**Watch your mouth!**

*James 3:2-12*

**Introduction**

1. The tongue, although a small member of our bodies, is very powerful, and therefore very dangerous.
2. As Christians, we must be ever aware of the dangers of the tongue, and watch our mouths!
3. If we are able to bridle the tongue, we can keep our whole bodies in check **(cf. 3:2-5a)**.
4. If we do not try to bridle our tongue, and let it loose, it is capable of great damage **(cf. 3:5b-12)**.
5. Our tongue is something we must always be careful about. We must always watch our mouths!
   1. Nobody is capable of taming the tongue **(cf. 3:8).**
   2. **We can bridle it, and being watchful and careful, we can keep from using it in an evil way.**
   3. **But, if we decide to forget about it, and we are not careful, words which are unfit can slip from our mouths.**
6. Many say, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me.”
   1. This is used to encourage having thick skin. Don’t be offended so easily.
   2. **But the general statement is false. Not only can words hurt others, but the can offend God, and certainly can put your soul in jeopardy.**
7. If we want to be pleasing to God, we must watch our mouths! The following are some ways in which we are to avoid using our tongues, and some ways that are encouraged.
8. Ungodly uses of the tongue.
9. Gossip
   1. **1 Timothy 5:13** (young widows) – meddling in other people’s business is an ungodly trait.
      1. Instead of the church being burdened with supporting a young widow, the young widow should marry and manage the house.
      2. If not, they can be tempted to wander around and inserting themselves into other people’s matters.
   2. **“but it is true” – this is not the point. It is of no concern to you, and does not help the situation. It is ungodly.**
   3. **1 Peter 4:15** – We should not involve ourselves into other people’s business.
10. Lying
    1. **Colossians 3:9-10** – lying is not fit for a Christian (**cf. John 8:44** – the Devil is the father of lies. Are we of the Devil?).
    2. **God does not distinguish white lies from grievous lies. They are all unacceptable.**
11. Corrupt Speech
    1. **Ephesians 4:29** – corrupt – rotten, that is, worthless.
    2. **Corrupt speech is useless, and has not positive end in sight. It is a reflection impure thought in the mind of the one using it. (cf. Luke 6:45).**
       1. Profanity (bad words) – **Colossians 3:8**
       2. Coarse Jesting (dirty jokes) – **Ephesians 5:3-4**
       3. Euphemisms – the substitution of a mild, indirect, or vague expression for one thought to be offensive, harsh, or blunt.
          1. These are not harmless.
          2. **They refer to the same corrupt speech, and are unfit for Christians.**
12. Bitter and Evil Speech
    1. **Ephesians 4:31** – If we are saying something with the intention of hurting another we shouldn’t speak.
    2. **James 4:11-12** – This can come in the form of judgment.
       1. This is unrighteous judgment – becoming the law giver.
       2. **Things which God has not become a judge of (matters of indifference) you judge, and speak evil of another.**
       3. Example: homeschool vs. public school.

*Instead of using our tongue for evil, we should use it for good!*

1. Godly uses of the tongue.
2. Proclaiming the Gospel Truth
   1. **Romans 10:13-17** – There are so many in the world who need the gospel. We must give it to them.
   2. **1 Corinthians 1:21, 31** – when the gospel is preached, God is glorified.
3. Praying
   1. **1 Timothy 2:1-6** – This use of the tongue becomes beneficial to all men.
   2. God requires us to use the tongue in this way.
4. Exhorting
   1. **Hebrews 3:13** – On our journey to heaven, we need not tear each other down, but build each other up in encouragement.
   2. **1 Thessalonians 4:18** – concerning the hope of heaven those who have passed away have, we comfort one another. (People need reassurance.)
5. Anything that imparts grace.
   1. **Ephesians 4:29** – We are to speak those things which may benefit others. That are morally pure and spiritually discerned.
   2. **Colossians 4:5-6** – Our speech, like ourselves, should be seasoned. (**cf. Matthew 5:13**).
      1. We may receive questions from those in the world about our faith. We must be able to answer wisely, and in a way that is Christ like.
      2. When communicating with the world in any occasion, we must have speech that reflects the virtues in the gospel.

**Conclusion**

1. Our speech is no little thing. It has a great effect on others, and ourselves.
2. God requires every facet of our being to be subject to Him. This includes our tongues.
3. We must always Watch our mouths!