

THE FOURTH TEST: THE CONTROL OF YOUR TONGUE

“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.” James 3:5 (NIV)

❖ Choose Your Words (and TEACHERS) Wisely

“Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. 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 3:1-2 (NIV)

1. Make sure you have SOMETHING to SAY

“What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church.”

1 Corinthians 14:26 (NIV)

2. Consider the CONSEQUENCES of your SPEECH

“And I tell you this, that you must give an account on judgment day of every idle word you speak.”

Matthew 12:36 (NLT)

3. Disciplined SPEECH comes from a DISCIPLINED LIFE

“Don't shoot off your mouth, or speak before you think. Don't be too quick to tell God what you think he wants to hear. God's in charge, not you—the less you speak, the better.”

Ecclesiastes 5:2 (MSG)

❖ The Power of the Tongue

When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. 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. 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.”

James 3:3-5 (NIV)

1. Bits are used to DIRECT a horse...your SPEECH will give DIRECTION to you.

“When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal...”

2. Rudders are used to GUIDE ... a tongue can guide you to or from BRAINSTORMS

“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...”

3. Sparks give WARMTH or cause DAMAGE...either way it can SPREAD quickly

“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...”

❖ Recognizing the CONTRADICTIONS of our tongues.

“We use it to give thanks to our Lord and Father and also to curse other people, who are created in the likeness of God. Words of thanksgiving and cursing pour out from the same mouth. My friends, this should not happen! No spring of water pours out sweet water and bitter water from the same opening. A fig tree, my friends, cannot bear olives; a grapevine cannot bear figs, nor can a salty spring produce sweet water.”

James 3:9-12

(TEV)

1. When you SQUEEZE the FRUIT you see how GOOD it is and WHAT is in it.
“The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.”
Luke 6:45 (NIV)
2. All of us are SUSCEPTIBLE to running our TONGUES without a BRAIN engaged
“May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.”
Psalm 19:14 (NIV)
3. If GOD CONTROLS your tongue He will do GREAT THINGS through you.
“‘Woe to me!’ Isaiah cried. ‘I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty.’ Then one of the angels flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, ‘See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.’ Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here am I. Send me!’”
Isaiah 6:5-8 (NIV)

❖ **CLOSING TRUTH:** Your Tongue is the TRUEST REFLECTION of your HEART
“Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such ‘wisdom’ does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.”
James 3:13-18 (NIV)

- **Our Challenge:** Let our FAITH be seen in our ACTIONS not just our SPEECH
“These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.”
Matthew 15:8 (NIV)