



# *The Heart of the Matter*

WORD SERIES WITH PS SIMON SAY



**WATCH  
YOUR  
TONGUE!**

**JAMES 3:1-12**

## OVERVIEW OF JAMES

# TRUE FAITH: WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT YOU CAN!

## FAITH SEEN THROUGH

● James 1: **Trials & Obedience**

(James 1:12, 22)

● James 2: **Impartiality & Action**

(James 2:1, 26)

● James 3: **Works & Godly Wisdom**

(James 3:10, 17)

● James 4: **Godly Submission**

(James 4:7, 8)

● James 5: **Wealth, Suffering & Prayer**

(James 5:1, 7, 16)

1 Not many of you should presume to be teachers,  
my brothers, because you know that we who  
teach will be judged more strictly. 2 We all  
stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in  
what he say, he is a perfect man, able to keep his  
whole body in check.



**JAMES 3:1-12**

3 When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. 4 Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go.



**JAMES 3:1-12**

5 Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. 6 The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.



**JAMES 3:1-12**

7 All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, 8 but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.



**JAMES 3:1-12**

9 With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father,  
and with it we curse men, who have been made in  
God's likeness. 10 Out of the same mouth come  
praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be.  
11 Can both fresh water and salt water flow from  
the same spring? 12 My brothers, can a fig tree bear  
olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt  
spring produce fresh water.



**JAMES 3:1-12**



# WATCH YOUR TONGUE!

JAMES 3:1-12



(1)

**SIGNIFICANCE**  
**OF THE TONGUE**  
(V1-6)



(2)

**STUBBORNNESS**  
**OF THE TONGUE**  
(V7-8)



(3)

**SELF-**  
**CONTRADICTION**  
**OF THE TONGUE**  
(V9-12)



## 1) SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TONGUE (VI-6)

### A. Standard of the Teacher (v 1-2)

- Teachers will be judged more strictly
- “With Great Power comes Great Responsibility”
  - The Peter Parker Principle, aka Spiderman
- The Jesus Principle: Luke 12:48.
- Teacher’s Responsibilities:
  - Interpretation
  - Application
  - Practice What You Preach



## 1) SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TONGUE (V1-6)

### **B. Size of the Tongue (v 1-2)**

- 3 Illustrations: Bit, Rudder, Spark-Fire
  - Small Bit Controls Big Horse
  - Small Rudder Steers Big Ship, Overcomes Big Wind
  - Small Spark can become Fire that burns Big Forest
- Though small, all have the power to achieve something out of proportion to its size.
- Small tongue has the power to plant lies, sow discord, damage reputation, destroy lives, profane God's name.



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“Without wood  
a fire goes out;  
without gossip  
a quarrel dies  
down.”

PROVERBS 26:20

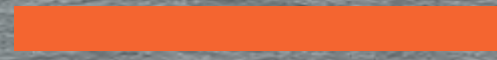
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**ASK YOURSELF  
3 QUESTIONS...**

- 1) Is it true?
- 2) Is it kind?
- 3) Is it necessary?

**Before saying  
anything  
about anyone...**

“It only takes a spark, remember, to set off a forest fire. A careless or wrongly placed word out of your mouth can do that. By our speech we can ruin the world, turn harmony to chaos, throw mud on a reputation, send the whole world up in smoke and go up in smoke with it, smoke right from the pit of hell.”



**JAMES 3:5-6 (THE MESSAGE)**



## 2) STUBBORNNESS OF THE TONGUE (V7-8)

### Why man is unable to control the tongue?

- "From out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks." Mat. 12:34
- "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?" Jer. 17:9
- "But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean'..."  
Mat. 15:18

**WE NEED THE HOLY SPIRIT'S HELP  
TO CONTROL OUR TONGUE.**



# The Tongue and the Heart



**IF THE TONGUE IS LIKE  
THE BIT,  
THE HEART IS LIKE  
THE REIN.**



**IF THE TONGUE IS LIKE  
THE RUDDER,  
THE HEART IS LIKE  
THE HELM.**



**IF THE TONGUE IS LIKE  
THE SPARK/FIRE,  
THE HEART IS LIKE  
THE FLINT / MATCHSTICK.**



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GOOD  
EVIL

LOVE  
HATE

### 3) SELF CONTRADICTION OF THE TONGUE (V 9-12)

- The forked tongue: praise and curse.
- Most unnatural thing about the tongue. Where in nature fresh water springs produce fresh water, fig trees produce figs, and the grapevine grapes, the tongue can produce something else.
- The uncontrolled tongue runs contrary to the nature of things and the will of God.



# **ANTIDOTE FOR CARELESS WORDS**

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**1) Listen to the Voice of God**

(e.g. Psalm 119:105; Isaiah 41:10; Psalm 4:8)

**2) Know God's Word about the tongue**

(Matthew 12:36, 37; Proverbs 6:12-15)

**3) Obey God's command to forgive**

(Matthew 6:14-15; Colossians 3:13; Eph. 4:32)

**4) Remember Jesus' Sacrifice on the Cross**

(1 John 3:16; Romans 12:1-2; Galatians 2:20)

# Poem of the Tongue

A careless word may kindle strife;  
A cruel word may wreck a life;  
A bitter word may hate instill;  
A brutal word might smite and kill.  
A gracious word may smooth the way;  
A joyous word may light the day.  
A timely word may lessen stress;  
A loving word may heal and bless.

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AUTHOR UNKNOWN



# REFLECTION

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- What is God saying to you this morning?
- Is there a sin to confess?
- Do you need to change the way you speak?
- Is there someone you need forgive?
- Do you need to seek forgiveness?



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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- What did you learn about the tongue in James 3:1-12?
- Recall how uncalled for words were spoken to you. How did you feel? What did you do?
- How can you echo the 'tongue' of God in your life - workplace, home, public?
- What do you think kind words can do to the people around you?



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**PRAYER**

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**RESPONSE**