



LEADER'S GUIDE – March 3



HIGHLIGHT: *Primary Passage from Sunday*

James 3:1-18: Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. ² We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.

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. 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 body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. ⁷ All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, ⁸ but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

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

¹³ Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. ¹⁴ But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. ¹⁵ Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. ¹⁶ For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

¹⁷ But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. ¹⁸ Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.



EXPLAIN: *To Be Reviewed before the group gathering*

In Chapter 3, James speaks about the taming of the tongue. This topic focuses heavily on one of the main themes of James which is that belief impacts behavior. In this passage, James shows that taming the tongue is not a word issue, but something much deeper.



APPLY: *For Group Discussion*

- 1.) Read vv.1-6. Of all the illustrations given for the tongue, which one stood out to you the most and why? What is a common theme from all of them? Though small, there is immense power in the tongue. Our speech can have a huge impact (positive or negative) on us and others.
- 2.) How have you experienced this truth in your life? If you are comfortable, share a positive/negative comment that someone has given you that has impacted you significantly.
- 3.) Read vv.7-12. Also, read Luke 6:43-45. What do these verses say about our ability to tame the tongue? It is impossible to tame the tongue, because the tongue speaks what the heart is full of. And our heart is naturally inclined towards evil.
- 4.) If “out of the heart the mouth speaks,” what are some examples in your life of things you say that reveal a deeper heart issue? (As we share, we want to inspect our own words and evaluate our motive, not share other people’s words and assume their motives.) If people struggle to think, give them some ideas and lead in transparency by sharing a personal example. Some ideas: Where do you respond disproportionately? When you say your sorry, what are the additional lines that you say to justify yourself? What are the things you say and then think to yourself “Why did I just say that?”
- 5.) If no human can tame the tongue and if “out of the heart the mouth speaks,” how must we approach taming the tongue? By ourselves, it is impossible to tame the tongue because it is a heart issue, not a word issue. And the only person who can change a person’s heart, is the Holy Spirit. So, we must ask God to change our heart and replace our evil and sick hearts, with his character. What are some practical ways we can do this? Prayer, reading the Word, Memorizing and meditating on Scripture, having accountability with other believers who can speak into your life, etc.



RESPOND: *Bringing the discussion to a point of action*

- What is one area/relationship in your life that you need to tame your tongue? (Family, Friendships, Work, etc.)
- What do you believe is the motivation/heart issue behind your struggle in this area?
- What truth in the Gospel addresses this heart issue? How can you focus on that truth this week?