

God Time Day 1: Watch Your Mouth



You have probably heard the phrase, “Sticks and stones will break my bones, but words will never hurt me.” While it was a cute rhyme when we were kids, we know that it is not true. While sticks and stones can break our bones, words can cause serious emotional damage that could require years of therapy.

This current age has a multitude of mediums for communication (phone, text, social media apps, video platforms, etc.). It has become ever clearer that while all this technology was intended to connect people, it often does more to divide and hurt. It is even being weaponized and used intentionally to “cancel” people. But keep in mind, this is not a new development.



Read Proverbs 12:17-19.

¹⁷ Whoever speaks the truth gives honest evidence, but a false witness utters deceit. ¹⁸ There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing. ¹⁹ Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue is but for a moment.

In these verses, underline the positive attributes of words.



Next, circle the negative attributes of words.

The problem is not one of technology, laws, controls, or even education. The problem is a matter of the heart. For as long as people have been broken and sinful, the struggle over the destructive power of words has existed.

Read Matthew 15:18.



But what comes out of the mouth comes from the heart, and this defiles a person.

Reflect on the “words of your mouth” and consider what they might indicate about your heart. What is God telling you?



Pray for God to be reflected in your words and to use your words for His glory.

God Time Day 2: Words Matter



Reread James 3:1-2 from page 14.

As we discussed yesterday, words can be damaging and destructive. One of the problems faced by the early church was persons desiring to be teachers merely because of the prestige and influence it would give them. But they had no consideration for the damage they could cause through their misguided teachings. Anyone in a position of authority should have a healthy and godly respect for the power and influence they have as a leader.

While James is writing specifically to address leaders in the church, everyone has influence over others as a parent, friend, coworker, or even on the Internet.



Pray for God to help you use your words to bless and uplift those around you.

God Time Day 3: Words Set the Course



Reread James 3:3-5a from page 14.

James uses the image of a horse and a boat, both powerful and large in their own regards, but they are guided by small means. James uses these images to help us understand that while our mouths and words might seem small, they reflect the direction of our lives.

Reread verse 5a again: *So too, though the tongue is a small part of the body, it boasts great things.*

Underline the word “boasts.”



Write down three things in your life in which you take great pride. Then consider, when you speak of those things, do your words give glory to yourself or God?

 SELF / GOD

 SELF / GOD

 SELF / GOD

What can you do about the ones you circled “SELF?”

What do you think God wants you to do?

God Time Day 4: Words Have Power

Reread James 3:5b-8 on page 14.

 Circle the word “*tongue*” in these verses.

Underline the last sentence in these verses.

As James continues to explore the destructive capabilities of words, he describes how our mouths, while small, have the potential to cause serious harm. He uses the image of a small spark which then builds into a fire. The truth is that words can be difficult to control. After all, have you ever said something in the heat of the moment, only to find that the words that came from your mouth were not what you would have originally intended?

Speaking out in anger, bitterness, or even in haste, requires no effort. It is easy to do but it often requires great effort to clean up the resulting mess. Hurting people, tearing people down, or even leading people astray with our words is surprisingly easy. Yet, considering just how destructive our words can be, it is interesting how often people tend to be very flippant about the things they say.

 Have you ever been on the receiving end of someone’s “*poisonous tongue*?” What were some of those words used against you, and how did they impact you?

 It is easy to think of times when words have hurt you, but James is challenging us to consider our own words. Whether intentional or accidental, describe a time when your words were “*poisonous*.”

 Pray for God to forgive you for the harm you caused. Ask Him to show you how reconciliation and healing are possible.

Day 5: Speak Words of Life



Over this week, we have spent a lot of time considering the destructive capabilities of our words. But God is all about transformation and healing. As we finish this week, let us consider how we might control our words.



Read James 3:9-12 on page 14.

Underline the word “*bles*” in the verses.



Circle the word “*curse*” in the verses.

As you might recall from Day 1, what comes from our mouths reflects what is in our hearts. James seems disturbed, and rightfully so, that people can speak such blessings and praises to God and yet produce such cursing against people who were created in God’s image.

James has repeatedly said that “*no one can tame the tongue*.” If that is true, what hope do we have? The hope we have is that salvation is not dependent on our abilities and skills, but rather on trusting in God’s provision. While no one can tame their tongue, God has the power to change our hearts, which in turn will change the words which come from our mouths.



So, what are some practical ways in which we can allow God to begin transforming our hearts?

Here are a few suggestions:

- **Pray daily** for God to help you be mindful of your words. Try praying Psalm 19:14 every morning.
- **Learn to filter** by eliminating influences we allow in our lives that may pollute our thoughts and get in the way. (Ex. Internet and other media content that is negative and destructive.)
- **Learn to listen better.** Hurtful words often come quickly and without hesitation but learning to be a good listener slows things down and often gives you a chance to think, empathize, and consider, before you speak.