

# Oh, Be Careful, Little Tongue!

James 3:1-12

## I. The responsibility of having the tongue

**James 3:1-5** 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.**

**Matthew 12:36-37** I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give an account for **every careless word they speak**, 37 for by your words you will be justified and by your words you will be condemned.

## II. The difficulty of taming the tongue

**James 3:5-8** ... (Behold) 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, and set on fire by hell. 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.

## III. The purpose of using the tongue

**James 3:9-12** **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, 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.