

James 3:1

Introduction:

1. In ch.1-2 of his letter James addressed a number of important subjects, including:
 - a. "facing temptations" (1:2-18)
 - b. "hearing and doing the Word" (1:19-27)
 - c. "respect of persons" (2:1-13)
 - d. "faith and works" (2:14-26).
2. In 3:1 James issued a serious warning to "masters."

Discussion:

- I. JAMES STATED THAT CHRISTIANS ARE NOT TO BE "*MANY MASTERS*"
 - A. The Bible uses the term "master" in different senses.
 1. A master may be someone or something that receives devotion from another person (Matthew 6:24).
 2. Christ is the Master of His followers (Matthew 23:8).
 3. Those who teach publicly are referred to as masters (John 1:38; 3:10).
 4. The master of a ship is mentioned in Acts 27:11.
 5. Instructions are given to masters who were owners of servants (Colossians 4:1).
 - B. The masters under consideration in James 3:1 are public teachers.
 - C. There are not to be "*many masters*" because masters will be held under stricter judgment.
 1. This passage does not teach that Christians are not to become teachers (Hebrews 5:12).
 2. Rather, those who desire to teach publicly must consider their work carefully because they will be held accountable for their teaching.
- II. THE LORD'S PLAN FOR THE CHURCH INCLUDES TEACHERS
 - A. The apostles were devoted to the work of teaching (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 5:42; 6:4).
 - B. The Lord gave the ability to teach to the early church (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:27-28; Ephesians 4:11-12).
 - C. Teachers no longer teach with miraculous assistance; however, the Lord's plan for the church still includes teachers (2 Timothy 2:2).
- III. "PUBLIC TEACHERS" ARE GIVEN SERIOUS WARNINGS
 - A. Teachers must not teach "*the commandments of men*" for doctrines (Matthew 15:9).
 - B. Teachers must set the proper example (Matthew 23:1-4).
 - C. Teachers must not teach because of a desire for the praise of men (Matthew 23:5-10).
 - D. Teachers must teach in such a way that the faith of people will stand in the power of God and not in the wisdom of men (1 Corinthians 2:1-5).
 - E. Teachers must teach so people can understand (1 Corinthians 14:9).
 - F. Teachers must have the right motives (Philippians 1:15-17).
 - G. Teachers must properly understand the things they teach (1 Timothy 1:7).
 - H. Teachers must "rightly divide" God's Word (2 Timothy 2:15).
 - I. Teachers must not teach things that are false (2 Peter 2:1-2).

Conclusion:

1. Although the Lord wants His followers to become teachers, James warned against a multitude of public teachers who do not fulfill their responsibilities.
2. Teachers will be held accountable; however, those who faithfully teach God's Word will be given a great reward.
3. Two great teachers worthy of our imitation are:
 - a. Jesus (Acts 1:1)
 - b. Ezra (Ezra 7:10).