

"Words Matter!"

James 3:3-12

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Aug. 16, 2026



Prov. 18:21: Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.

1. The Tongue is _____: Vs. 3-5a

Vs. 3-5a: If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So also the tongue is a **small member**, yet it boasts of **great things**.

Proverbs 16:24: Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body.

2. The Tongue is _____: Vs. 5b-6

Vs. 5b-6: How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and **set on fire by hell**.

Proverbs 16:27: A worthless man plots evil, and his speech is like a scorching fire.

Proverbs 26:21: As charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire, so is a quarrelsome man for kindling strife.

James 1:19-20: Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

3. The Tongue is _____: Vs. 7-8

Vs. 7-8: For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, **full of deadly poison**.

4. The Tongue is _____: Vs. 9-12

Vs. 9-12: With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water? Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water.

Luke 6:43-45: "For no good tree bears bad fruit, nor again does a bad tree bear good fruit, for each tree is known by its own fruit. For figs are not gathered from thornbushes, nor are grapes picked from a bramble bush. The good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure produces evil, **for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.**"

Ephesians 4:29-32: Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but **only such as is good for building up**, as fits the occasion, that **it may give grace to those who hear... Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.**

1 Thessalonians 5:11: "Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."

Discussion Questions:

- Share about a time when you hurt someone with your words. How was your heart involved?
- Share about a time when someone encouraged you with their words. What effect did it have on you? Was it life changing?
- How have you seen the tongue destroy like fire?
- What are some effective ways to keep ourselves from sinning with our tongue? Look through the scriptures on this page.
- What are some gentle and effective ways to stop the spread of gossip and slander?
- Does stress cause us to sin with our tongue? Is the ultimate cause internal or external?
- What are some effective ways to encourage others? Encourage someone in the room right now.
- How could you use your tongue more in your daily life (work, school, hobbies, etc.) to point people to Jesus?