

James 3: 1-12

How to Use Your Mouth For God!

Life Group Study Guide

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For use by Sugar Grove Church of Christ Life Groups

***Your Job Is To Build People,
Not Just Lead a Meeting***

**Note: Intended direction of discussion is listed in italics after some of the questions. Please do not read these 'answers' to your group but instead use them to help guide your group discussion.*

Life Group Life:

- Make sure everyone in your group knows everyone else. If you have new members take a few minutes getting to know them and learning how they came to be connected to your group.
- In the past week what has been a high or a low or both in your life?
*(Encourage each person in the group to share something from their week that has been a high and one thing that has been a low. There is not right or wrong answer to this question. **This is an exercise that offers the opportunity to celebrate or mourn with each other. For example, if a group member shares a "low" that is really significant stop what your group is doing and pray over/with that person right then and there.**)*

Memory Verse:

*"...Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers, this should not be."
James 3:10*

If your group has more than 8 people you may want to break into groups of 4-8 people to facilitate greater participation and discussion. Then come back together at the end of the discussion time and have someone from each group report the highlights of their discussion.

Grow:

- ❖ Every one of us has been in a situation where someone's words got them in trouble or where our own words have gotten us in trouble.
- ❖ This section of James talks about the tongue but the conversation is about more than just the tongue! It is about where our heart is. Let's read James 3:1-2
- ❖ Is there a perfect 'man' who can keep his whole body in check? *No, except for Jesus!*
- ❖ Read James 3:3-6.

- ❖ **How does the tongue corrupt the whole person?** *Because it sets the course of a person's life and actions.*
- ❖ **What does it mean that the tongue itself is set on fire by hell?!** *This is a figurative way of saying that the source of the tongue's evil is the devil.*
- ❖ **Read James 3: 7-8**
- ❖ **Verse 8 says no person can tame the tongue because it is a "restless evil filled with deadly poison."** **If the tongue is 'set on fire' by the devil then why can't any of us 'tame' the tongue?** *Because none of us are more powerful than the devil!*
- ❖ **Since we cannot control our own tongue then who can control our tongue?** *Only God!*
- ❖ **Read James 3:9-12**
- ❖ **James uses three images to get us to understand his point; a spring, a fig tree, and a grapevine. What is the point these examples are trying to get us to understand?** *These things produce what they are, they can't produce what they aren't... Our tongue simply reflects what is in our heart.*
- ❖ **Can a heart controlled by God "curse men who have been made in the likeness of God?"** *No.*
- ❖ **The question these verses make us ask is this: Who are you allowing to be in control of your heart, the devil or God? What needs to happen to give God more control of your heart?** *(discussion leaders be sensitive at this point to the fact that there may be someone in your group who needs special attention or prayers...)*

Serve:

- ❖ **It is easy to encourage each other not to say inappropriate things. It is much more difficult to encourage each other to open our hearts to God so that our mouths will say things that bring glory to God. What are some things we can do to help each other open our hearts to God?**
- ❖ **A mouth controlled by God seeks to build up and encourage other people (who are made in God's image.) Take a few moments in your group for each person to share something spiritually encouraging with someone else in the group.**

Share:

- ❖ **We can choose whether our tongue will be used by God or the devil. How can we allow God to use our tongue to spread the message of Jesus Christ to those around us? What are some specific things you need to be saying to other people around you?**

Worship:

- ❖ **Take this time to share prayer requests and close by praying over these requests.**

Preparation for Next Time:

- **Read James 3:13-18**