



PRACTICAL GUIDELINES FOR AN EFFECTIVE CHRISTIAN LIFE
Lesson Seven: Taming the Tongue
James 3:1-12

1. Have you ever said something that you wish that you had not said but felt as though you just had to say it?

2. Have you ever said something that you regretted since accepting The Lord Jesus into your life?

3. Here is a short list of speech that can roll off of our tongue and out of our mouth!

Bragging, lying, flattering, slandering, gossiping, verbally abusing others, cursing, making off-color remarks, talking behind another's back, passing on rumors, shading the truth, arguing, yelling, being sarcastic and teaching questionable "truths".

The Context

The tongue is you in a unique way. It is a tattletale that tells on the heart and discloses the real person. Not only that, but misuse of the tongue is perhaps the easiest way to sin. There are some sins that an individual may not be able to commit simply because he does not have the opportunity. But there are no limits to what one can say, no built-limits or boundaries. In scripture, the tongue is variously described as wicked, deceitful, perverse, filthy, corrupt, flattering, slanderous, gossiping, blasphemous, foolish, boasting, complaining, cursing, contentious, sensual, and vile. And that list is not exhaustive. No wonder God put the tongue in a cage behind the teeth, walled in by the mouth!

(Matthew 12:33-37)

James 3:1

Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. *(Romans 2:17-22)*



James 3:2

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.

James 3:3

When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. *(Psalm 32:9)*

James 3:4

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.

James 3:5

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. *(Proverbs 12:18)*

James 3:6

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. *(Mark 7:20-23)*

James 3:7-8

7 All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, 8 but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. *(Psalm 140:1-3)*



James 3:9-12

9 With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. 10 Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. 11 Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? 12 My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water. (*Jeremiah 17:9*)

1. According to James, where does the root of the problem of evil speech lie?

2. What types of evils are caused by the tongue?

3. Using the truths and principles you've learned, write down two ways you can avoid sins of speech this next week.
