

James Chapter 3



3:1-8

Our Challenge: Controlling Our Tongue

James explains how the horse, one of the most powerful animals used by man, and the ship, one of man's largest inventions, can both be controlled by something; what attribute do these things have in common? (chapter 3:5 provides a helpful hint).

With this principle in mind, we can now understand the first two verses of chapter 3. Look up chapter 3:1 in the RSV to get a better idea of who James is talking about when he refers to "masters". Who are these people?

**TONGUE CONTROL
MASTER OF THE BODY**



Now, using the RSV and any other translation you may find helpful, fill in the summary below:

Just as the _____ can control the entire _____, and as a powerful horse can be controlled by a small _____, so too one _____ can influence an entire _____.

Study Hint: Sometimes the best way to understand a part of the Bible is to read it in other translations, and then try to write it in your own words.

Do this for chapter 3:1 in the space below:

3:1-8

Our Challenge: Controlling Our Tongue

But why these three examples in particular? Complete the box below to see the lesson James has in mind:

	Tongue	Horse's Bit	Helm (rudder)
Location			
Size			
Purpose			

James 3:5 is the key verse for this passage; look it up in the RSV and write it out in the box below:

TONGUE CONTROL
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But what else does scripture teach us about the tongue? Look up the following passages and summarise them in your own words:

Job 15:5

Prov 17:28

Isa 3:8

Jer 9:3-9

Matt 12:36-37

Rom 3:13-14

These might be useful marked into a little box at the bottom of James 3.

3:9-12

Inconsistency Of The Tongue: Lessons From Nature

James was obviously a keen observer of the world around him, and he chose examples from things in daily life: animals, ships, forests, plants. Like James, we ought to learn from the simple, every day lessons God has put around us.

After reading the above section out of James, explain in your own words each symbol James uses and how it relates to the lesson James is teaching:



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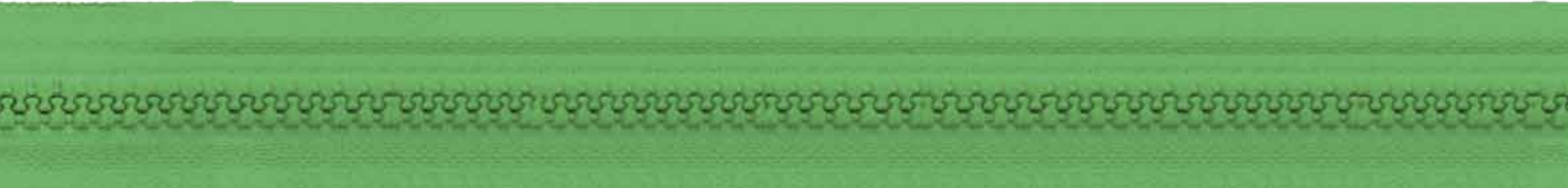
**LESSONS FROM NATURE
GOOD TREE = GOOD FRUIT**



The Fountain (James 3:11)

What was happening to it?

What does scripture say a fountain is supposed to be like? (see John 4:14; 7:37-38 but principally James 3:11)



3:9-12

Inconsistency Of The Tongue: Lessons From Nature

The Fig Tree (James 3:12)

What do you expect a fig tree to produce?

What is James trying to teach from this fact?

What lesson does scripture teach from the use of the fig tree? (see Joel 2:22; Matt 21:19 and Matt 24:32)

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LESSONS FROM NATURE
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The Vine (James 3:12)

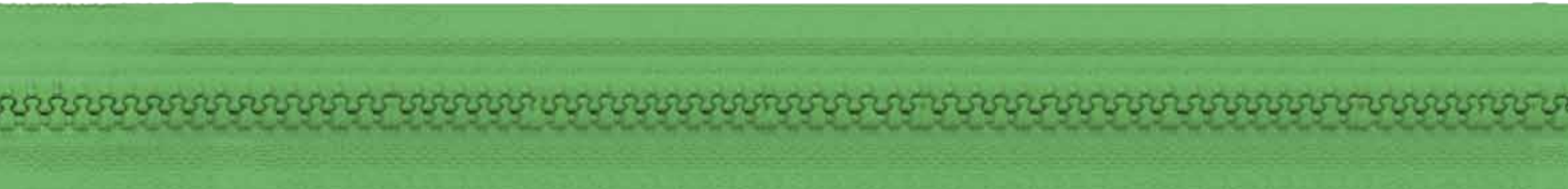
What do you expect a vine to produce?

What is James trying to teach from this fact?

What lesson does scripture teach from the use of a vine? (see Gen 40:10; Ezek 19:10)

James' lesson from this section is simple. Just as a fig tree produces figs, and the vine produces grapes, so a Godly heart will produce Godly speech. We can't claim to have a Godly mind but then speak and act differently!

James shows that nature is consistent - we ought to be also.



If the tongue itself cannot be completely tamed – or permanently subdued – we must learn instead to control it. At the start of the chapter, James showed in each of his four examples (chapter 3:3-5) that there was a force that influenced a small object which in turn controlled a much larger one.

3. Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us, and we turn about their whole body.

4. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great and are driven by fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the helmsman pleases.

5. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a wood a little fire kindleth!

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**THINK LIKE GOD
...AND YOU CONTROL
YOUR TONGUE**

Using these verses, consider and complete the diagram below:

Rider

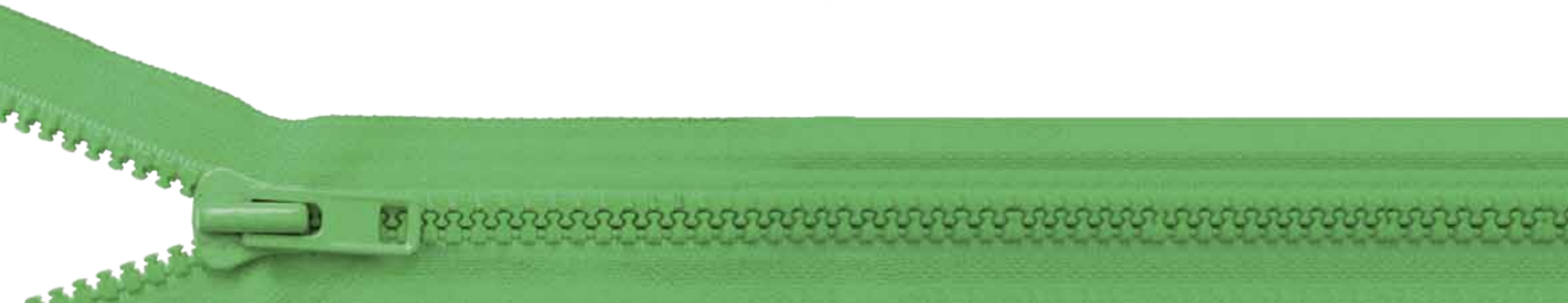
Mind

Kindling

Rudder



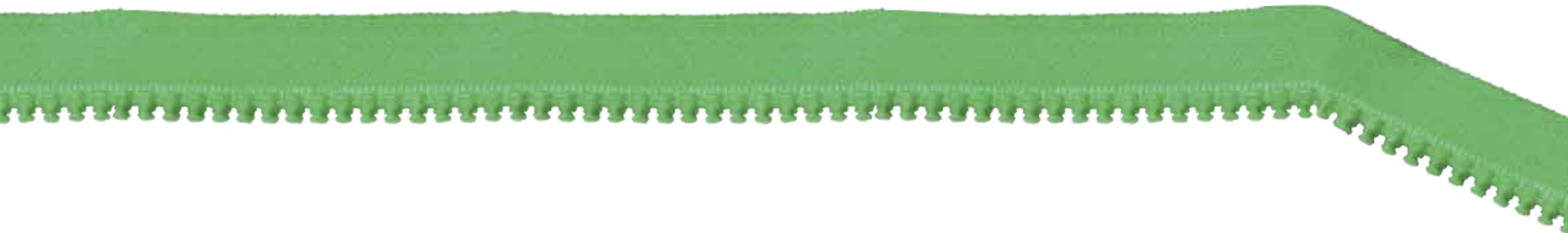
So then, if the mind can control the tongue, we must learn to think like God does!



In verses 13-18, James now shows how we can fill our mind with one of two types of wisdom: either "earthly" or "from above".

In the box below, list out the attributes in order from chapter 3:17. Then, using the examples and the verses provided, show how the wisdom from beneath is always the opposite to the wisdom from above:

James 3:17	James 3	
Pure	Defiling	v6
Peaceable	Strife	v14
		v6,8
		v8
		v9
		v16
		v10
Without hypocrisy	At the same place sweet and bitter	v11



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GOOD TREE = GOOD FRUIT**



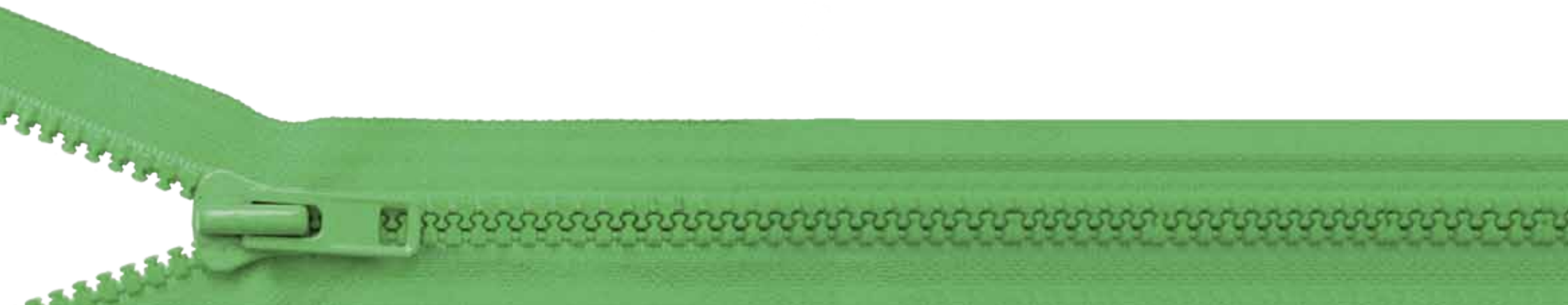
**THINK LIKE GOD
...AND YOU CONTROL
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The Chapter 3 Challenge:

Get a group of two or three of your friends, and PRACTISE true religion:

- > Try for one month to **never** talk about anyone negatively, if it comes up with friends, change the topic!
- > “How great a matter a little fire kindleth” - try to have this effect in a **positive** way; be excited, motivated and cheerful. Try to spread this attitude like a roaring fire.
- > Where do we get our wisdom? Read one Proverb a day for the next month. Remember one lesson and try to apply it that day. (There are 31 days in a month and 31 chapters in Proverbs - perfect!)
- > Stop for a moment and review your Facebook account and those of your friends. Do the words promote self, talk about others, promote strife? If so, delete your account or make a real effort to change this.

Challenge themed around James 3:5,15-17



CHAPTER 3 RECAP

TONGUE CONTROL
MASTER OF THE BODY



LESSONS FROM NATURE
GOOD TREE = GOOD FRUIT



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