



December 1, 2019

**James 3:1-12**

1. We all have suffered from various symptoms of foot-in-mouth disease. What was one of your best remembered bloopers as a child?
2. Think of a time when you were hurt deeply. Was it because of something someone said? Why do words have so much power to hurt or heal?
3. Why do you think James is so hard on teachers? What reality does Verse 2 describe for the rest of us? (vv. 1-2)
4. How do the three illustrations here (horses bit, ships rudder, fire's spark) each demonstrate the tongue's power? (vv. 3-6)
5. We may have heard the phrase, "*sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me.*" Is that true? What are some biblical examples when words hurt or deceive? (vv. 7-8)
6. Judging from the next set of illustrations, how is it possible for humans to both curse others and praise God? What does this say about the tongue? About human nature? About hope for change? (vv. 9-12)
7. When was the last time your tongue got you into trouble? Share what you have found helpful in controlling your tongue?
8. What are right speech patterns the Bible commends? Take time to think through and share how you are harnessing the positive power of words when it comes to praising God, praying, giving public testimony, building others up, and speaking the truth in love.

