

Ridicule **James 3:2,6-8**

Tongue leads to sin in more ways & easier than any other member

Sadly, sins of the tongue are a common part of the human experience

Our tongues are compared to a "little fire."

Can ruin one's reputation, destroy churches, families, friendships

Doesn't take long speech to start fight, cause misunderstanding, hurt feelings, or sow discord.

James uses vivid terms to make point: Tongue is...A fire; A world of iniquity; Set among our bodies, it defiles whole body; That which sets on fire course of nature; That which is itself set on fire by hell!

Despite able to tame wild animals, man is unable to tame tongue! It is an unruly evil! It is full of deadly poison! **James 3:7-12; Psalms 141:3**

With God's help, we can & must tame it - **Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 4:6**

Regarding sins of the tongue, I think we face two major challenges:

Keeping our tongues in check so we do not sin with our tongues.

Reaction to 'tongue' sins of others lest we become bitter or defeated.

As society grows more vicious every day, one prevalent sin of tongue is ridicule, making fun of others, it is far too common.

Ridicule (bullying) plays a part in violent and self-destructive acts

Ridicule can destroy dreams, rob sense of self-worth, drive wedges, disrupt fellowship, generally wreak havoc among friends.

Christians need to live by different standard, guarding our tongues by nobler calling, tempering our speech with the kindness of Christ.

Defining Terms:

Ridicule - The act of exposing to laughter for derision and mockery.

Ridicule implies an often-malicious belittling; a contemptuous and often bitter scorn; jeeringly provoking insult or challenge.

This alone should bring agreement that ridicule is not Christ-like

"Ridicule" not found in the KJV, but various synonyms are used.

Mock - EMPAIZO - to jeer at, deride

Treat w/contempt or ridicule; deride; to mimic in sport for derision

Can refer to righteous men mocking idol gods & prophets (Elijah Mt Carmel) Most often of evil men seeking to inflict pain - **Luke 23:11**

Scorn - QALAC (Hebrew) - disparage, ridicule

Emotion involving anger and disgust often expressed in taunting. - **Proverbs 22:10**

What's wrong with making fun of other people?

God considers it a serious matter! - **2Kings 2:23-25**

Elisha traveled to Bethel when he encountered group of young men.

"Young lads" better translation - likely between ages of 12 and 15.

Likely idolatrous, infidel young men of idol worship there

Issue a two-fold verbal assault on Elisha:

"go up" - allusion to ascension of Elijah, sarcastic urge to follow him

"baldhead" - statement of contempt applied even to those with hair

These rude, verbal marauders ridicule godly man on divine mission.

Elisha turns "curse them" Law required rebellious & evil-doers be cursed - **Deuteronomy 27:14-26**

Not just explosion of anger on Elisha's part, but completion of his divine duty to rebuke and curse sin.

What follows is God executing justice on them. Not told how bad were injured - but a momma bear can tear things up!

Does God consider it trivial to make fun of other people? Hardly!

Their youth was no excuse.

It's hurtful and harmful.

None enjoys receiving end of cruel barbs of scornful men

Matthew 7:12; Ephesians 4:31-32; Colossians 3:8

Malice - Greek word comes from same root as evil & wickedness.

Intentionally inflict pain on someone - in this context with words.

Very opposite of kind of words and expressions coming from person filled with tender-heartedness of our forgiving Savior.

One of the marks of men growing worse and worse - **Romans 1:29**

It stirs up strife. Note companions of scorners! - **Proverbs 22:10; Proverbs 6:19**

It discourages rather than encourages - **Romans 12:10-ff; Ephesians 4:12,16,29**

Why do people make fun of others?

Out of fear & anger - **Nehemiah 4:1**

Cover up what they don't understand or accept - **Acts 2:13**

To be cruel & hurtful - **Luke 23:36**

Draw attention away from their own short comings

Ridicule is Destructive!

We live in rude, crude society - Christians must not contribute to that.

Others may laugh when we make fun of someone, but God does not! Making others targets of our verbal assaults is not amusing to God.

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