

# Watch Your Mouth

Sunday, July 21, 2024

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Big Idea:

To equip believers to control their language.

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A message from the James series of the Summer of 2024.

James 3:1-12 ESV

**3** Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. **2** For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. **3** If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. **4** Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. **5** So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things.

How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! **6** And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life,<sup>[a]</sup> and set on fire by hell.<sup>[b]</sup> **7** For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, **8** but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. **9** With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. **10** From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers,<sup>[c]</sup> these things ought not to be so. **11** Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water? **12** Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water.

**Slide:**

Longman Dictionary:

A crude, blunt way of directing them to stop saying whatever sorts of things they've been saying, generally something disrespectful

**Slide:**

James is focused on **Wisdom and Obedience** , particularly in the area of our speech.

**Slide:**

The positive use of the tongue:

- perfect speech could lead to perfect control over the whole person
- The tongue can do great good
- Some kinds of boasting can be good

**Slide:**

Positive Power of Speech in Proverbs:

- The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life (10:11)
- A gentle answer turns away wrath (15:1)
- Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the souls and healing to the bones (16:24)

Perfect = mature, complete

The ability to control the tongue is the mark of true maturity for the Christian.

**Slide:**

**Matthew 12:33-37 - (Tonia, this is KJV, you can use ESV)**

Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

**32** And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.

**33** Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.

**34** O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

**35** A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

**36** But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

**37** For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

James 1:19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

**Slide:**

One one half of the slide:

1. photo of a horse's mouth with a bit in it
2. Photo of a ship and the rudder

On the other half of the slide:

Photo of:

- a tongue
- Fire
- Poison

**Slide:**

The negative uses of the tongue:

- the tongue is a fire that corrupts
- Defiles the person who speaks wrongly
- Increasingly damages others
- Burns out of control
- Repeatedly kindled by hell itself

Negative Potential of Speech from Proverbs:

- A harsh word stirs up anger (15:1)
- The mouth of a fool gushes folly (15:2)
- A perverse tongue crushes the spirit (15:4)

**Slide:** (please show each separately)

Why should I 'watch my mouth'?

The major problem with the tongue is its duplicity.

**Slide:** (please show each line separately)

We Bless God and Curse men.

We must consider the imago Dei in our speech about others.

The mastery of the tongue is a sign of wisdom.

**Slide:**

Duplicitous behavior has no place among Christians.

**Slide:** (please show separately)

Nature itself confirms:

1. No plant can produce fruit that belongs to a different plant.
2. One kind of water cannot transform itself into another kind.
3. Our tongues, naturally evil since the fall, cannot produce good on its own.

**Slide:** (Please show separately)

How to watch our mouths:

1. Be **aware** of what is influencing our hearts and minds
2. Be **mindful** of our inner self
3. Be **consistent** in our behavior