

19. The analogous venom of the reversionist is the result of mental attitude sins. His venom sacs are systematically refilled by the constant production of arrogance and hatred from the cosmic systems.
20. His mental-attitude sins produce the venom while the tongue functions as the fangs.
21. This habitual behavior pattern is expressed in numerous ways. The advanced reversionist, having lost touch with reality, is mentally deranged. Therefore, he can vacillate between apparent cordiality toward others and then suddenly spin on a dime by expressing hostility.
22. Such a person is obviously unstable, but his fluctuating behavior patterns cause others to never quite know where they stand because they never know what personality trait will emerge next.
23. The venom of the unstable believer has an arsenal of ordnance to deploy: gossiping, criticizing, maligning, judging, et. al., while assigning all sorts of sins and indiscretions to the poor bloke caught in his crosshairs.
24. A mature believer has the stability of soul to allow these assaults to bounce off his doctrinal armor. To do so provides an example of the situation James is describing and wishes to prevent.
25. In fact, James introduces chapter three with the example of how a believer ought to behave:

**James 3:2** For we all fall into sin in many ways. If anyone does not sin in what he says, he is a mature believer, able to restrain his tongue by bridling his entire body with his volition. (EXT)

1. The volition of this believer has the power to make a good decision from the inventory of doctrines in his *kardía*. This is a problem-solving device that empowers the believer to regulate his entire body and most importantly his tongue.
2. This is made possible by his volition complying with his conscience to apply doctrine in his soul as the working object of his faith.
3. The sin nature may tempt him to say something verbally, but his conscience restrains and overrides that temptation thereby suppressing the lust patterns of the sin nature.
4. By suppressing the desires of the sin nature, the believer has bridled his entire body with the result that his tongue is not used to utter sinful comments.



5. The soul therefore avoids uttering a sinful remark and thereby maintains the filling of the Holy Spirit.
6. This is an example of how the Royal Law and the law of freedom function so that the believer is able to “love his neighbor as himself.”
26. Such a response expresses unconditional love for his adversary. He transfers the adjudication of the assault over to the Supreme Court of Heaven while maintaining poise and grace.
27. The illustrations given in verses 7 and 8 continue James’s exposition about the overwhelming impact the untamed tongue can have and the ramifications of its cosmic assaults from the venom sacs of the reversionist’s free will.
28. James continues his dissertation on the tongue by discussing the dichotomy illustrated by the inconsistencies of its use.

**James 3:9** With it we bless our Lord and Father,  
and with it we curse men, who have been made in the  
likeness of God. (NASB)

1. A dichotomy is defined as “a division into two especially mutually exclusive or contradictory groups of entities.”<sup>1</sup> The pronoun “it” refers to the tongue. It is reflexive and should be translated, “By means of this, i.e., the tongue.”
2. The instability of this believer’s volition is again addressed by James. First, he writes that with the tongue, this reversionist uses his volition to verbally “bless our Lord and the Father.”
3. The word “bless” is the present active indicative of the verb, **εὐλογέω (eulogéō)**: “we bless, praise, extol, glorify.” The direct objects of these encomiums are cited as, **κύριος (kúrios)**: “Lord,” and **πατήρ (patḗr)**: “Father.”
4. In James’s context, he establishes that his primary and overriding concern is the flagrant, unbridled use of the tongue to communicate human viewpoint, human good, and evil in his criticism of others.
5. Overwhelmingly, these excoriations are laced with venom that contains gossip, criticism, accusations, argument, false finding, sins, and behaviors directed toward other believers.
6. Somewhere in the process, this spiritual reprobate occasionally realizes that his castigations are ill-received, rejected, and rebutted—sometimes done argumentatively and in other times by clear, biblically-based responses.

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<sup>1</sup> Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, 11th ed. (2014), s.v. “dichotomy.”



7. For various reasons, by a guilt complex, by a desire to publicly portray spirituality, or an effort to take the spiritual high ground, the antagonist uses his tongue to arrogate Christ and God as witnesses on his behalf.
8. This is hypocrisy of the most dangerous order. One must not use God to support sin. Use of the tongue to criticize a fellow believer is an overt, verbal sin. The latter is bad enough; the former is blasphemous.
9. When aggrandizing his comments by implying support by God and Christ is a dangerous game to play. For example, take this tactic and combine it with Matthew 7:1–2 and the confluence of divine wrath is sure to follow.
10. James wants to impose quietus on that tactic and get back to the central issue of his commentary which begins with the phrase, “and with it, namely the tongue,” or “and by means of the tongue.”
11. It is by means of the tongue that reversionists “curse men.” The verb “curse” is the customary present middle indicative of **καταράομαι** (*kataráomai*): “to curse or execrate; to wish anyone evil or ruin.”
12. James uses the verb, *kataráomai*, to describe the motivation of this reversionist. The verb is generally translated “curse,” but the context demands a more precise definition which is supplied by the word “execrate.” Here’s are extended definitions of the word:  
**Execrate. To denounce evil against, or to imprecate evil on; hence, to detest utterly; to abhor; to abominate.<sup>2</sup>**  
**Execrate. To imprecate evil upon; hence to detest utterly; to abhor. Execrate implies intense loathing and, usually, a fury of passion.<sup>3</sup>**  
**Execrate. To imprecate evil upon (as an expression of hatred); to express or feel intense loathing or abhorrence for; utter detestation.<sup>4</sup>**
13. *Kataráomai* is also defined as a curse, but the dictionary definitions noted above show that execrate carries a more intense application to the verb. Its customary present tense indicates that this execration regularly occurs or is part of an ongoing state that occurs regularly.
14. The impact of this verb is further intensified by the middle voice indicating that the person’s volition employs this tactic consistently.

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<sup>2</sup> Noah Webster, *An American Dictionary of the English Language*, vol. 1 (1828), s.v. “execrate.”

<sup>3</sup> *Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*, 2d ed. (1953), s.v. “execrate.”

<sup>4</sup> *The Oxford English Dictionary* (1971), s.v. “execrate.”



15. The tongue is simply an organ in the body. It has several functions, one of which is the enunciation of ideas fed to it by the thought processes contained in the believer's stream of consciousness.
16. The tongue is being scolded by James, but his Letter makes it clear that the organ is just the means of communicating the thoughts and ideas contained in a person's soul.
17. Therefore, as we have noted earlier, "The medium is the message." The medium in context is the tongue. What it communicates has the power to persuade or dissuade.
18. Either way, the tongue is only the medium by which the soul is enabled to communicate its ideas to others.
19. Loosely using the vocabulary of herpetology as an example, the soul contains a person's inventory of ideas, beliefs, and attitudes. The volition contains the venom sacs that expectorates through their fangs the soul's poison, and the tongue communicates by its hiss what warns of incoming ordinance.
20. Consequently, it is the tongue that receives the condemnation because it is the medium of communication. It was Marshall McLuhan who cleverly characterized the emerging power of electronic media in the early 1960s:

**Marshall McLuhan. Canadian communications theorist and educator, whose aphorism "the medium is the message" summarized his view of the potent influence of television, computers, and other electronic disseminators of information in shaping styles of thinking and thought, whether in sociology, art, science, or religion.<sup>5</sup>**

**NOTE:** Television, including its spinoffs, is the most effective medium for electronic influence because it presents video images of a person who, accompanied by his audio commentary, addresses his audience face-to-face. The cosmic believer has always had this same power because his thoughts are expressed by the use of the tongue while his personal presence is accompanied by the visual nuances of facial expressions, body language, and eye contact.

What a person says is the expression of what is contained in the stream of consciousness of his soul which remains dormant until volition makes the decision to express these thoughts verbally to others. Therefore, the tongue becomes the most effective and powerful medium for a message.

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<sup>5</sup> McLuhan, (Herbert) Marshall, in *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Micropaedia* (2010), 7:643.