

**“A Serious Warning
to Would-Be Teachers
(James 3:1-2)**

1. Read James 3:1-2. What was the most significant thing you took away from the sermon, and why? Was there a particular Scripture, illustration, or statement that caused you to stop and think?

2. Why do you think James moves his discussion from faith and works in chapter 2 directly into a discussion about the tongue in chapter 3? What does our speech have to do with demonstrating genuine faith?

3. Consider this statement: “What you are, will sooner or later make itself known in what you say.” What does our everyday speech reveal about the condition of our hearts? How does Jesus' teaching in Matthew 15:17–20 reinforce this?

4. James warns, “Let not many of you become teachers.” Why is teaching God's Word such a serious responsibility? What are some of the ways a teacher can potentially influence people for good or for harm?

5. Teachers will be judged more strictly because they have greater knowledge and influence. How should that reality affect the way someone approaches teaching, leading a Bible study, discipling another believer, or even teaching their own children?

6. Why is it important for Christians to be discerning about the pastors, teachers, books, podcasts, and other spiritual voices they allow to influence them? What are some practical ways we can evaluate whether a teacher is faithfully handling God's Word?

7. James says, “*For we all stumble in many ways.*” How should this truth affect the way we view our own failures—and the failures of other Christians? How do we avoid using our imperfections as an excuse for sin while also avoiding the unrealistic expectations of perfectionism?

8. What does spiritual maturity look like when we know we will all still stumble at times? How should a mature believer respond when he or she sins?

9. James says that the person who can control his tongue is able to “*bridle the whole body.*” Why do you think control of our speech is such a significant indicator of spiritual maturity? What kinds of speech are particularly difficult for Christians to control—anger, criticism, gossip, complaining, sarcasm, dishonesty, etc.?

10. Matthew 12:34 says, “*For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart.*” If someone listened carefully to your conversations for an entire week, what would your speech tell them about what is filling your heart? Is there an area of your speech where you believe God is calling you to repent and grow?

11. What is one specific change you would like to see God make in your speech—and what can you do this week to cooperate with His sanctifying work?
