

Sermon Notes

The Power of the Tongue
James 3:1-12

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Don't let its size fool you...the tongue has tremendous potential for good

- Our speech is a leading sign of spiritual maturity (v. 2)
- Our tongue can determine our destiny (v. 3-5a)

Don't let its size fool you...the tongue has tremendous potential for evil

- The tongue is destructive (v. 5b-6)
 - Emotionally charged, angry words (1:19)
 - Uncontrolled speech (1:26)
 - Quarreling (4:1-2)
 - Boasting (4:16)
 - Distorting the truth (5:12)
 - Degrading others (3:9, 4:11)
 - Inconsistent speech (3:10)
- The tongue is stubborn (v. 7-8)
- The tongue is inconsistent (v. 9-12)

Steps towards God-honoring speech

- Strengthen our theology of imago-dei (v. 9)
- Pay attention to our digital lives
- Attend to our identity
- Get excited about how our words can bring life and healing.
 - Who is someone you need to bring life to this week through your words?

Questions for Reflection/Discussion:

As always feel free to tweak, skip, or add questions to focus on areas you think most relevant to your group.

Icebreaker: If you could tame one animal and have it as a pet, what would it be?

Share a time when someone said something to you that changed the course of your life.

"Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check". Is that possible in this life? If not, why bother trying?

If speech is a leading sign of maturity, what do your words reveal about your own maturity?

How have you been on the giving or receiving end of speech that has caused destruction?

Read Matthew 12:33-37 and/or Matthew 15:10-20. As you hear Jesus teach on the tongue, what strikes you?

Look at the list of ways that our speech can be destructive (see outline). What would you add to the list? Which convicts you the most?

We can be so inconsistent with our speech. Which settings do you find the most challenging in having God-honoring, life-giving speech? What do you need to do to honor God with your speech in that space?

What can you often place your identity in instead of what God says about you? And how might this negatively impact your speech?

Reflect on your digital life. As you think about the emails/texts you send and the social media apps you manage, are you pleased with the way you communicate? What shifts might need to take place?

Who is someone you need to bless/encourage this week through your words? Do it!

What's one action step I feel God calling me to take after looking at this passage?