

07 April

 Break the ice

Write down what God is saying to you in today's message:

TOPIC: James – week 6



Let's hear your story

1. Tell of a time when you had to explain to a friend or family member that our tongues are powerful to either build people up, or break them down?
2. What is James' warning to teachers in v.1? (... **My brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.**.)
3. To what does James compare our tongue in v.3 – 4? (**v.3; ... we put bits in the mouths of horses... v.4; ... Ships are guided by a very small rudder...**.)
4. What does James say about the tongue in v.5? (**So also, the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things.**.)



Let's go deeper

5. To what does James compare our tongue in v.6? (**And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness.**.)
6. What does James warn us against in v.8? (**But no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.**.)
7. According to v.10, what comes from the mouth? (**From the same mouth come blessing and cursing...**.)
8. What is the real problem with our tongue – see Matthew 15:18? (**But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person.**.)



Let's apply this

**9. James 3:8;** But **no human being can tame the** tongue. It is restless evil, full of deadly poison.

When Jesus Christ controls the tongue, then we need not fear saying the wrong things or even saying the right things in a wrong way. When Jesus Christ is Lord of the heart, then He is Lord of the lips too.

- Allow God to use your tongue to direct others into the way of life.
- Give God your heart and tongue and ask Him to use you to be a blessing to others this week.

SUMMARY:

James: Week 6 – The power of the tongue

Read: James 3:1 – 12

**v.1 – 2;** Those who teach the Word of God will face stricter judgment. Teachers must use their tongue (words) to share God's truth. The person who can discipline his tongue gives evidence that he can control his whole body. He proves that he is a mature (perfect) man.

**v.3 – 5a; The tongue has power to direct.** James use two small items; a bit and a rudder that exercise great power, just like the tongue. A small bit enables the rider to control the great horse, and a small rudder enables the pilot to steer the huge ship. The tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it has the power to do great things. Both the bit and the rudder must overcome contrary forces. The bit must overcome the wild nature of the horse, and the rudder must fight the winds and currents that would drive the ship off its course. The human tongue also must overcome forces. We have an old nature that wants to control us and make us sin. Both the bit and the rudder must be under the control of a strong hand. When Jesus Christ controls the tongue, then we need not fear saying the wrong things.

**v.5b – 6; The tongue has power to destroy.** A fire can begin with just a small spark, but it can grow to destroy a city. Our words can start fires. Fire burns and hurts, and our words can burn and hurt. Fire spreads, and the more fuel you give it, the faster and farther it will spread. A person's entire life can be injured or destroyed by the tongue. As it spreads, fire destroys, and the words we speak have power to destroy.

**v.7 – 8;** Not only is the tongue like a fire, but it is also like a dangerous (unruly) animal. Some animals are poisonous, and some tongues spread poison. The deceptive thing about poison is that it works secretly and slowly, and then kills. James reminds us that animals can be tamed, and, for that matter, fire can be tamed. When you tame an animal, you get a worker instead of a destroyer. When you control fire, you generate power. The tongue can be tamed by God.

**v.9 – 12; The tongue has power to delight.** The fountain, of course, provides the cool water that man needs to stay alive. Man needs water not only for drinking, but also for washing, cooking, farming, and other activities necessary to life. Water is life-giving, and our words can give life. However, if water is not controlled, it brings death and destruction like floods. The tongue is also like a like a tree. Trees provide beauty and shade; and they bear fruit. But James issued a warning: a fountain cannot give forth two kinds of water, and a tree cannot bear two different kinds of fruit. The problem is not the tongue; it is the heart – see Matt.15:18 / Proverbs 4:23.

God can use our tongues to direct others into the way of life, and to delight them in the trials of life. The tongue is a little member, but it has great power. Give God your tongue and your heart each day and ask Him to use you to be a blessing to others.