

TITLE AND NUMBER: 45. Taming the tongue



REFERENCE AND KEY VERSE(S): James 3:9-12

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

LOOKING FURTHER: Matthew 12:33-37; Psalm 34:13; Proverbs 12:18

What does this Bible passage tell us?

When we are thirsty, we go to the tap, pour a glass of water and drink. It restores, refreshes and keeps our body in good shape. Imagine if the water from the same tap was salty, we would immediately spit it out. It wouldn't refresh but instead would make us physically sick.

In this passage, James talks about the fact that when we speak, we can bless and encourage someone or we can criticise them. How can we use our speech to bless God one minute and then speak out unpleasant words the next? This is not how it should be. Remember, everyone is made in God's image. We should speak to those around us as we would speak to God. What we say reflects what is going on deep down inside us (Matthew 12:34). We are accountable for what we say. If the Spirit of God is in us then He will filter out the outbursts and unpleasant things that we are tempted to say in anger, frustration or despair. Let us determine today to be careful in what we say, to bless those around us and not hurt or abuse them by our words.

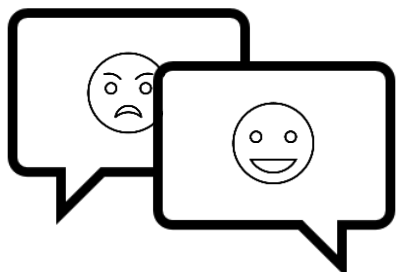
*Heavenly Father, I ask You to protect my heart,
may my speech be a blessing to those who hear it.*

"Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips". Psalm 141:3

Reflections:

- Do your words reflect God's Spirit inside you?
- Are you someone who blesses and encourages others by what you say? If the answer is no, then ask God to work in you by His Spirit to change your attitude towards others and what you do.
- Remember, 'If you can't say something pleasant, then it's probably best to say nothing at all' (see James 1:19).

Write or draw something you read in this Bible Study that stood out to you.



Do you have any questions about this week's Bible Study?



How does this week's message apply to your life?



What can we learn about God from this week's passage?



What would you like to ask God this week?



Has God responded to your prayers this week in the way you had hoped for? It's okay to talk to God about this.

