

SERMON

DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Depravity of the Tongue

James 3:1-12

Pre-Questions

1. When have you seen how a few careless words caused much more harm than expected?
2. Have you ever experienced a moment when someone's words made you feel deeply hurt—or deeply loved?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Begin by reading James 3:1-12. Notice the severity of James's warning.

WORDS MATTER IMMENSELY (VERSES 1-5)

2. James warns that those who teach must be careful with their words. Why do you think teachers carry such responsibility with speech?
3. James gives analogies comparing the tongue to a bit for a horse, a rudder for a ship, and a spark that sets a forest ablaze. In what ways have you seen small words lead to large consequences?
4. Our tongues can lead us to hell (verses 6-8)
5. James describes the tongue as a fire, a restless evil, and something untamable. How does that challenge our view of words as harmless?

HOW WE SPEAK REVEALS WHO WE ARE (VERSES 9-12)

6. James points out the hypocrisy of praising God and cursing human beings made in His image. When have you observed or done this?
7. He uses pictures of springs, fig trees, and grapevines to show the need for consistency. How can the way you speak reflect who you really are, not just what you feel in the moment?

Theological Reflection

8. James implies that our words reflect our hearts. Our tongue's destructive power reveals how deeply sin affects even the smallest parts of our lives.

While it seems humanly impossible to tame the tongue, our hope lies in God's transforming grace.

Application Questions

9. Recognize your need for repentance—reflect on a recent moment when your words brought harm. Confess it to God and ask for His grace.
10. Remember you are being recorded—words can't be taken back, yet we will give an account. How does that motivate you to speak more thoughtfully?
11. Reveal who you want to be—choose to bless rather than curse. Today, speak life into someone's situation.

12. Each day this week, ask God to help you tame your tongue. Pray that your words would reflect His peace and truth.
13. Consider journaling or pausing before speaking to filter your words. Ask the Holy Spirit to fill and guide your speech.