

Next Steps:

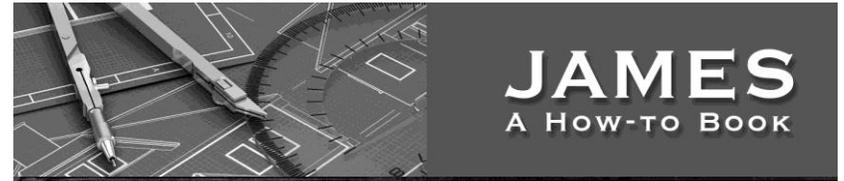
- I understand that “what” I say is a reflection of the condition of my heart (Mt 12:33–37).
- I need a renovation of my heart and am surrendering to Jesus today.
- I will make a deliberate attempt to speak what is helpful for building others up (Eph 4:29).
- I will pray Psalm 141:3—”Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips.”
- In order to repair a broken relationship, I will ask forgiveness from _____ for what I have said.

Memory Verse – James 3:10

*From the same mouth come blessing and cursing.
My brothers, these things ought not to be so.*

Next Week: James 3:13-18 – How to Spot True Wisdom

Prayer Requests



James: A “How To” Manual for Life

This Week: How to Tame the Tongue James 3:1-12

So Far: James encouraged his readers to joyfully endure the trials of life, to develop steadfastness and maturity in their lives. They can ask God for wisdom, because he gives generously and without reproach. God never tempts; he only gives good gifts. The one who remains steadfast under trial will be blessed and will receive the crown of life.

Believers should be doers of God’s word and not hearers only, quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to anger. God wants his children to bridle their tongues, take care of the needy, and to remain unstained by the world. They should not show partiality to the rich while neglecting the poor. He called them to fulfill the royal law of neighborly love.

James then emphasized the symbiotic relationship between faith and works. Faith without works is dead, while faith with works brings energy to faith and makes it complete.

This Week: James returns to the importance of taming one’s tongue. Our tongue has potential to influence life for good and bad that is out of proportion to its size. James uses examples and illustrations to drive home his warning.

Open

1. “Them’s fightin’ words!” What are some words or phrases people use that might start a fight with someone?
2. If you could take back something you have said, what would it be?

Read James 3:1-12

The Warning

1-2

1. Why does James warn his readers about becoming teachers?

What are some responsibilities of being a teacher?

What are some inherent dangers of being a teacher?

Why will teachers receive a stricter judgment?

2. What does verse 2 teach us about the human condition?

Small in Size; Big in Impact

3-6

1. How do our tongues compare to:
a bit in a horse's mouth?
the rudder of a ship?

2. In what ways is the tongue like a fire?

3. What are the three results of the tongue being a "world of unrighteousness" in verse 6?

Read Proverbs 16:27-29

What are the examples here of speech as a scorching fire?

Taming the Tongue

7-8

1. What is the contrast in verses 7-8?

2. In what ways is the tongue:
a restless evil?
full of deadly poison?

3. What are some examples of an untamed tongue?

4. Why is it so difficult to tame one's tongue?

Read Ephesians 4:29

1. Give some examples of "corrupting talk."

2. Give some examples of speech that "is good for building up."

Blessing and Cursing

9-12

1. What is James concern in verses 9-10?

2. How does James illustrate his concern in verses 11-12?

3. How can the tongue be used for both good and evil?

Reflect

1. What does James say about the power of words?

2. How does what James says correspond to your experience?

Read Matthew 12:33-37

According to Jesus, from where does the mouth speak?

What can you do to reduce the amount of careless words that come out of your mouth?

3. Check-up: How do you speak habitually?

Do your words generally build up or tear down?

Do your words reveal who you are or hide who are?

Do your words reveal God or hide him?

Do your words empower others or dominate them?

Do your words speak the truth or "tickle the ears"?

Are your words the same whether the person you are talking about is present or absent?

(From *Mastering the Basics*, Serendipity)

Pray Psalm 141:3 – Set a guard over my mouth;

keep watch over the door of my lips.

Take-Away

What is your take away from our time together?