



## James Chapter 3

*'Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me'.*

Has everyone heard this common ditty? It's meant to show that we have a thick skin, but how true is it? How often have you seen destructive words damage others? How often have those words come from your own mouth? The damage from words can go deeper and last longer than any physical hurt, and so, as God's people, James asks us to make a thorough assessment of our tongues.

### Read James Chapter 3

Q1. Our tongues, though small, can determine the course of our lives. What analogies and comparisons does James use to describe the tongue? (v 3-6) How do they highlight the power and danger of our tongues?

Q2. Why is it so difficult to control our tongues? (v 6-8) Are we able to master them on our own? (v 8) Where do we need to look for help? (Chapter 1 v 5)

Q3. How does James say our tongue is inconsistent? (v 9-12) Does this ring true for you? What inconsistencies do you see in the way you talk to others?

Q4. Throughout his book, James reminds us that true faith is shown through consistency in what we say and do. He wants our faith to be evident in how we live our lives. How do you respond to James' challenge in v13 – does this describe you? Who do you think James was thinking of when he wrote this? (see Matthew 11 v 29)

Q5. James says that earthly wisdom brings about jealousy, selfishness and disorder. What are the results of living – and speaking – with heavenly wisdom? (v 17-18) Does verse 18 give you added strength and motivation to be more careful with your words?

*Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips' Psalm 141 v 3*

**Adoration:** Praise God that He is a speaking God who has shared with us his gift of speech by giving us tongues to bless Him and those around us.

**Confession:** Confess times when you have used your tongue to harm those around you instead.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank God that Jesus is the solution to the problem of our sin!

**Supplication:** Ask God to make your tongue a source of life rather than a source of destruction