

Discussion Questions:

What are some of the wrong motives people have for wanting to teach/give their opinion?

Why do we give so little thought to what we say?

What makes the tongue so hard to control?

What are some situations where we often respond sinfully with our tongue?

What are some of the more subtle ways we cause damage (like a fire) with our tongue?

What are 3 steps you can take this week to begin to bring your tongue under control for the glory of God? *Remember, if we say our tongue is completely under control, then we are saying that everything in our life is completely free from sin (v.2).*

Putting Your Tongue on a Leash, pt. 1

James 3:1-5

Unless we burn it with scalding coffee or accidentally bite it, we rarely think about our tongue. Yet, it is a very important and unruly member of our body. In the first 12 verses of chapter 3, James shows us how true faith *talks*. Real, genuine faith is demonstrated through our actions, including our speech.

The Restriction (1a)

This section warning us about the danger of the tongue begins in a peculiar place; it begins with a warning about teaching. Now, James is not discouraging believers from using their spiritual gifts; instead, he wants us to clearly understand the gravity of teaching. It is not a light, laughing matter to stand up before brothers or sisters in Christ and claim to speak for God.

The Reasons (1b-2)

Three specific reasons are highlighted which explain the seriousness of teaching. First, teachers will be judged with a greater degree of strictness. Second, teachers are sinners as well, and third, teachers have to deal with the uncontrollable member of the body—the tongue.

The Reality (2b-5)

The unfortunate reality we must face is that the tongue, though small in size has great power. If the tongue is controlled, the whole body can be controlled. Wherever the tongue leads, the body follows. The tongue, like a fire, has the ability to destroy whatever gets in its path. We cannot overlook this small, but destructive member of the body; it must be controlled to the glory of God.