



July 20, 2025 | Matt Magee

Series: James

Sermon Title: What You Must Know to Tame the Tongue

Main Scripture: James 3:1-12

OUTLINE

1. The tongue, which no human can control, disproportionately reveals the inconsistency of the human heart.
2. We must tame the tongue but no human can.
3. Jesus bore the judgment for every sinful word our tongues have spoken and empowers us to speak truth in love.
4. In humility, acknowledge your inconsistency and inability to control your tongue. Seek the Spirit's help, which He gladly gives to those who seek Him.
 1. Repent: Recognize that speech sins are heart sins ([Luke 6:45](#)). Repent for careless, critical, manipulative, or prideful words. Acknowledge that ungodly speech flows from a heart in need of transformation.
 2. Revere: Approach teaching and public speech with reverence. Honor the weight of words, particularly in spiritual leadership, knowing we will give an account ([Jas. 3:1](#); [Matt. 12:36](#)).
 3. Restrain: Learn the discipline of silence, careful listening, and thoughtful speech. Bridle the tongue not in legalistic restraint but in the Spirit's strength ([Prov. 17:27-28](#); [Jas. 1:19](#)).
 4. Reform: Actively replace destructive words with constructive ones. Speak blessing instead of cursing, truth instead of slander, gentleness instead of wrath. This is not merely moral effort, but gospel application ([Eph. 4:29-32](#)).
 5. Renew: Let your daily speech become a site of sanctification. Practice confession when words fail. Use words to heal, not to harm; to honor, not to humiliate. Join God in His redemptive work by speaking life in a world of verbal death ([Phil. 2:14-16](#); [Col. 3:16](#)).
 6. Rest in Christ: Ultimately, transformation comes not by tongue control alone but by heart renewal. Fix your eyes on Jesus, the Word who saves and sanctifies, and submit to the Spirit's ongoing work.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Group Leader: See if your group has reviewed the latest newsletter and briefly skim together if needed. [NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE](#)

1. Read James 3:1-12 aloud together. Why do you think James starts by warning teachers (v.1)?
2. What is the relationship between spiritual maturity and speech (v.2)?
3. Which analogy (bit, rudder, fire) speaks to you most? Why?
4. How does James describe the paradox of our speech (vv.9–10)?
5. What does the spring/fig tree imagery reveal about inner transformation?
6. What connection do you see between heart and speech (Luke 6:45)?
7. How does this passage expose our need for Christ?
8. Review the 6 "Rs" for our response. Discuss how you need to apply these in your own heart & life.

Pray