

# THE PASTOR'S *ESSENTIALS*®

OUR LIVES IN THE BIBLE - THE BIBLE IN OUR LIVES

<sup>13</sup> "ENTER THROUGH THE NARROW GATE. FOR WIDE IS THE GATE AND BROAD IS THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO DESTRUCTION, AND MANY ENTER THROUGH IT. <sup>14</sup> BUT SMALL IS THE GATE AND NARROW THE ROAD THAT LEADS TO LIFE, AND ONLY A FEW FIND IT.  
MATTHEW 7:13-14

**es-sen-tials** (ĭ-sĕn'shəlz) – *noun* – those things that are necessary and basic to life. In biochemistry essentials are substances that are required for normal functioning but cannot be synthesized by the body and therefore must be included in the diet. Essentials are those things that are fundamental to the spiritual health of the professing Christian.

## *The Letter of James*

*A BIBLE STUDY*

### SESSION FOUR

*James 3:1-18*

*Questions for Session Four*

1. To whom or to what group is James addressing this letter in 1:2; 2:1; and 3:1? What is James telling the reader in 3:1? James refers to the church teachers. Who are they? Why was it important to judge the church teachers more strictly?
2. By what standard are the church teachers measured? How do we hold our pastors, as well as *conference* and *denominational* leaders, accountable to teach the truth? Discuss your ideas within the context of the church in the twenty-first century.
3. In vv.2-3 James teaches us about the taming of the tongue and the hazards of not bringing it under control. James mentions *full maturity* with respect to what? What metaphor does James use to make his point?

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4. The metaphor in the previous question identifies the bridled horse, and the fact that the entire horse can be controlled by the small bit in its mouth. How does James treat the next metaphor using the rudder of a ship?
5. In vv. 5b-6 the writer teaches a similar lesson using the idea of a small flame, and how destructive it can be when it is unleashed. What good is fire? Name the benefits of fire. How do we control the flame and use it for good?
6. Think of an example of how someone's tongue has contaminated his or her life. What sets the tongue on fire (v. 6d)?
7. Humanity has been able to tame—and *even domesticate*—many wild animals. Who can tame the tongue? James compares the tongue to a restless evil full of poison. How can we accomplish both things James describes in v. 9? Cite examples.
8. What does James believe about the two things we accomplish with the tongue (v. 10)? Since this is possible, but not admirable, how can we strive to use the tongue only for good? What kinds of things can you do to promote not only the *positive* use of the tongue, but to set that example for others to follow?

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9. What examples does James cite in vv. 11-12 that support his argument? How many other examples can you think of that support his argument? Please list several that come to mind.

10. In vv. 13-18 James teaches about living through wisdom *versus* living through jealousy and ambition. Direction for our lives can come from two sources: (1) down from above or (2) from this world. Explain the differences between the two sources. What are their characteristics? What are their effects on others?

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