think about how God trusts us!

Let us keep in our prayers: Greg, who lost his son; Bill facing upcoming surgery; a friend who has entered hospice care; a friend facing serious surgery; continued prayers for those suffering from extreme weather; those suffering from violence; all who are suffering from disease and hunger. Lord, hear our prayer!