



MAIN POINT	MAIN BIBLE VERSE
When Jesus changes your heart, your mouth follows	James 3:1-12
<p>When Jesus saves you, He wants to transform you... ALL of you! Even the parts that seem hardest to control. In chapter 3, James addresses the difficulties of controlling our tongue, but he also teaches how Jesus gives us self-control.</p>	
Teaching Script / Guide	

HOOK

- Have you ever said something... and then the moment it came out fo your mouth, you wished you could take it back?
 - Something rude
 - Something mean
 - Something embarrassing
 - Something about someone behind their back
 - Maybe you sent something in the group chat too fast...
- *Speaker note: Feel free to share a personal, age-appropriate example if you have one of your own.*
- How many of you know that words are powerful?
 - And James teaches us why...
 - Your words don't just show what you're thinking...
 - They reveal what's in your heart.
- In this series so far, we've already seen how James has talked about how:
 - Real faith changes how we treat people
 - Real faith changes what we do.
- But now he's about to tell us: **Real faith changes what we say.**

BIBLE:

- *Either read, summarize, or invite a student to come up and read James 2:1-13. The emphasis and main point of teaching will be James 3:1-12.*
 - *James gives us three pictures to describe the power of the tongue:*
 - *A bit in a horse's mouth – <https://good-horse.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/bitwrinkles.jpg>*
 - *Something so small can control a BEAST of an animal*
 - *A ship's rudder - https://t4.ftcdn.net/jpg/07/85/83/91/360_F_785839118_OWbssaRfM28q8SRvZWAKIU8bZdALMqix.jpg*
 - *Can steer a MASSIVE ship*
 - *A small spark starting a wildfire - <https://www.dadspeak.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Whats-Your-Spark.jpg>*
 - *A small, incidental spark can lead to DETRIMENTAL damage*

- Let me ask you... have your words ever had THAT type of impact on a situation?
- James is only speaking the truth when he says,
 - Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. (James 3:5 NIV)
 - The tongue may be small, but your words are powerful.
- And James goes on to talk about how your words describe and paint a picture of what's happening in your heart.
 - ¹⁰Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. ¹¹Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? ¹²My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water. (James 3:10-12 NIV)
- Have you ever said something, then immediately realized you shouldn't have said it? What do we usually say to defend ourselves? → I didn't mean it.
 - James, throughout this chapter, teaches us two things:
 - Either we meant it or
 - Even if we didn't, the effects can still do great harm.
 - This is why we need to allow the Holy Spirit to control our words rather than treating them as if they don't matter.

ILLUSTRATION MOMENT:

- *If you want to use an illustration, you can invite 2 people on stage. Give them a tube of toothpaste and tell them they can both squeeze out as much toothpaste as they want. Don't tell them why, but let them choose on their own.*
 - *Once they've both squeezed some out, tell them their job now is to clean up the mess they made. Then go a step further and try to get them to put the toothpaste back in the bottle.*
 - *The lesson is that our words are the same way. Every day we have a choice of what we're going to say, but we need to be mindful that it's a lot easier to talk than it is to take back harmful words spoken to others.*

Look (Meaning)

- Here is James' big idea: Your words reveal your heart.
- If your words are
 - Mean
 - Gossipy
 - Negative
 - Hurtful
 - Disrespectful
 - It usually means something deeper is happening inside.
- Jesus doesn't just want to change your speech or your behavior. He was to change your heart and when your heart is changed, your words follow.

APPLICATION/GOSPEL MOMENT/CLOSE:

- Real faith changes how we talk:
 1. **About people**
 - No gossip
 - No trash talk
 - No making fun of people behind their backs
 2. **To people**
 - Encourage instead of insulting
 - Respect instead of sarcasm
 - Kindness instead of cutting jokes
 - 3. **About ourselves**
 - Stop saying:
 - I'm dumb
 - I'm bad at everything
 - No one likes me
 - Because God doesn't talk that way about you.
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- For some of us, this will come more naturally than it will for others, but don't forget, this isn't just a matter of making up your mind... although some of it does start there...
 - It's ultimately about allowing Jesus to change your heart. No change is possible without Him, including receiving the power to control our mouths.
- Close with prayer.