

4Ws REAL FAITH TAMES THE TONGUE

FEBRUARY 15, 2026

WORSHIP

Suggested worship songs: Dwell, Know His Love, Take My Life, Always on Time, I Speak Jesus, Shout to the Lord

WELCOME

Do you agree or disagree (and why) with this famous rhyme, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me..."?

WORD

JAMES 3:1-12

Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment. 2 For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well. 3 Now if we put the bits into the horses' mouths so that they will obey us, we direct their entire body as well. 4 Look at the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, are still directed by a very small rudder wherever the inclination of the pilot desires. 5 So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! 6 And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell. 7 For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. 8 But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; 10 from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. 11 Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? 12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor can salt water produce fresh.

Christianity has been distorted so that many people think they're Christians and will go to heaven, but not having been disciplined properly, they show no proof of the faith they claim to have. The Bible warns against ungodly persons who turn grace to licentiousness, and whose actions are detestable, disobedient, and worthless (**Jude 1:4, Titus 1:16**). Grace doesn't only forgive us of our sins but empowers us to live transformed lives. God cares not just about we believe, but about how we live. On the other hand, some think that works justify them (legalism), but our justification is by faith in Christ, not through the works of the Law (**Galatians 2:16**). As James warns, faith without works is dead – it must be seen in our lives (**James 2:17**). Not everyone who calls Jesus, "Lord, Lord" will enter heaven, but only those who do the will of the Father (**Matthew 7:20-21**). We must KNOW (Gk. ginosko) God and Jesus Christ, not just know about God (**John 17:3**).

Real faith in Him allows growth, transformation into Christlikeness, produces good works, and even tames the tongue! The tongue is small but can be very destructive. God cares not only for how we live, but for what we say too. Our words may be something we do not pay attention to, but true followers of Christ must do so.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

James was talking to believers and reminds them that teachers have tremendous responsibilities and held to a higher standard; they'll "incur stricter judgment" (**v. 1**). As followers of Christ, we too must walk the talk and teach the truth. Christians today dabble into worldly things to make them happy, so we stumble in many ways (**v.2**).

We should tame the tongue because it is the highest proof of spiritual maturity, and our personal responsibility. However, we often speak out of anger and regret things we say afterwards. We sometimes speak out of hurt or gossip and slander others. We all stumble in this area when we say things at the expense of others or criticize someone in their absence. We must take the responsibility for our words.

Jesus warns that for every careless word we say, we are going to account for on Judgment Day (**Matthew 12:36-37**). CARELESS words are useless, idle, and senseless words. How do we represent Jesus in our speech at work, at home, in school or wherever God has placed us? We are to "guard" our mouths (**Psalms 39:1, 141:3**).

No unwholesome word (rotting, useless) should proceed from our mouths, but only what is good for building others up (**Ephesians 4:29**), according to the need of the moment (good timing), giving grace to those who hear. If what we want to say do not align with these, then choose to keep quiet!

POWER TO BUILD OR DESTROY

The tongue has tremendous power and James compared it to three things: the bit on a horse's mouth (**v3**), the small rudder of boats (**v4**) and to fire (**vv.5-6**). The Bible says, the heart is deceitful above all else. What we say defiles us because it comes from the heart. People who don't guard their tongue sets their life's direction to waste. Our tongues are powerful – it can destroy or build. A perverse man or slanderer who is not wise in taming the tongue can even destroy friendships (**Proverbs 16:28**)! Death and life are in the power of the tongue (**Proverbs 18:21**). What we say to people can set a good direction for them or discourage them so that they don't reach their maximum potential. Our words invested on the minds of others will help them to become who God wants them to be! We must say LIFE words rather than DEATH words. Pleasant words are like honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the bones (**Proverbs 16:24**). Commit to using words of life to build others up!

PROBLEM OF THE HEART

Real faith tames the tongue – not only because of our responsibility and the power it wields, but also because it says so much about the state of our hearts. But no one can tame the tongue – it is called "*restless evil and full of deadly poison*" (**James 3:7-8**). A shocking contrast is that it is from the same mouth that we curse others and worship God; the same mouth speaks both blessing and ill words (**vv. 9-10**). The human heart is consistently "inconsistent". Our hearts are likened to fountain and trees – whatever comes out of our mouths (*the words we speak*) reveal so much about the state of our hearts (**vv. 11-12**). God will not allow us to remain as we are, and He intends to correct the heart. Jesus says the same thing --- the mouth will only speak out of what fills the heart (**Matthew 12:33-34**). The problem is what fills the heart (**Luke 6:45**). Speech problems are heart problems. If we are not speaking encouraging words, it tells us that something is wrong in our hearts. It reveals many problems – hurtful words, or words that are reactive, pride and other inner sins. The deeds of the flesh, include sins connected to our words (*sins of the tongue, like strife, anger, disputes and dissensions, etc.*) (**Galatians 5:19-21**). The only solution is to surrender to the Holy Spirit and let Him be the one to control us (**Galatians 5:16,22**). Self-control is part of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. We must be broken before God, repent, and surrender our hearts to God.

Use the CCF tongue test before you say anything: Is it necessary? Is it true? Is it spoken in love? Is it encouraging? Is it glorifying to God? Let your speech be seasoned with grace (**Colossians 4:6**). Speak encouragement, draw people near to God through your words; speak honestly with great respect. Doing so will make us useful in God's kingdom. Offer every thought and word to God and bless others by speaking words of wisdom and encouragement to them (**Psalms 19:14**)!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. How can the tongue (our words) be a measure of maturity in the faith?
2. What are positive and negative ways we impact the live others using our words?
3. What does "out of the abundance of the heart - the mouth speaks" mean, and how will you apply this?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE

IN ACTION

Pray for the Lord to send His words of life to people around you through you. Make it a habit to read and meditate on God's word, so that what comes out of your mouth will build others up, drawing them to Christ. Proclaim the gospel through your words today.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- For legislators to promote and support bills and laws aligned with God's Word.
- Pray for persecuted Christians in Sudan and Nigeria) --- many have been beheaded and murdered; earnestly seek God's intervention to stop the bloodshed. Pray for freedom from oppression, that God's word and His people bring them comfort and hope.
- PRAISE God that all Israeli hostages have been restored to their families! Continue to pray for Israel's war with terrorists to end according to God's purpose and for His glory. For Jewish people worldwide who are experiencing a surge of antisemitism. May this lead them to the Messiah, Jesus as they turn to God for help and comfort.
- For nations in turmoil (e.g., Ukraine, Iran, Syria, etc.) to experience true freedom in Christ and become centers for massive spiritual revivals in their regions. Killings of thousands of civilians by Islamist regime forces in Iran and Syria to be put to an end by God's mighty hand.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God, and make disciples
- For elders, pastors, deacons, and families to become holy, humble, harmonious, happy, and heart-working)
- For ministries and church expansions worldwide.

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain (MMRC)

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper and intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends

MEMORY VERSE

JAMES 3:2

For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well.