

James 3:1-12 Watch Your Tongue

The average person uses approximately 2 million words a year, and that does not include texting, emailing, or commenting. The book of James speaks caution to us about the words we speak (and write) - watch your tongue. Why? Because every word that comes out of our mouths reveal the secrets in our heart.

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, 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. 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, 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.

James 3:1-12

Watch your tongue. Our words can be influential. Our words can be powerful. Our words have the power to steer the course of our lives as well as other people's lives. Our words can be destructive. Our words can be incriminating. Our tongue is a conduit between our heart and the ears of others. So, watch your tongue.

Discussion Questions

Words are influential (v. 1-2).

- Who is listening to you talk- at work, at school, at home?

Words are powerful (v. 2-5).

- Read Proverbs 18:21. In what ways do our words give life?
- In what ways do our words give death?

Words are destructive (v 5-8).

- What examples does James give to show the destruction of our words?
- How have you seen words destroy relationships?

Words are incriminating (v 9-12).

- Read Luke 6:43-45. Where do our words originate?
- As you consider your own words, what areas of your heart are reflected in how you speak?
- What steps can you take to align your words with God?

D&A (Discipleship & Accountability)

Break up into smaller groups for prayer.

- Who are you praying for to know Jesus?
- What gospel conversations have you had this week with someone who doesn't follow Jesus?
- How is your time with God?
- What are you praying for?
- What are you struggling with?