

23. Here is the expanded translation of verse 4:

James 3:4 Consider the example of ships which are quite large and are propelled under the influence of fierce winds upon its sails, yet it is guided by the positioning of a very small rudder toward whatever direction the volition of the ship's pilot determines.
(EXT)

Principles:

1. The ship is the second example that James uses to address the power of the tongue, illustrated in verse 3 by the bit in a horse's mouth and in verse 4 by the rudder of a ship.
2. The horse is a large, strong, and yet trainable animal. We have noted quite a number of principles associated with the flexibility horses have in the learning process.
3. The horse is easily controlled by the bit and bridle. The second illustration is the ship whose rudder is small, especially by comparison to the boat it is tasked to guide.
4. James's major points in his illustration is that the tongue is small compared to the size of the human body just as the rudder is small compared to the size of the ship.
5. The bit in the horse's mouth is behind its tongue; the rudder of the ship is paltry by comparison to the ship it guides. When two people engage in disagreements the result can often lead to use of fisticuffs, arms, elbows, legs, knees, feet, and body slams.
6. Yet those tactics are usually employed one-on-one. Eventually the fight is over, one makes his point while the other nurses his wounds. There is yet another part of the human body that can do far worse damage and include an entire group of people.
7. Lasting damage to a congregation can rip apart its membership when one person uses his tongue to gossip, malign, judge, criticize, insult, or demean a fellow believer.
8. Sides are taken; some leave the church others separate but continue to attend; some agree with the accusations while others do not. Regardless of the responses, pro and con, the congregation suffers divisions that without the application of the Royal Law the body remains fractured by the use of an easily enunciated criticism of a fellow believer.



9. Therefore, the body of Christ, which makes up a congregation, is damaged by the verbal assault of one person. Sides are taken, lines are drawn, and doctrine takes a holiday if not a sabbatical.

10. The chaos caused is done by a simple but tremendously devastating remark, one that James critiques in:

James 1:21 Therefore, put away from yourself mental attitude sins that pollute the soul and all the excesses of an evil habit of mind, you must receive with humility the implanted word, which is empowered to deliver your souls from danger.

v. 22 But keep on becoming doers of the implanted Word, and not only hearers who deceive themselves due to self-induced stupidity.

v. 23 For if, and it is true, anyone is a hearer of the Word in the *noús* and not a doer from the *kardía*, such a person, is like a nobleman who looks contemplatively at his facial features in a mirror;

v. 24 for once he had continued to contemplate himself intently in the mirror and departed, he has the existing result of immediately disregarding what kind of man he habitually and regularly was.

v. 25 But the one who looks with an earnest desire to absorb in detail the perfect law of freedom, and continues to live in close proximity to it, not having become a forgetful hearer only, but a doer, this man shall acquire unalloyed happiness by the production of divine good. (EXT)

11. The most devastating thing a believer can do is to verbally gossip, criticize, or denigrate another believer. The Royal Law does not permit this which our study of the edification complex of the soul clearly taught.

12. This doctrine presented a foundation and seven advancing levels of spiritual growth that when accumulated and applied resulted in invisible impact for that believer.

13. The foundation is obviously salvation. There has to be a starting place and acquisition of divine viewpoint and advancement toward the understanding and use of the Royal Law and the Law of Freedom are developed by means of a process.



14. The obvious first level is spiritual growth under the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit. If inculcation of biblical guidelines, vocabulary, and doctrines does not follow, then the believer remains in self-induced stupidity.
15. Bible study requires some basic principles of how Scripture is organized. Every section of the Bible takes place in a certain historical period. These are categorized as dispensations.¹ The Old Testament has two of these time periods: **(1)** the times of the **Gentiles** and **(2)** the times of the nation and people of **Israel**. These are centered around the works and acts of God related to these two groups and are referred to as Theocentric.
16. The New Testament contains four time periods. The third and fourth time periods are: **(3)** the birth, life, and public ministry of Jesus Christ is known as the **Incarnation** found in the four Gospels, followed by **(4)** the Acts of the Apostles and the period of the **Church** covered primarily in the Epistles. The Gospels were completed in the past; the Church is taking place presently and will terminate at the Rapture of the Church, yet future noted by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:51–57; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; 2 Thessalonians 4:1–12 These are classified as Christocentric.
17. What follows these are two more time periods which take place in the future; **(5)** the **Tribulation** or the fulfilment of the prophesy of Daniel’s seventieth heptad mentioned by the Archangel Gabriel to Daniel in Daniel 9:25–27, by Jesus in Matthew 24:9–26; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; Jude 14 and **(6)** the **Millennium**, which is the perfect kingdom of Christ, mentioned by the Lord in Matthew 24:27 and by Isaiah in Isaiah 10:21–22; 60:18–25 and Joel 3:18–21.
18. Knowing what time it is enables the believer in the Church Age to develop his inventory of ideas primarily from the teachings of Jesus in the Gospels, the experiences of the apostles in the Acts, and the Epistles of the New Testament. It is from these resources that the believer is able to develop, facilitate, and execute the gradual accumulation of the ten problem-solving devices.
20. During this spiritual advance, the believer develops problem-solving devices 7 and 8: personal love for God followed by unconditional love for mankind. It is at this level that the believer is able to use his spiritual inventory to develop and execute the Royal Law.

¹ “A dispensation is a period of human history defined in terms of divine revelation. According to the Bible, history is a sequence of divine administrations. These consecutive eras reflect the unfolding of God’s plan for mankind. They constitute the divine viewpoint of history and the theological interpretation of history. The doctrine of dispensations is the vehicle by which believers living at a specific time can orient to God’s will, plan, and purpose for their lives” (R. B. Thieme, Jr., *The Divine Outline of History: Dispensations and the Church*, 2d ed., ed. Wayne F. Hill [Houston: R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 1999], 3).

21. Once the problems associated with other people—both the heathen and the saved—the believer is freed up to concentrate on the blessings associated with spiritual freedom.
22. Spiritual freedom is the environment of spiritual autonomy and the enjoyment of the copacetic spiritual life. Freed from the lust to run other people's lives, to set them straight, achieve spiritual one-upsmanship, teach them a lesson, or relate these desires to others is now a thing of the past.
23. True spiritual freedom and true happiness is the environment that the believer enjoys when the working objects in his stream of consciousness council him to avoid mental-attitude and verbal sins regarding other believers.
24. Cut them slack. They may not have arrived at spiritual maturity as you may assume you have accomplished. They are who they are because of where they are in the development of their edification complex of the soul.
25. Maximum use of the Law of Freedom requires maximum use of forgiveness of others' failings and the willingness to pray for the alleged offender instead of calling them out.
26. Live and let live. Allow others room for error. Permit them time to grow in grace and recover from personal difficulties. Ignore what is none of your business. If it is your business, turn it over to the Lord for prosecution and stay out of His way.
27. The environment this believer's advance enjoys is the copacetic spiritual life and characterized by unalloyed happiness.
28. The ultimate advance is the lifestyle of the invisible hero. With full utilization of his spiritual inventory, this believer has become a star witness² for the Prosecution and in doing so has provided invisible historical impact in his life, in his generation, and in his accumulation of Nike Awards.
29. One of the primary assets in this advance is the believer's ability to curb his tongue. The tongue can be a sword that cuts deep into the reputation of others, ignites fuel for prolonged antagonisms, and accomplishes nothing spiritual.
30. Those who have conquered their tongues are pleasant to be around. They do not display any animosity toward others, and they personally enjoy life.
31. Those who cannot control their tongues are advancing toward reverse process reversionism by the influence of evil and promotion of the lie.

² "In legal proceedings, a star witness is a witness who provides major and crucial information in a criminal case. In some instances, a case may have several star witnesses, and their testimony may cinch a conviction or acquittal" (<https://www.wisegeek.com/what-is-a-star-witness.htm>).



32. The soul of an out-of-fellowship believer with axes to grind can unleash a smorgasbord of verbal ordinance besmirching unsuspecting targets.
33. The tongue that is trained and controlled by a cosmic steam of consciousness is mightier than a sword. The vitriol that spews forth can create more lasting damage than a common fistfight.³
34. James has taken his text and he will drive it home to anyone with the good sense to give it a hearing and also the volitional will to curb his tongue.
35. Here is the expanded translation of James 3:3–4:

James 3:3 Now if we thrust the bits of the horses into their mouths so that they obey us, we change the direction of their entire body.

v. 4 Consider the example of ships which are quite large and are propelled under the influence of fierce winds upon its sails, yet it is guided by the positioning of a very small rudder toward whatever direction the volition of the ship's pilot determines. (EXT)

Summary of the Ship's Rudder:

1. The rudder exemplifies the tongue of the believer.
2. The ship's pilot serves to illustrate the believer's soul with emphasis on its volition.
3. The ship, whose large size is dominant, illustrates the believer's body.
4. The fierce winds that propel the ship convey the content of the soul's inventory of ideas, i.e., human viewpoint or divine viewpoint, in fellowship or out of fellowship, low doctrinal inventory or high doctrinal inventory.
5. The advanced mature believer is portrayed as one who has firm control over his tongue by applying the working objects of his doctrinal inventory in an advanced level of the edification complex of the soul.
6. The reversionistic believer is chronically out of fellowship reflected by his verbal sins which are exposed by his tendency to gossip, malign, judge, lie, slander, smear, and cast aspersions.
7. The tongue of the believer functions in one of two ways, for blessing or for cursing (see v. 10a).
8. In verse 5, James gives a summary interpretation of verses 2 through 4 followed by a third illustration:

³ Hide me from the secret counsel of evildoers, from the tumult of those who do iniquity, who have sharpened their tongue like a sword. (Psalm 64:2–3a)



James 3:5 So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! (NASB)

1. This verse is introduced by the demonstrative adverb **οὕτως (houtōs)**: “In this way.” This word introduces James’s interpretation of the illustration in verse 4.
2. The culprit for all that is being discussed is the singular feminine subject **ἡ γλῶσσα (hē glōssa)**: “the tongue.”
3. What exactly is the tongue good for, specifically, without its ability to form words? There are a few that we consider essential.

Tongue, an organ capable of various muscular movements, located on the floor of the mouth. In mammals the tongue is also a major bearer of taste buds and, in humans, an aid to speech.

In humans the front tips and margins of the tongue usually touch the teeth, aiding in swallowing and speech. The top surface contains numerous projections of the mucous membrane called papillaē. They contain taste buds sensitive to food flavors and serous [serum] glands that secrete some of the fluid in saliva, a substance that moistens the oral cavity and helps lubricate food particles.

Nerves from the tongue receive chemical stimulation from food in solution that gives the sensation of taste. There are four fundamental taste sensations, which derive from receptors that have specific topographical distribution: salt and sweet at the tip of the tongue, bitter at the base, and acid or sour along the borders. The total flavor of a food comes from the combination of taste, smell, touch, texture or consistency, and temperature sensations. Small taste buds situated on the tongue’s top surface transmit these flavor sensations to the nervous system.⁴

4. Thus, the tongue’s top two duties are taste and speech. Every time you eat your tongue gets involved in how things taste and when you speak the tongue is the primary means of forming words for communication.
5. It is the medium of communication which conveys the speaker’s thoughts to others. The content is formed in a person’s soul and his volition decodes it to communicate those thoughts. Finally, the tongue does the duty of verbalizing its content.

⁴ *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Micropaedia*, 15th ed. (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2010), 11:841.



6. After two illustrations on the dangers common to the use of the tongue in speech, James gives us a synopsis of its hazards. He begins by pointing out that “the tongue is a small part of the body.”
7. The verb, “is,” is the present active indicative of **εἰμί (eimi)**. This verb is an aoristic present which means the action is completed at the moment of speaking, therefore it keeps on being a small member of the body.
8. What it keeps on being is, first of all, “little,” the neuter singular of **μικρός (mikrós)**: Here James picks out a word that borders on hyperbole. The English prefix, “micro-,” is defined as “very small or microscopic; abnormally small.” To amplify this idea, the dictionary goes on to include the noun, “microglossía⁵: Abnormal smallness of the tongue.”
9. The insult is found also in Koiné Greek: “μικρός, a small member, James 3:5”⁶ and Classical Greek: “μικρός, in amount or importance, petty, trivial, slight; of lesser importance.”⁷
10. With such a small and slight member of the entire body, James continues with his putdown, “yet it boasts.” He does not use the Koiné Greek word for boasting here: **καυχάομαι (kaucháomai)** “to boast, glory, exult” which can be used in both the good and bad sense.
11. Instead, James goes to the Classical Greek and uses the present active indicative of the verb, **αὐχέω (auchéō)**: “to boast or declare loudly; to be proudly confident.”
12. The key word here is “boasting.” *Kaucháomai* includes this definition but it can be used in a positive sense. James did not want this idea to intrude on his point so he opted for the fixed idea in the Classical Greek.
13. To further amplify James’s choice of the verb, **αὐχέω**, we may observe its cognates: (1) **αὐχῆ (aúchē)**: “boasting, pride,” (2) **αὐχῆεις (auchēis)**: “a person who is bragging to impress someone,” (3) **αὐχῆμα (auchēma)**: “the content of one’s boast,” and (4) **αὐχηματίας (auchēmatias)**: “a boaster.”⁸
14. James’s example fulfills all of these Classical Greek words and definitions of a tongue “boasting great things.” The verb is the customary present active indicative of *auchéō* which denotes that which habitually occurs or may be reasonably expected to occur.”⁹

⁵ *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 5th ed. (2016), s.vv. “micro-” “macroglossia.”

⁶ Walter Bauer, “μικρός,” *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and other Early Christian Literature*, 3d ed., rev. and ed. Frederick William Danker (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000), 651.

⁷ Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, “μικρός,” in *A Greek-English Lexicon*, rev. Henry Stuart Jones (New York: Oxford University Press, 1940), 1133.

⁸ *Ibid.*, “αὐχέω,” et al., 285.

⁹ H. E. Dana and Julius R. Mantey, *A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament* (Toronto: The Macmillian Co., 1955), 183.



15. This man's braggadocio bloviates about what he considers are "great things." His assumption of things he deems great is strictly a matter of his cosmic opinions.
16. The word that is translated "great things" is **μέγας (mégas)**. There were about twenty citizens running for president that served as clear examples of what James has just described. Their frenzied orations clearly defined the verb, **αὐχέω (auchéō)**: "to boast or declare loudly; to be proudly confident."
17. In this context, current presidential wannabes arrogantly proclaimed ideas that no free society could sustain or economically underwrite. They would ignite a firestorm of fiscal chaos should their ideas be employed.
17. To amplify the problems caused by the avoidance of divine viewpoint, James presents his third example, introduced by imperative mood #24, the aorist middle imperative of **ὁράω (horáō)**: "to perceive with the eyes; to see with the mind or senses."
18. Both these ideas may be summed up with the use of the verb, "See!" If a person possesses divine viewpoint it is because he has bought into the principle that what the Bible contains is absolute truth which *does not* vary because it *cannot* vary. The Bible is divinely revealed by God to human writers who, through inspiration, wrote down what the Father dictated.
19. Scripture is clear about this including our Lord's testimony to the fact in:

John 8:31 Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed in Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine;

v. 33 and you will know [γινώσκω (*ginōskō*): to acquire knowledge from "My word"] the truth [ἀλήθεια (*alētheia*): absolute, divine truth], and the truth will make you free." (NASB)
20. There are voices presently proclaiming the lie in opposition to truth. Their proclamations and intents are a part of a decades-long strategy to transform our society into a totalitarian nightmare.
21. The strategy to do so is evident to us but probably needs at least one voice as a reminder of the unrelenting momentum by the Dark Side to transform its strategy into reality.
22. Richard D. Lamb served three terms as governor of Colorado from 1975–1987. In 2004 Mr. Lamb gave a speech before an immigration-overpopulation conference in Washington, DC. The speech was entitled, "I Have a Plan to Destroy America."