

# BELIEVE IT.

## James: A Bible Study WORDS

(Unless otherwise noted, all scripture is from the ESV and found in James.)

### THE TONGUE - THREE POWERFUL PICTURES

"So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things." (3:5a)

A **BIT**--used to gain obedience and to guide an animal

A **RUDDER**--to guide the ship

A **SPARK**--to set a whole forest ablaze

### THE POWER OF THE TONGUE

A **FIRE**, a world of unrighteousness (3:6)

**STAINING** (polluting) the whole body (3:6)

**UNTAMABLE** (3:8)

A restless **EVIL** (3:8)

Full of deadly **POISON** (3:8)

### AVOID THE PITFALLS OF THE TONGUE

1 "Be quick to hear, and slow to speak..." (1:19b)

2 Control our tongues.

"If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless." (1:26)

3 **Don't use empty words (words not backed by works).**

"If a brother or a sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that?" (2:15-16)

4 **Don't strive for the limelight of being a teacher.**

"Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness." (3:1)

5 **We can't bless our Lord and Father and curse people.** (3:9-10)

Jesus says, "But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person." (Mt 15:18)

6 **Don't speak evil or judge our brother.**

"Do not speak evil against one another, brothers.

The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law." (4:11)

"But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire." (Mt 5:22)

7 **Don't boast about our plans.** (4:13-17)

"Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.'"

<sup>16</sup> As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil." (4:15-16)

8 **Don't grumble against one another.** (5:9)

9 **Don't deceive each other by taking oaths.** (5:12)

(Similar words of Jesus are found in Mt 5:33-37.)

### THE PERFECTING OF THE TONGUE

Our tongues are perfected/matured through the work of **WISDOM**, the word of **TRUTH** and the work of the **LAW**.

\* **THE WORK OF WISDOM** (1:5)

\* **THE WORD OF TRUTH** (1:18)

The gospel continues to mold and shape us into the image of Christ.

\* **THE WORK OF THE LAW**

1 **THE PERFECT LAW** (1:25)

Jesus is the Perfected Law--the fulfillment of the law. (Mt 5:17)

2 **THE ROYAL LAW**

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (2:8)

3 **THE LAW OF LIBERTY**

"So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy." (2:12-13)

Jesus said it this way, "Judge not, that you be not judged.

For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you." (Mt 7:1-2)

### A LOOK IN THE MIRROR

*My tongue is polluting my life, but I want to be clean.*

*My tongue is hurting the people around me,  
but I don't want to hurt them anymore.*

*I use pious, empty, religious words,  
but want to start doing something for others.*

*I curse others and give bitter praise to God,  
but want to refresh others and truly bless the Father.*

*I slander and judge others, but I don't want to face the same judgment.*

*I deceive others by making strong oaths,  
but want to deal honestly with others.*

*I love myself, but I want to learn to love my neighbor as myself.*

*Lord, I stumble in so many ways,  
but want to be the perfect man/woman, able to bridle my whole body.*

### NEXT STEPS

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