

## **TAMING THE TONGUE**

### **JAMES 3:1-12**

#### **SERMON POINTS**

- Warning to potential teachers
- Bridle, bit, rudder, and fire
- The untamable tongue
- Blessing and cursing

**MAIN IDEA:** It doesn't make sense for people who live under the blessing (benediction) of God in Jesus, to be a people who curse and wound others with their words.

#### **BOOK OF JAMES BACKGROUND:**

In James 1:22 James writes, "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves." This verse serves as a primary theme for the letter. The topic of speech was his first application point regarding being doers of the word (James 1:19, "let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger") and now he spends twelve verses in chapter three unpacking this idea even more. For James, the "tongue" (words) are powerful and are important because they demonstrate what is in our heart.

#### **QUESTIONS:**

**Q:** The tongue is small, but it has so much power to bless and curse. It's like a bridle, bit, rudder and spark of fire. A blessing can shape your life and change you. In your life who has blessed you (shaped you/formed you) the most with their words? What were some of the words or phrases that shaped you the most?

**Q:** The tongue is small, but it has so much power to wound. How have you been hurt or even shaped by other people's words?

**P:** In James 3:9-12 James is showing how absurd it is for one thing to produce something entirely different from itself (a grapevine doesn't produce olives). James is saying that the tongue isn't the problem, it's the source (the heart). Jesus said,

#### **Matthew 12:34**

"You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."

**Q:** In your life right now, what are your words showing that you have an abundance of? Anger? Fear? Self-focus? Joy? Hope?

**Challenge for each group member:** Who do you need to repent to regarding your words? Who do you need to bless?