

October 7, 2018
La Jolla Christian Fellowship
THE TONGUE : What To Do With What You've Herd
Episode 1 - TAMING THE TONGUE
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James 3:1-12

Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. ²We 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. ³When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. ⁴Or 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. ⁵Likewise, 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.

⁶The 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. ⁷All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, ⁸but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. ¹⁰Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. ¹¹Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? ¹²My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

Word Up: What's the big deal about a few words?

- For God, words express **true reality**. For God, words have the power to create, to bring life and to destroy it.
 - God is ultimate truth. His entire being emanates truth. Language is a created tool designed to allow us to express true reality.

1. God Spoke Creation Into Being.

- **Gen 1:3** *And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.*
 - "God said" is mentioned 9 times in the Genesis 1 creation account, bringing life to an unformed and chaotic environment.
 - **Proverbs 18:21** *"Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits."*
 - What are you creating with your tongue?

2. The Bible Itself Is A Collection Of Words Meant To Lead You Into True Reality.

- **Hebrews 4:7** *The word of God is alive and active, sharper than any double-edged sword. It cuts all the way through, to where soul and spirit meet, to where joints and marrow come together. It judges the desires and thoughts of the heart.*
 - **Proverbs 4:23** *My son, pay attention to what I say; turn your ear to my words.²¹ Do not let them out of your sight, keep them within your heart;²² for they are life to those who find them and health to one's whole body.*
 - Every day, each of us consumes words. Those words will lead you to life and health or death and decay.

3. Jesus Himself Is Called "The Word".

- **John 1:1** *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ³Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴In Him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*
 - Within the person of Jesus is an eternity of words that describe the totality of truth and love, thus the only way to describe this reality is to say that He is "The Word".

A Final Warning About Your Words:

³³*"Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. ³⁴You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? **For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.** ³⁵A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. ³⁶But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. ³⁷**For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.**"*

Food For The Journey: Use these questions to go deeper in personal study or in one of our community groups.

1. Have you ever thought about how much credence God gives to words? Why do you think that they are so important according to the scriptures presented above?
2. Words are shown to create. What can we create in our lives by using the tool of our tongue?
3. Words are seen in the scripture to give the power of life and death? How does this play out in real life? Can we really give life and death?
4. Jesus was called the Word. Why do you think that He was given that title?
5. Every day we consume words, and those words give us life and health or death and decay. Do you need to change your consumption habits?