

When is it most difficult for you to show restraint in your words and why?

*As you pray today, ask God to give you a sharp conscience when it comes to your tongue. Pray that your speech will be filled with grace today.*

## Saturday

*Please reread James 3:9–10. Controlling our tongues is one of the more difficult battles we each will face! Spend time in prayer today asking God to continue to grow you in this regard. Pray that your words will be consistent with your love for God and His love for you! Please pray for the weekend services. Thank you!*



## Managing My Mouth

March 13 & 14, 2010 • René Schlaepfer  
James 3:1–12

“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 (NIV)*

### Why watch what I say? My tongue can...

#### ...Direct

“When we put **bits** in the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal.”  
*James 3:3*

“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*

#### ...Destroy

“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**. 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 3:5–6*

“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*

#### ...Display

“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. 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 3:9–12*

### How can I manage my mouth?

1. \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

“Everyone should be quick to listen...” *James 1:19a*

2. \_\_\_\_\_ my \_\_\_\_\_

“...slow to speak...” *James 1:19b*

3. \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_

“...and slow to become angry.” *James 1:19c*

4. **Bring others** \_\_\_\_\_ **not** \_\_\_\_\_

“With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God’s likeness... My brothers, this should not be.” *James 3:9–10b*

“Don’t use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.” *Ephesians 4:29 (NLT)*

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**The real problem:** \_\_\_\_\_

“For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.” *Matthew 12:34b (Also Matthew 15:18–19)*

**The solution: Change my** \_\_\_\_\_

## Daily Meditations

### Monday

Please read James 3:1–12. We all have our “foot in mouth” moment. What’s one of your recent bloopers?

What metaphors for the tongue does James use in this passage?

It’s intense language, but have you ever felt that your tongue was “set on fire by hell”? What does that mean, in your experience?

What steps can you take to change the “source of the spring”, to use James’ analogy?

*Thank God today for the opportunity to grow in controlling your tongue this week. Ask Him to help the words from your tongue flow from the pure stream of living water that comes from Him. Pray that your words will be healing and will reflect His supernatural power working in you.*

### Tuesday

What was one meaningful truth you got from this weekend’s message?

Please read James 1:19–20. What three tips do these verses tell you about the tongue?

Which of these is hardest for you to practice? Why?

Choose one of these actions to focus on this week!

*Pray that God will enable you to be Christ-like with your tongue.*

### Wednesday

Please read Proverbs 12:18, 15:14 and 16:24. What type of imagery does the writer of Proverbs use to describe healing words?

How does he describe the harmful effects of the tongue?

How have your words brought hurt to someone? How was that like a sword?

How have your words brought healing to someone — what happened?

*Ask God to show you how to heal with your words — and also to show you if your words are destructive.*

### Thursday

Read Ephesians 4:29. What are our words supposed to do? Read Proverbs 16:21. According to this verse, what do pleasant words promote? If pleasant words promote this, how do unpleasant words hinder it?

How have words promoted or hindered instruction in your life?

Think of one person who has “promoted instruction” in your life through their gracious speech. Think of way to thank them today!

*Thank God today for the opportunity to build into other’s lives with your words. Ask God to fill your speech today with words that promote wisdom and learning in others.*

### Friday

Please read Proverbs 17:27 & 29:20. What point are these verses driving home?

How can you apply this in your speech and relationships today?

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**Memory Verse**

“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 (NLT)*