

Practical Instructions for Real Life When I Speak

James 3:2-12

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.

You may not think about what you say very often, but today's passage tells us that our words matter. Our words impact others. Our words also expose the desires of our hearts. Our words can cause harm, or they can display a life changed by Jesus.

1. Our words are powerful.

James 3:2-6; Proverbs 16:24; Proverbs 18:21; Proverbs 26:20; James 1:19-20

2. Our words come from our hearts.

James 3:7-12; Matthew 12:34; Matthew 7:15-18; Colossians 3:15-16; Galatians 5:22-23