

## TONGUE TWISTED

### Book of James Study Program

#### BACKGROUND:

Scripture has a lot to say about our speech. According to Proverbs, our words have the power to wound or heal (12:18) and the power of death and life (18:21). In addition, Matthew's gospel tells us that we will give an account for every idle or unnecessary word that we speak (Matthew 12:36-37). In short, our words have power can be used for good, or for bad. In James 3:1-12, James warns us that the judgment for our speech is quite real and shows us all that we need to repent from sinful and destructive words.

#### DAY 1: READ JAMES 3:1-8

1. What part does the tongue play in demonstrating a person's spiritual maturity?
2. Why do you think James warns, "not many of you should presume to be teachers"?
3. Amongst all creatures, only man has the power of speech. How have you been the victim of a tongue (the words of another) that spewed evil? How did that feel?
4. How have you used your tongue to spew evil at others? Stop now and ask God's forgiveness for any unkind or evil words you have said to another. Ask God to show you what He wants you to do to make things right with that person.

Pray: Father, please forgive me for words I have spoken that don't honor You. Bring to mind people I have wronged with my words, and give me the courage to offer an apology. Help me, Lord, to control my tongue, speaking only words that glorify You. Amen.

#### DAY 2: READ JAMES 3:9-12

1. When we praise God and curse men with the same mouth, what do our words and actions speak to the unbelieving world?
2. How can we go about cleansing our words?
3. Would you say you lean more toward having a tongue that blesses, or more toward one that curses?

4. How can you be more purposeful in your speech, and encourage others with your words?

Pray: Lord, make me an encourager. Let my words bring You glory and draw others to Your Kingdom. I love You, Lord, and I want others to know that, and to know You in the way that I know You. Thank You, Lord, for giving me the ability to communicate. Teach me the words You would have me say.

### **DAY 3: READ MATTHEW 12:34-37**

1. According to this Scripture, how important are your words? Explain your answer.

2. What would your words tell others about the spiritual condition of your heart? Who or what are you focused on?

3. What would you classify as a “careless word”? Why do you answer the way you do?

4. How can you change the inclinations of your heart so that the “overflow” would be more positive?

Pray: Lord, I desire for the overflow of my heart to honor You. Father, please teach me to be more like You. Teach me to be more aware of the words I utter, seeking always to bring You glory and honor in all I do and say. Amen.

### **DAY 4: EPHESIANS 4:29, COLOSSIANS 3:12-17, AND COLOSSIANS 4:6**

1. What would constitute speech that builds others up, and gives grace to those who hear?

2. How does a thankful heart translate into a positive speech pattern?

3. How can you be more thankful in your speech and lifestyle?

4. What would you consider speech that is “gracious and seasoned with salt”? How can your speech be filled with grace, yet preserve the truth of Scripture?

Pray: Father, teach me to speak graciously- building others up instead of tearing them down. Let others see Your love in me by my speech and actions. Lord, never let my speech be anything but a representation of Your truth. Amen.