



SPEECH IN REAL LIFE

James 3:1-12

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The Problem of Our Tongue - verses 1,2

1. How would you describe the warning James gives in verses 1 and 2?
2. Are there situations/circumstances/relationships where you find it easier to “stumble” in your speech? To not “stumble”?

The Influence of Our Tongue - verses 3-5a

3. In verses 3 to 5a, how does James describe the influence of the tongue?
4. Have you experienced (i.e. please share) situations where the influence of the tongue was used for bad? For good?

The Destructiveness of Our Tongue - verses 5b-8

5. In verses 5b to 8, how does James describe the destructiveness of the tongue?
6. Have you experienced (i.e. please share) situations where the power of the tongue was used for bad? For good?

The Inconsistency of Our Tongue - verses 9-12

7. In verses 9 to 12 how does James illustrate inconsistency? How are these illustrations related to our speech? Are there times when you notice inconsistencies in your own speech?
8. What can these inconsistencies tell you about your faith? About your relationship with God?

Processing What James Writes...

9. In verse 10 James tell us that *“these things ought not to be so.”* What are “these things”?
10. If *“these things ought not to be so,”* what should be so? Consider as suggestions: Ephesians 4:29; 1 Thessalonians 5:11. Are there any other “things”?
11. In verse 8, James writes that *“no human being can tame the tongue.”* What does he mean by this?
12. If *“no human being can tame the tongue”* (that’s us), Who can? How? How could this taming take place in your life?
13. What would it look like for you to surrender control of your tongue to God? Consider as a suggestion: Galatians 5:16-24.
14. The Christian Jews that James is writing to could see severe persecution coming. Put differently: they were about to get hammered by intense drama in their lives. Given that reality, how might James’ warning have been especially relevant to them?
15. How does James 3:1-12 relate to James 2 and our relationships with others? How might this be especially relevant given the drama we face in life?
16. What immediate opportunities do you have to use your tongue to influence and empower others for good? What would it be like for you to take advantages of these opportunities?
17. Are there any parts of this study that you have found especially helpful, troubling, challenging? Are there additional ways you can apply this study in your life this week?