

# My Big Fat Mouth Part 1 *Origins of our Words*

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## Message to Conversation Guide

### Key Text

#### James 3:1-12

3 Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. 2 We all stumble in many ways. **If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man**, able to keep his whole body in check.

3 When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. 4 Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. 5 Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. 6 The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

7 All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, 8 but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

9 With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. 10 Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. 11 Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? 12 My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water. NIV

1. The most challenging thing to manage is our mouth. Perhaps we sin with our mouth more than any other part of our body. Discuss how James says that if we can control our mouth we can do anything.

#### James 3:2

*2 We all stumble in many ways. **If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man**, able to keep his whole body in check. NIV*

2. James cites how we can manage a lot of things but we can't seem to manage our tongue. Discuss this reality as outlined in the verse below.

#### James 3:3-8

3 When we put bits into the mouths of **horses** to make them obey us, **we can turn the whole animal**. 4 Or take **ships** as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, **they are steered by a very small rudder** wherever the pilot wants to go. 5 Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. **Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark**. 6 The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

7 All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, 8 **but no man can tame the tongue**. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. NIV

3. James suggest that it is ironic that we can't control the tongue because it is so small. However the size of the tongue is deceptive - although it is small it is unruly. Why do you think the tongue defies management? What is inferred by James's blanket statement "no man can control the tongue?"
4. It isn't non-Christians alone that struggle with their tongue it is Christians as well. Who is James writing to? How does the argument between Paul and Barnabas illustrate the Christians can sometimes have difficulty holding their tongues?

### **James 1:1**

1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,  
To the twelve tribes scattered among the nations:Greetings. NIV

### **Acts 15:36-41**

36 Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go back and visit the brothers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing." 37 Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, 38 but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. 39 **They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company**. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, 40 but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord. 41 He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches. NIV

5. Discuss how our words are not created out of thin air but originate from our thoughts. Discuss the principle that if we want to produce healthy words we must have healthy thoughts.
6. Discuss the Acrostic - **THINK**, **T** = is it true, **H** = is it helpful, **I** = is it inspiring, **N** = is it necessary, **K** = is it kind.