

James 3; Lord's Day 43

LOVING MY NEIGHBOR WITH MY TONGUE

- I. The concept.
 - A. This commandment reveals God as the perfect Communicator and as Truth.
 1. God communicates perfectly within Himself and to His creatures, especially to His children.
 2. God is Truth, i.e., all that He does and says is truth (perfectly trustworthy and reliable).
 - B. God created man in His image: able to know and speak the truth and able to communicate thoughts, reasoning, feelings.
 1. The power of speech is very great (James 3:4,5). It can comfort or confuse; build up or destroy.
 2. God calls man to use the gift of speech/communication to glorify his Creator and love his neighbor.
- II. Sin ruined communication making all men liars.
 - A. We are liars, not because we lie consciously and deliberately, but because we are incapable of knowing and loving the truth.
 1. First, we naturally believe the lie that there is no God, no truth, no standard, no necessity of answering to God one day.
 2. Second, we hold the truth under in unrighteousness, so it is distorted and perverted (Rom. 1:18; 3:13,14).
 - B. Also the regenerated easily lie, so we must always be fighting to speak the truth in love.
 - C. All violations of this commandment are most serious: (Prov. 6:16-19; 19:5,9; 21:28; Psalm 15:-3; Rev. 21:8).
- III. Grace restores the ability to know and speak the truth in love so we are able to bridle our tongues (James 1:26).
 - A. The speaking God declares to us the true message of salvation, redeeming us from the lie and the love of it.
 - B. This command sets before the redeemed the duty to express their gratitude by speaking the truth in love (Eph. 4:15,16).
 - C. As God's servants, we want to use the gift of speech to glorify His Creator and Master.