

THE BOOK OF  
**JAMES**  
 MAKING FAITH WORK

**TAMING THE  
 TONGUE**  
 James 3.3-12

**Key Points :**

- “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me” is untrue! The opposite is more accurate – broken bones mend, hurtful words can last forever.
- James talks about the importance of taming our tongues. We tend to minimise how our negative words affect us and others, but words have more power than we know. As we walk out our faith journey, it’s critical for us to recognise three specific truths about our words: They will determine the direction of our lives; they have the power to destroy what we have; and they will always reveal what’s in our hearts.

**WE SHAPE OUR WORDS, AND THEN OUR WORDS SHAPE US.**

- The output of our mouths reflects the kind of person we are. It can be very hurtful. We can naturally lean towards criticism as a first response, or to encouragement. The fruit we bear, in what we say, reflects whether we live in Jesus’s vine or not. If we speak unkindly, or gossip, with the mouth that praises God, it should not be. Learn the value of silence, moderate your tone of voice and think before you speak. A proverb which is true is, “Act in haste, repent at leisure”. When we speak, we act. We need to tame our tongues but it is not humanly possible – we need God’s help.

**Questions:**

**Conversation Starter**

1. What words, which are in common use today, annoy you most? Why?

**Start Thinking & Sharing**

2. Are you still carrying any hurts from words spoken to you during your life? How can we move on? How can we ease our pain from verbally inflicted wounds?
3. Are you still carrying the guilt and/or shame of things you have said in the past? How can we use regret and repentance to be free and to learn from the experience?
4. Are there times when harsh words are justified and needed to achieve change? How can we identify/expose faults, and give advice to others, without causing hurt?

**Start praying. Be bold, and pray specifically.**

5. *Lord Jesus, help me to be mindful of the effect my words have on others. Amen*

**Start doing. Commit to a step, and live it out this week.**

6. Use one method this week – valuing silence, moderating tone, thinking first.