



## How to Tame the Tongue

James 3:1-12

**James 3:1-5**, Dear brothers and sisters, not many of you should become teachers in the church, for we who teach will be judged more strictly. 2 Indeed, we all make many mistakes. For if we could control our tongues, we would be perfect and could also control ourselves in every other way. 3 We can make a large horse go wherever we want by means of a small bit in its mouth. 4 And a small rudder makes a huge ship turn wherever the pilot chooses to go, even though the winds are strong. 5 In the same way, the tongue is a small thing that makes grand speeches. But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire. **PRAY**

### I. The tongue has power to direct. James 3: 1-5

#### A. Our Reputation. Proverbs 29:20

**Proverbs 29:20**, There is more hope for a fool than for someone who speaks without thinking.

#### B. Our Relationships

### C. Our Righteousness (right standing with God). James 1:19-20

**James 1:19-20**, This you know, my beloved brethren But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God. **NASB**

### D. What We Reap. Galatians 6:7

**Galatians 6:7**, Don't be misled: No one makes a fool of God. What a person plants, he will harvest. **MSG**

\*We reap what we sow. We reap later than we sow. We reap MORE than we sow. Can be positive OR negative.

### II. The Tongue Can Destroy. James 3:5b-6; 1 COR 13:1

**James 3:5b-6**, But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire. 6 And the tongue is a flame of fire. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself. 7 People can tame all kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and fish, 8 but no one can tame the tongue. It is restless and evil, full of deadly poison.

**1 Corinthians 13:1**, If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn't love

*others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.*

### III. The Tongue Can Delight. James 3:9-12; COL 4:5-6

**James 3:9-12**, *Sometimes it praises our Lord and Father, and sometimes it curses those who have been made in the image of God. 10 And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right! 11 Does a spring of water bubble out with both fresh water and bitter water? 12 Does a fig tree produce olives, or a grapevine produce figs? No, and you can't draw fresh water from a salty spring.*

**James 3:9a**, *Sometimes it praises our Lord and Father...*

#### A. Praising God. James 3:9

#### B. Encouraging Others. 1 Thessalonians 5:11

**1 Thessalonians 5:11**, *So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing.*

#### C. Comforting Others. 2 COR 1:4

**2 Corinthians 1:4**, *He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.*

### D. Pointing Others to Christ. Colossians 4:5-6

**Colossians 4:5-6**, *Live wisely among those who are not believers, and make the most of every opportunity. 6 Let your conversation be gracious and attractive so that you will have the right response for everyone.*

#### APPLY GOD'S WORD...

1. Before you speak, ask three questions...
  - a. Is this true?
  - b. Is it kind?
  - c. Is it necessary?
2. Does your tongue give praise to God?
3. Are you pointing others to Christ with your tongue or pushing them away?
4. What is God's Spirit prompting you to do right now?