

Man On Fire

James 3:1-12

Purpose of series: The purpose of this series is to assist you in taking off the limits of God's expression through you and in your life and His blessing on your life. The book of James reveals many practical duties and activities of Christian, that if not heeded will hinder God's expression through them and blessings on them, especially during difficult seasons of our life. This series will provide us with a practical view of how to live a life of spiritual impact and personal fullness in a difficult world under pressure.

Purpose of this message: There are basically three schools of foundational Christian living. These three school proclaim that the fullness of the Christian life and the blessings of God actually follow one of these school of thought. James gives us one of these teachings with full description. One school would be described the foundation of Christian living as the **"obedient life,"** live right and act right, and it brings God's blessings. The other one comes from Paul's teaching which should not be contradictory to James' writings here. Paul strongly suggests that God blesses those whose **"minds"** are right. If your thinking has changed, naturally your behavior will change. James teaches us something thoroughly that the others don't teach us as much on, he is an advocate in saying that God's blessings follows those to **"talk"** right, change your talk and you will change your behavior. This teaching must be invested into your heart and mind if you intend to live a limitless life in Christ. You should not run quickly past this teaching and should make it a constant watermark in your life. I would encourage you to test yourself in this teaching. Experiment with James' teaching and see if God doesn't do something mighty in you. To avoid or take this teaching lightly is to miss a great opportunity in your life, and to limit the affect of Christ in your walk.

Look Whose Talking

- The average American has 30 conversations a day and you'll spend 1/5 of your life talking. In one year your conversations will fill 66 books of 800 pages a book.
- If you're a man you speak an average of 20,000 words a day. If you're a woman you speak 30,000 words a day.
- Some of us are born with a silver foot in our mouths. We have this natural ability to say the wrong thing at the wrong time. Nothing is opened more wrongly at the wrong time than our mouths.
- There are many language and cultural differences and nothing can be more destructive than mis-communicating what you intended to say, for example...
 - The name Coca-Cola in China was first rendered as Ke-kou-ke-la, which the Coke company did not discover until after thousands of signs had been printed that the phrase means **"bite the wax tadpole"** or **"female horse stuffed with wax"** depending on the dialect.
 - In Taiwan, the translation of the Pepsi slogan "Come alive with the Pepsi Generation" came out as "Pepsi will bring your ancestors back from the dead."
 - In China, the Kentucky Fried Chicken slogan "finger-lickin' good" came out as "eat your fingers off."
 - When General Motors introduced the Chevy Nova in South America, it was apparently unaware that "no va" means "it won't go."

- An American t-shirt maker in Miami printed shirts for the Spanish market which promoted the Pope's visit. Instead of the desired "I Saw the Pope" in Spanish, the shirts proclaimed "I Saw the Potato."

Our words get us into a lot of trouble. James talks more about the tongue in his little five chapters than anyone else does in the New Testament. Every chapter in the book of James he says something about managing your mouth.

Speak Carefully

"Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly."

James 3:1

It would be valuable as a foundation to read Matthew 23 to see what Jesus was talking about being a teacher and the failures of the priest in His time. It is dangerous to consider yourself a teacher without understanding the full impact of this position on your own life. At one place Jesus says that the judgments of 4,000 years will be against you if you take this calling out of it's rightful context.

You will remember that James was writing to the twelve tribes of Israel, (James 1), who has been scattered in every direction because of the persecution in Jerusalem and the surrounding region. Because so many had enjoyed the fellowship and leadership in Jerusalem and because of the great revival and move of God's Spirit, (Acts 2), those thousands who had come to the faith of Jesus Christ were now attempting to continue that move of God in their lives by establishing places of worship. But there was a problem, the talent pool, the anointed team that God had assembled from that area did not permeate everywhere else. In other words, the move of God in Denver, Wichita or Dallas did not provide the same aptitude of leaders in the Garden City, Kansas area.

The church at Jerusalem during the writings of Acts must have been incredible, they had give-a-ways every Sabbath, there were powerful healing ministries, incredible fellowship, (did I mention the Manna chips?). Anyways, Jerusalem was a desired place to be if you were a believer, but it was also a deadly place if you were a Christian. The guys James was writing to here ended up some one hundred to three hundred miles away from this epicenter of God's great move in Jerusalem. Many of these people had not given up on God and loved Him even more, but they were facing a new struggle that they had never experienced before, their new roll as being leaders and teachers in the fellowship of God. They had become so accustomed to the great teaching that had taken place in Jerusalem, the incredible love of the fellowship and the free expression of their new found faith. But now, they were leaderless. They didn't have a Paul or a Peter to come through frequently as guest speakers, and there was no one like their pastor James.

They had moved in such a hurry into these outer regions that it never dawned on them that there was no training center developed to prepared up and coming pastors to send into all the world. Here they were, alone and outcasts, struggling for life and their faith. And in the middle of all of this, there were some who didn't have a problem with jumping up and attempting to fill the leadership void with their own opinions and views of how things should be done and their view of how the fellowship should be ran.

Apparently, the churches to which James was writing had too many men who were self-appointed teachers. He makes a strong point that a man should not take on the role of teacher unless God has called him and that he is speaking the truth of the Word of God. Why, because teachers will be judged under a stricter judgment because of the Words that come out of their mouths.

It is important for you to know, and must understand, that if you are going to teach God's Word, it doesn't matter if it is to the congregation or to the small children, you will be held more accountable, because our words represent God and affect the lives of people. Any time that we teach, we should keep in mind the serious fact that we will stand before the Lord to give an account for all that is spoken!

Every time I open my mouth it is a teaching opportunity, whether I have a comment, an opinion or a position. My words speak life or death, truth or lies, strengthen or weaken, build up or destroy.

James says that in every moment your mouth is open, it is an opportunity of planting seeds that will offer a wonderful harvest. There are many kinds of seeds, seeds of anger, jealousy, peace, confidence, insecurity, many different kinds of seeds. So you will inevitably reap the seeds you sow. How can I plant seeds of peace? How can I be a peacemaker? How can I bring peace to a chaotic, angry and hurt society who has abused the name of Jesus and are suspicious or in the least questioning of everyone who represents Him? My words have to have the anointing of the Holy Spirit. I will not over-respond, quick talk, stir up and antagonize those I am hoping God would save. I have to be careful, but more than that, I have to allow the Holy Spirit to bring truth into my life. Into the deep areas that demand healing so that I can confidently share His grace and love.

1. What I Say Directs My Way

"We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check."

James 3:2

The word "perfection" in Greek literally means "mature, healthy". *Perfect* does not mean sinless, but rather, *mature*.

"But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."

Matthew 12:36-37

When you go to the doctor and say, "I'm not feeling well," the first thing he says is, "Stick out your tongue." Your tongue reveals what's going on inside of you, not just physically but spiritually. James says that you've got to learn to manage your mouth. You've got to learn to tame your tongue. You've got to get your tongue under control. I was tempted to title this sermon "Don't Let Your Tongue Lick You."

James does not leave himself out when he makes this incredible statement, "We." See, we can fail in so many ways, but, if you can control what comes out of your mouth that is the difference in being a failure and a perfect man. Did you get this? As a

matter of fact, if the words that come out of your mouth are right and acceptable you will actually find that you will be able to take control of your whole body! You can talk yourself into right behavior and responses by only allowing the correct words and statements to come out of your mouth. This sounds much like behavior modification and positive speaking all wrapped into one. But the truth is, our words often define our heart. We may not know we are angry, fearful, frustrated and judgmental, but our words release that info in small increments indicating that something is not right.

Example: I was trained to hear when things were going wrong with the car, which happened often when I was a boy. I could tell you when the universal joint was going out, the alternator or generator windings were going out, I could tell you if a lifter in the engine was going out, I could tell when the car was not set at the right timing, all by listening to it. The same is true with our words, they tell on us. Not out loud at first, but in little moments I can jab someone with an opinion, or make a statement of frustration, or I may keep making comments concerning some situations that show that I feel threatened or uneasy. Those statements have the tendency to be the rumbling before the eruption. They are saying something is wrong. Seldom is any situation immediate, something that "just happened." We don't just blow up, we rev up, we stir up, we build up and then boom, all the air just left the room and we are recovering from all the rubble.

James is saying, there are some of you who want to tell everyone else what to do and what you think but be careful, you will not be judged equally by God, He will not take what you say about Him or to His children lightly. He will hold you accountable. But, if you do want to be perfect...be a watch-dog on your tongue. And if you do that you will be amazed at how your life will line up behind the control of your tongue. If you are needed life adjustments, a believer's realignment, deal with your tongue, confront yourself with the words that come out of your mouth. Allow the Holy Spirit to reveal to you what it was that inspired the words that come out of your mouth. Let Him reveal who you are angry with, what you are afraid of, what you are judgmental about. Let the Holy Spirit reveal God's truth to you. This is not a matter of self control, this is a matter of being Spirit led. This is not about learning to say all the right things well, say them often and say them at the appropriate times. This is learning to hear the Holy Spirit as He teaches you by reflecting your words back to you.

I see so many wonderful, incredible people who have so much to offer, but because of their hurtful past, they have given way to **actions**, habits in their lifestyles that has set out a course to destroy them. Those hurts, unless dealt with, will continue to be the basis of them leaping from one crisis to another. These hurts and pains drive their behavior.

But there are others whose hurt and pain drives their **words**. They have somehow been able to control their lifestyles to a certain point but their hurt spills out of their mouth. They hurt others with their tongue. They create pain from the source of their pain.

Your verbal response from hurts and pains are just as harmful as your physical response from hurts and pains.

James gives us four examples to help us understand our mouth.

1. Example #1: The Bit In The Horses Mouth

What comes out of your mouth has tremendous influence and control over your life. I can tell where you are at by what you say. Where are you headed in life is closely related to what is coming out of your mouth! Where are you going to be ten years from now? Look at what you are talking about. What do you like to talk about? What do you talk about the most? We shape our words and then our words shape us.

"When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal."
James 3:3

James says, "The tongue is small, it's tiny". And because it's tiny we think it's insignificant. But it has tremendous power. Here James asks us to think about the incredible power of a bit in a horse's mouth. You've got this huge stallion, 2,000-3,000 pounds, and a little 95 pound jockey on his back. But this little jockey, a twentieth of the size of the horse, can control the tremendous mighty horse by a little piece of metal stuck strategically over his tongue. In a similar fashion, your tongue controls the destination of your life, you will always be headed in the way you are talking.

2. Example #2: The Rudder On A Boat

"Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go."
James 3:4

Think about this, the luxury liner, The Queen Mary, has 3 acres of recreational space on board. The anchor is equal to the weight of ten cars. But it has a relatively small rudder that directs this huge ocean liner out in the middle of the waves and winds and seas. A little rudder keeps it on course. Our tongue is like that.

Without a doubt, our tongue is like a rudder that steers us. Ships: "... they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go." My tongue directs where I go. **Circle "steered"**. Your tongue is the steering wheel of your life. **It is the guidance system. If you don't like the way you're headed right now, change the way you talk.**

Many people think, if the tongue has such influence maybe it's best to say nothing. Not talk at all, be silent. James says that my tongue directs where I go, so I've got to learn to not only control it, but controlling it may not be staying silent, it may be speaking truth, speaking life, speaking the Word of God.

Also, I believe that the tongue is the very place that God intended to establish the working of the Holy Spirit. Why would God start here in Acts 2:

"All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."
Acts 2:4

Why would the Holy Spirit start here? What is the significance of that? It is because the tongue is the beginning ground of a new life and creating a new environment for the presence of the Lord.

Why would praise and worship be so significant in our church. Why don't we stop all this shouting and singing and go back to three part, pretty harmony? It's because our praise invites the presence of God. **A yielded tongue will always release God more than a pretty tongue. God is not near as impressed with our ability to worship Him as our expression of worshipping Him.** When I sing to the Lord, when I shout, when I proclaim Him as Lord and when I pray, my tongue is being used of God to bring on this earth what is already alive and doing well in Heaven! Can I hear an AMAN!

3. Example #3: The Fire Of A Great Forest

"Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark."

James 3:5

I've seen the destruction of what fire can do to a beautiful forest. At one time beautiful trees stood strong and majestic and because of a little fire, it is out of control and takes over everything in it's path.

Example: When I was in the ninth grade we had just got out letter jackets. We were so proud of them, it must have been February or march because it was cold outside and windy as well. A friend of mine had found some fireworks and called me and some others up to go out in a field and pop them. We all had our letter jackets on. We were throwing fireworks at each other and as you can imagine, one of the guys ran out of fireworks and started throwing matches. It did take one or two, and within minutes the grass about knee deep caught on fire. The wind shifted so fast that the fire turned on us causing us to run and then it turned again and blew the opposite direction. The flames were huge and they were going in the direction of some houses about 50 yards away. We knew if we didn't do something the houses would catch on fire. We took our day old letter jackets and spent about two hours beating the fire out...except for the guy that threw the matches, he attempted to put it out with his feet, he would not use his jacket. It was terrifying to us what could have happened but we later laughed about the incident. We walked back home, through our jackets on the washing machine and we out and played basket ball at someone else's house. When my Mom and one of the other kid's Mom came home that thought that we both had got hit by a car and were in the hospital somewhere. Things got real interesting!

In 1983 in Australia, one fire overnight destroyed 600 miles of land, villages, livestock, all from a single match. James says that your tongue can destroy like that. You can lose it all. A careless camper can destroy an entire national forest overnight. A careless word can destroy a life overnight. Gossip is like a fire. It spreads quickly and it wrecks havoc, builds suspicion, causes confusion and weakens confidence. Careless words have destroyed marriages, ruined reputations, split churches, broken relationships. This tongue is underestimated

in its power of destruction.

James tells us that words, like a fire, can burn people. I continue to see advertisements for a "Celebrity Roast," why do you think they call it that? Because you can burn people with what you say. "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me." It does hurt.

**"You have to live with the consequences of everything you say."
Proverbs 18:20(Good News)**

What I Say Directs My Way

2. What I say Determines My Way

**"The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell."
James 3:6**

James is wanting us to know that words can create a chain reaction. You can say something that you had no idea would have such great affect. But it does have affect. And he tells us four ways how this fire can burn our lives.

1. Resident Evil

***"...a world of evil among the parts of the body."
James 3:6b***

James is saying that my tongue is the most evil part of my body. Why did my mom want to wash my mouth out with soap when I talked back, said a bad word or stuck my tongue out? (Or I heard she would do that?) Think about it, why would someone sticking out their tongue frustrate us in the first place? Because it is built in us, it is the resident evil. We instantly feel disrespected no matter how stupid and immature it seems. It is the most evil part of our body.

Think of all the things that you could have done with your body and life. Think of all the evil that you have repented from that you have done. Now hear the words of James, anything that has come out of your mouth is actually worse than anything you have done in your body. That's the kind of fire your tongue is. It's that bad.

If I leave my tongue unchecked I am being foolish. James says that it is a world of evil. It has its own agenda. It is something in your body that actually had implanted evil and it will defile your whole body. This fire has incredible potential to be the warehouse where evil is ship out from. Being carelessness concerning your tongue is being carelessness with your life. Taking this message lightly will absolutely be a tragedy.

2. Corrupts The Vessel It's In

***"...It corrupts the whole person..."
James 3:6c***

On a more personal level, you come home from work and you're tired and grumpy and cranky. The husband walks in and yells at the wife. The wife yells at the oldest kid. The oldest kid yells at the baby sister. The baby sister goes out and kicks the dog. The dog goes and bites the cat. The cat comes in and scratches the baby. The baby bites the head off the Barbie doll. Wouldn't it be a whole lot simpler if the husband just bit off the head of the Barbie doll himself? It corrupts the whole person.

What comes out of my mouth sets destiny to what my life becomes. My words create my way.

I will either learn to speak what I want to become or I will become what I speak!

Parents, when you are allowing kids to talk about authority, talk about their friends, talk about themselves in a degrading way you are allowing a course to be set in their lives. You cannot outlive your words. Right now if you are thinking certain things that have now become statements that have come out of your mouth you need to repent of those words and start using your mouth for life and not death.

Some may be agreeing with death and sickness in their life.

- My dad had heart problems and we will probably have heart problems.

Some may be accepting rejection and strife.

- Nobody likes me. No one wants to be around me. You are right, stop claiming that for yourself because you are creating most of your rejection.

Some may be creating destruction and death.

- Suspicions and rumors being spread around create and atmosphere to have faith in the negative. STOP!

Some may be ruining their marriage.

- You will never change. You always! You don't listen to me! You don't care! DEATH, DEATH, DEATH!

Some may be cursing their job or community.

- I can't stand my job. I hate my job. I hate this town.

See, James says you've got to learn to manage your mouth, not only because it can direct where you go but it can destroy what you have. You can lose your family, your kids, your career simply by what you say. It's like a fire!

“He who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps himself from calamity.”

Proverbs 21:23 (NIV)

"If you want to stay out of trouble be careful what you say!"
Proverbs 21:23 (Good News)

3. **Sets Destiny**

"...sets the whole course of his life on fire..."
James 3:6d

Scholars have debated how to translate and punctuate this verse, but when all is said and done, what is the final statement: Our tongue is a powerful, deadly tool or life giving tool that can be used by Satan or God and it's effect actually starts within us. Whatever comes out of our mouth comes into our life.

James is saying here that the one misuses his tongue is the first to be defiled. Our ability to influence the future, its success isn't limited to my past failures -- but it is invented by my willingness to take the right words and allow them to come out of my mouth -- right now. This can be defined or will look like what we call a positive attitude, but the truth is, there are times you just have to turn the corner. Nothing looks good, things look pretty hopeless, but James says that within your words you are creating real opportunities for development or crisis. This fire can destroy or it can be the source of melting down the threats of your life. Actually, the way James puts it, your tongue gives you the power and confidence to approach every situation with the expectation that you will ultimately find the right thing to do -- and then you must turn and do it.

A negative, self-defeating attitude destroys all hope of future opportunities, dreams and vision. That negative seed thought, that painful or frustrating situation, those negative words that was thrown on you can either stick and become part of your vocabulary or you can shake it off and refuse to take on those destructive characteristics. James is telling us that a positive, proactive attitude and impressive life opportunities are a reflection of what is coming out of our mouth.

4. **Hell Central**

"...and is itself set on fire by hell."
James 3:6

James goes one step further here and exposes the full extent of what is happening, your tongue is set on fire by hell itself! The Greek word he uses here is *gehenna*, which is a transliteration of two Hebrew words meaning, "**Valley of Hinnom.**" This valley was located just outside the walls of Jerusalem, where, in Jeremiah 32:35, the Israelites turned from God and became worshipers of Molech. Worshiping Molech was a horrible form of idol worship which required you to burn your own children as sacrifices to appease this false God.

Later, after this form of worship was cast out, *Gehenna* became the local dump ground, a place to burn your trash. The only other New Testament

use of this word is by Jesus (11 times) and it is in reference of eternal torment and punishment...hell. It is understood that when *gehenna* was referred to in the New Testament that is is not talking about a dump ground, even though a “trashy” mouth is an applicable word, but it is something much deeper in meaning, and more powerful.

James is literally saying that your tongue is a receptor, an antenna, the coax cable network line directly into hell. Your tongue is directly inspired by hell and all its influences. Satan himself is sending signals constantly to see if you will open up to his frequencies.

It would be better to realize that your tongue is actually more than that, it is a detonator switch. Your tongue needs to be in check because it can be sent one signal and “boom,” you have just released a horrible fire that will kill and destroy.

- It can happen in your marriage
- It can happen in your job
- It can happen in your family
- It can happen in our community
- It can happen in our church

There are many sins that appall us as Christians. There are sins that we just cannot tolerate, but when we tolerate gossip, slander, deceit, half-truths, sarcastic put downs, and other sins of the tongue we are foolish to believe that these are a lesser offense.

The abrupt reality of what James is telling us is that all sins of the tongue have their origin from the pit of hell, instructed and orchestrated by Satan himself. It defiles you as it employs you in its destructive efforts. You cannot help but become tainted with what you yield your tongue to. As a believer in Christ, you must realize the level of conflict and depth of sin that this is and confront this issue in yourself. You must be soberly bold enough to confront yourself and others.

4. Example #4: The Fallacy of Taming The Tongue

“All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and creatures of the sea are being tamed and have been tamed by man, but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.”

James 3:7-8

James uses an analogy from the animal world. I've been to Sea World before and it is mind boggling to see the trained whales, dolphins, and seals do their amazing feats. You have probably been at the circus trained elephants, lions, and tigers. James says that even reptiles have been trained...I haven't seen that but it would be interesting to watch a crocodile go get the morning paper.

I have to admit that I have enough redneck in me to be entertained by some of the videos named, “When animals fight back.” There is always this anticipation that that huge, powerful animal may forget that they are trained.

But James says that there is one beast that cannot be tamed: our tongue!

James gives two descriptive statements about our tongue, these are not to be taken lightly. As a matter of fact, to skim over this portion of James' writing is to take the thunder away from the lightning. If I were sitting with you right now talking to you about this please hear my voice raise, my eyes lifted, my hands waving wildly when it comes to this point:

1. **My tongue is a restless evil**
2. **My tongue is full of deadly poison**

Neither one of these descriptions has an endearing connotation to it. As a matter of fact, James' description carries with it a huge caution, a don't turn your back on this thought! He doesn't hold back or slightly discuss what he not only thinks, but believes about the tongue.

James makes these two things clear:

1. **Our tongue is a restless evil**

Restless: *akataschetos*- that can not be restrained. Unruly! It is about attempting to say something but something else comes out of your mouth. We think it's about speaking positively, but it is about allowing the Spirit of God to have full affect through us. This tongue never sleeps, it is not "if" it will jump out and say something wrong, it is "when" it will go wrong.

2. **It is full of deadly poison**

Your tongue is nothing less than a vial of anthrax. The word in Greek is literally "snake venom". Just a few drops can kill you. When the Holy Spirit controls your heart and mind the fruit of the Spirit will develop not far behind. This exposure of God's presence in you will come out of you in the form of love, patience, kindness, gentleness, and self-control, nothing can show a greater change about you more than the change that takes place in your mouth and tongue. Nothing is more important in any behavior of your life then the Spirit guided tongue.

What I Say Directs and Determines My Way

2. What I Say Defines My Way

What you say can immediately tell where your heart is. It is an immediate signal of your position with God. James gives us five statements concerning the impossibility of confusing this thought:

- **Praise God, Curse Men**

"With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be."

James 3:9-10

James is telling us, "Why curse men? They are made in God's image." This is a necessary reality. You are not just talking about someone, you are talking about God's creation. If that reality could actually set in our minds we would never make another negative comment about another human being!

Our mouth is the open conduit from the heart. Whatever has been brewing deep down in our hearts, whatever it is that is a hot spot in our heart will eventually find it's way out of our mouth. We come to church on Sunday giving the highest use of our mouth which is to use it praising God. We sing praises to the Lord. Jesus says:

"But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean.'"

Matthew 15:18

Then we walk out, get into the car and on the way home we argue about where we're going to eat lunch. Isn't it amazing how quickly your attitude can change? In one minute you're saying, "Praise the Lord", the next you're saying, "Shut up!" The tongue is a strange contradiction. It's so inconsistent.

"Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life."

Proverbs 4:23

What I Say Directs, Determines and Defines My Way

- **This or That?**

"Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? My brothers, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water."

James 3:11-12

James gives us some opposites to consider.

- Whatever is in the well comes out in the water.
- Whatever is in the tree, comes out in the fruit.

My tongue is the expression of my heart. I can attempt to hide it but what is inside my heart will eventually comes out of my mouth. People can say something really mean and painful to others and say, "I don't know what got into me. It's not like me to say that. I don't know why I said that. It's totally out of character. I didn't really mean it." James would say, "Yes, it is. It's just like you. You meant it. Quit kidding yourself. What's inside of you is going to come out. You don't have a spring of pure clean water one minute one one that gives salt water the next. It's a natural law: what comes out of the spring of your mouth is what is inside the pool of your heart." Jesus said,

"For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks."

Matthew 12:34

The Freudian slip that comes out of your mouth is not a Freudian slip at all, it is an entire dip in the pool of heart exposure. There is a reason that there needs to be apologies after words that were vicious and hurtful, because your heart

has got exposed and it should humble you. But we love to cover it up with pride, blaming our response on someone or something else. We are aware that we are getting less and less about taking responsibility for our actions in life. Nothing could be more evident in our lack of taking responsibility for what we say!

My tongue is resident evil, it corrupts the vessel it's in, it sets destiny and it is hell central! It directs where I go. It can destroy what I have. But most of all, it simply displays what I am. It reveals my character.

You don't need a stress test to find out if you have heart problems, all you have to do is to open your mouth.

- A person with a harsh tongue has an angry heart.
- A person with a negative tongue has a fearful heart.
- A person with an overactive tongue has an unsettled heart.
- A person with a boasting tongue has an insecure heart.
- A person with a filthy tongue has an impure heart.
- A person who is critical all the time has a bitter heart.

On the other hand,

- A person who is always encouraging has a happy heart.
- A person who speaks gently has a loving heart.
- A person who speaks truthfully has an honest heart.

Conclusion: So what do we do about it?

1. I Need A New Spirit

"Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit..."
Ezekiel 18:31

Listen to the Holy Spirit identify the rumblings of our heart. Allow the Holy Spirit to identify when words and short jabbing statements are coming out of our mouth and we can reflect on it as an indication of what needs to be addressed.

- "I am frustrated with my job." On a journey with the Holy Spirits help you might find out that there is an individual at work that you have become frustrated with and now attempts to avoid. Over the process of time, you now hate your whole job, your thinking of moving to Kentucky and raise pigs! What scary is that it is just that simple to make great moves without the Holy Spirits help. Not only that, you may make a huge announcement declaring your disgust and ruining your testimony that you spent years to establish. All because of one individual that you are allowing to manipulate your whole life by.

What I really need is a new life through the work of the Holy Spirit. I need is a fresh start. I need to let go of all the past and be born again and start over. I need to get a new heart. How do I get a new heart?

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new person. The old has passed away. Behold all things have become new."

2 Corinthians 5:17

"Create in me a clean heart, O God" Psalm 51

What's in my heart is going to come out in my mouth.

2. I Need A New Guard

I don't need my Mom's voice in the back of my head reminding me not to say those type of things. I need a supernatural power to guard my mouth. This tongue cannot be tamed, I cannot control it, it is defiant of my self-control.

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

We want to let God have His way. We want His intervention in our life but He must be invited. "God don't let me be critical today. Don't let me be judgmental. Don't let me say things that embarrass your name and things I will regret." We need God's help daily, His power in my life.

- Sidlow Baxter: "The proof that God's Spirit is in your life is not that you speak in an unknown tongue but you control the tongue you do know."

Fill your heart with the Word of God --

*"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."
Philippians 4:8*

3. I Need A New Mind

*"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."
Romans 12:2*

It's a matter of changing teams. You can't play for the other team any more. You can't conform any longer to this pattern of thinking. Your mind has to be renewed, it will change your heart and it will change your mouth.

What does your tongue say about you? What does it reveal about you? God hears everything you say. I cannot hide who I am because my mouth will tell on me. What are you speaking about yourself, about your family, about people around you? Are you allowing clear reception from hell itself? Are you allowing words to come out of your mouth carelessly not knowing that the next few weeks, months and years will take affect upon what you say?

James is saying that the only way to get control of your tongue is let Jesus Christ have control of your heart and mind. What's in your heart is going to come out in your mouth. Maybe you need to ask forgiveness. Maybe you need to go to your kids to say, "I'm sorry. I'm inconsistent the way I talk to you."

“Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.”
Proverbs 16:24

Rabbi Joseph Telushkin has lectured around the country on the powerful and often negative impact of words. He has asked audiences if they can go for twenty-four hours without saying any unkind words about, or to, anybody. He says, “Invariably, a minority of listeners raise their hands signifying ‘yes,’ some laugh, and quite a large number call out, ‘no!’” He responds, “Those who can’t answer ‘yes’ must recognize that you have a serious problem. If you cannot go for twenty-four hours without drinking liquor, you are addicted to alcohol. If you cannot go for twenty-four hours without smoking, you are addicted to nicotine. Similarly, if you cannot go for twenty-four hours without saying unkind words about others, then you have lost control over your tongue” (Imprimus [1/96], p. 1)

What I Say Directs, Determines and Defines My Way