

review it *(Revisit the weekly rituals and follow-up on the last gathering)*

- Look over the last session’s Action Step Journal and ask how it went. Share as honestly as you can. It’s not meant to cause shame or guilt, rather, a community of care.
- Try to recite last week’s memory verse.
- Try to recite the series memory verse, James 1:22.

hear it *(Slow down and hear the Word)*

Read James 3:1-12 aloud (twice if possible, using two different translations).

- ASK: What word, phrase, or image stands out to you and why?
- ASK: What does this passage teach about God?
- ASK: What does this passage teach about humanity?

check the mirror *(Help the group examine themselves honestly by asking questions)*

- **start light**
 - What’s a phrase you heard growing up that stuck with you, for better or worse?
 - When you’re tired or stressed, what kind of words tend to come out of you?
 - Have you ever said something seemingly small that had a bigger impact than you expected?
- **go further**
 - What word, phrase, or image stood out to you as we read this?
 - Why do you think James starts this section by addressing teachers?
 - What do the images of the bit, rudder, and spark have in common?
 - **James treats words as spiritual forces, not casual expressions.** According to the Scripture, what makes the tongue so dangerous?
 - The sermon asserted that “the tongue is not the source of evil, but the exposure of it.” Have you seen this play out in your own life?
 - If so, how? If not, why do you think not?
- James describes praising God and cursing people as a contradiction. Why do you think this is so easy for believers to slip into?

- Where do you see the tension between current culture (“say what you feel”) and Christian wisdom (“watch what rules your heart”)?

wisdom in action *(Apply wisdom principles to life situations.)*

Invite honesty, not pressure.

- Is there a type of speech do you struggle with most?
 - Blessing | Sarcasm | Gossip | Harsh criticism | Exaggeration
- When your words get sharp or careless, what’s usually going on inside you?
- What would it look like for your speech to be internally consistent with your faith?

The Big Four: before speaking, which question do you most need to learn to ask?

1. Is it wise?
2. Is it loving?
3. Is it necessary?
4. Does it reflect my love for Christ?

put it to work *(Move from talk to action)*

This week’s practice: **the holy pause**.

In general, we’re too quick to speak and too slow to listen. This week, let’s practice arresting the initial, human reaction to interject. The encouragement? Pause before responding. Ask yourself “The Four Questions.” Intentionally choose one: restraint or grace.

- Would you be willing to tell the group about this practice and check in next week?

weekly rituals *(Do these in whatever order—be sure to move through them)*

- Weekly Memory Verse:
“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” James 1:22
- Action Step Journal: *Be sure to take some notes here.*
- Series memory verse:
“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” James 1:22