

“The Untamable Tongue”

(James 3:1–12)

1. What stood out to you most from this sermon, and why? Did anything particularly challenge or convict you regarding the way you use your words?

2. Read James 3:1–2. Here James warns about the dangers of the tongue, particularly for those who teach God's Word. Why do you think James begins with teachers? What does our speech reveal about our spiritual maturity?

3. Read James 3:3–4. In these verses Pastor James compares the tongue to a bit in a horse's mouth and the rudder of a ship. What is the point of these two illustrations? How have you seen something relatively small, such as a few words, significantly influence the direction of someone's life?

4. In the sermon, we were reminded that the real problem with our tongue is actually a problem of the heart (Matthew 12:34–35). Why is simply trying to control our words insufficient if we fail to address what is going on in our heart?

5. Read James 3:5–6. Here James compares the tongue to a small fire capable of destroying an entire forest. What are some examples of how careless, angry, or sinful words can cause tremendous damage in marriages, families, friendships, or the church? Why can that damage be so difficult to repair?

6. Read James 3:7–8. Here Pastor James tells us that mankind has been able to tame all kinds of animals, yet no one can tame the tongue. What does this teach us about our own inability to overcome sinful speech through human effort alone? How does the Holy Spirit enable believers to change?

7. Read James 3:9–10. Here James confronts the hypocrisy of praising God while speaking sinfully about people created in His image. Why is this such a serious contradiction? How should our love for God affect the way we speak to and about others, especially when we disagree with them?

8. Read James 3:11–12. Here James uses the illustrations of a fountain and fruit trees to teach that our words reveal our true nature. How can the patterns of our speech help us evaluate the condition of our hearts and the genuineness of our faith?

9. The sermon emphasized the destructive nature of gossip and slander, including gossip disguised as a prayer request. How can we distinguish between genuinely seeking godly counsel and sinfully spreading information about another person? What responsibility do we have when someone begins sharing gossip with us?

10. Matthew 18:15 teaches us to address a brother's sin privately rather than talking about it with others. Why do we sometimes find it easier to talk about someone rather than speak directly to them? How would following this Biblical principle strengthen relationships within the church?

11. Read Ephesians 4:29. This verse commands us to speak words that edify others and give grace to those who hear. What specific changes do we need to make in our everyday conversations?

12. Read Matthew 12:36–37. Here Jesus says that we will give an account for our words. If someone were to listen to everything you said over the past week, what would your words reveal about your heart and your relationship with Christ? What specific area of your speech do you believe God is calling you to repent of and change?
