

# Taming the Tongue

## James 3 NIV

<sup>3</sup> Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. <sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. <sup>4</sup> 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. <sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> 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.

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

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

- 1) Is it fair to judge leaders and teachers more strictly?
- 2) What are the biggest stumbling block for the tongue?
- 3) How does it most often get us in trouble?
- 4) V3-5 what point is James making with these 3 different analogies?
- 5) V6 how is the tongue a dangerous fire? What damage can it do?
- 6) V7-8 what does James concede about the tongue?
- 7) So what is he encouraging us to do?
- 8) V10 can salt and fresh water come out of the same spring? What kind of water would you get?
- 9) What is the point James is trying to make about "good" speech and "bad" speech?
- 10) What is a practical way we can try to tame the tongue?