



I resolve...

A Year of Life-Giving Speech

James 3:1-12, p. 1012

December 29, 2019

Pastor Casey Ehlers

- (1) Introduction: New Year's resolutions can aid in our spiritual formation.
 - a. **Edward's Resolution:** [#58]. "Resolved, not only to refrain from an air of dislike, fretfulness, and anger in conversation, but to exhibit an air of love, cheerfulness and benignity."
 - b. **Ehlers's Translation:** "This year I will refrain from words that aim to hurt or create conflict with my neighbor, and let the Gospel ground my speech in life-giving hope and joy."

- (2) James 3:1-12 speaks to the destructive power of our words.
 - a. Verses 1-8: Our speech as Christians carries great power.

 - b. Verses 9, 10: Our speech as Christians is often inconsistent.

 - c. Verses 11, 12: Our speech as Christians is often unnatural.

- (3) Jesus, "the *chief* Prophet maintained the *profoundest* silence in the presence of the highest court there ever was in the world." (Klass Schilder) (Matthew 26:57-63a)

Application: Hope Church, may we rely on the Holy Spirit and aim to speak life to one another (and our neighbor) this upcoming year!

Sunday Text Questions for James 3:1-12
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- (1) Do you make New Year's resolutions? If so, are you generally good or bad about keeping them?

- (2) Re-read James 3:1-12. What images does James use in this text and which one stands out to you the most?

- (3) How can our speech carry great power? Is this a good or bad thing?

- (4) Can you think of an example in your life where you experienced the power of speech (either life-giving or life-cursing)?

- (5) How can our speech be both inconsistent and unnatural as Christians? Why do you think this is?

- (6) What is one situation (family relationship, news story, ministry preference) that you struggle to speak peaceably about?

- (7) Jesus, the perfect man, did not speak during his trial after false testimony was given against him. How is this instructive to our lives as followers of Jesus?

- (8) Is there anyone in your life that you need to speak life to during this winter season?

- (9) Is there anyone in your life that you need to seek forgiveness from because of your words?

Further Bible Reading: Galatians 5 (Mon); Romans 14 (Tues); Matthew 18:15-35 (Wed); Proverbs 10 (Thurs); Proverbs 18:1-21 (Fri)