

James 3: 1-12

Flowing words



Getting Started

1. Have you ever experienced a feeling of being really present in a situation, where your skills and the challenge came together and it seemed like time stood still? (You might call it 'flow'. Some examples would be rock climbing, playing chess or music, water colour painting.) Do you feel like that when you have a conversation?

The Text – James 3:1–12

2. Why is the tongue so dangerous?
3. What is it about the tongue that connects it to hell?
4. How might this text flow out of James' discussion of faith and works in James 2?

The Scriptures – James 3:1–12 as a portion of the Scriptures

5. Consider the power of God's word in, for example, Psalm 19.
6. Remind yourself of the Ten Words (Commandments) in Deuteronomy 5:6–21. How might speech directly and indirectly impact one's response to these?
7. Look at the 'woes' in Isaiah 5:8–30. How might speech directly and indirectly contribute to the sin of the people?
8. How have you seen these Proverbs lived out? What would help you to apply their wisdom?
Kind and gentle words Proverbs 12:25; 12:18:15:1; 16:24; *Sharpening and advice* Proverbs 27:17; 27:9; *Revealing honesty* Proverbs 29:5; 27:6.
9. In what ways is James resonating with the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5:33–37; 7:1–6; 7:15–23?
10. How does Paul understand the connection between sin and speech in Romans 3:10–18? (Use a cross-referenced Bible to find the OT passages he quotes.)
11. What uses of speech should be evident in the new self in Ephesians 4:25–5:20?

Our lives – walking the way of Jesus in response to James 3:1–12 as a portion of the Scriptures

12. Does the passage in James make you feel hopeless or hopeful? What has God done to bring transformation to our tongues?

13. What's a habit of speech that needs to stop in your life? Explore how your bad habit may connect to a false belief about God.

14. What helps you to be attentive to and present in your conversations?

15. Find a positive type of speech mentioned in the Proverbs (Q8) or Ephesians (Q11). What would help this to grow in your life?