

me & My BIG MOUTH

ME & MY BIG MOUTH, PART 2: UNTAMABLE

Like a small spark that has the potential to scorch an entire green forest, our tongues are untamable, with the power to control our whole bodies. We have a tool that can be used to build up those around us or tear them down in just a few words. What do we do with that kind of power? We can't lock it away. But we can, by God's grace, learn to control it.

BIG IDEA: Control your tongue, control your life.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Think of an example of someone who famously lost control of their mouth. What's your perception of that person? What consequences do you assume they faced?
2. Who has significantly impacted your life with their words? Were their words that shaped you positive or negative? Discuss why it's easier to remember the harsh words of those who hurt you than the kind words of those who encouraged you.
3. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read [James 3:2–12](#).*

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. When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. 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. 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. 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.

All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be. Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

[James 3:2–12 \(NIV\)](#)

4. List together the images that James paints of the power of the tongue. Which of these comparisons do you identify with the most?
5. James used the metaphor of a small spark starting a great forest fire to illustrate the power of our tongues. Share some of the examples of people who have started "forest fires" with their words. What kind of damage did they do?

If you accidentally start a fire with your words,
you are still responsible for the fire you accidentally started.

6. In which relationship do you most often find yourself losing control of your mouth? Have you faced any relational consequences as a result?
7. In the message, Chris said that with your tongue, "There is constant potential for great good and constant potential for great evil."
8. It can be hard to come to grips with how powerful our words can be. It helps to have a clear plan on how to respond when you're faced with losing control. In which of the following areas below do you need the most help?

9. Your tongue may be untamable, but there are three things you can do to gain some control over it:

Remember: recognize your words are powerful

Surrender: ask God to help you be quick to listen and slow to speak

Confess: don't explain or excuse, but own the fires you start

Which one is the easiest for you to do? Which is the hardest?

10. Think about creative ways you can support one another in controlling your mouths (e.g., text an image of a fire, write a note with the prayer below, send a laffy taffy candy). Commit to follow through on one of your ideas this week.

MOVING FORWARD

We are powerful because our words are powerful. Our mouths have more destructive power than any other part of the body. The good news is that we also have the power to avoid the consequences of an untamed tongue if we choose to take James' wisdom to heart and surrender this powerful tool to God. Take time this week to pray:

“Heavenly Father, remind me to be quick to listen and slow to speak.”

WEEKLY READING

Read James 3:2-12. Try to memorize the image you identified with most by reading it every day this week. Repeat it and recall it when you feel like you're about to lose control of your tongue.

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