

## **“The Power of the Tongue”**

**James 3:1-12**

### **I. The teaching power of the tongue (v. 1-2)**

- A. Being a spiritual teacher is a serious responsibility
- B. Being a spiritual teacher brings accountability to God

“But I tell you that men will have to give account on the Day of Judgment for every careless word they have spoken.” (Matthew 12:36)

### **II. The natural power of the tongue (v. 3-5a)**

- A. The tongue is small but powerful

\*Picture of horse bit...

- B. The tongue can guide our life

\*Picture of ship rudder....

“He who guards his lips guards his soul, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin.” (Proverbs 13:3)

“He who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps himself from calamity.” (Proverbs 21:23)

- C. The tongue is prone to boast

### **III. The destructive power of the tongue (v. 5b-6)**

\*Picture of forest fire....

- A. The tongue can be a world of evil

“Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies.” (Psalm 34:13)

- B. The evil tongue can affect the entire person
- C. The evil tongue can influence our life story

“Whoever would love his life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech.” (1 Peter 3:10)

- D. The evil tongue can be a tool of the devil

“Do not give the devil a foothold. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.” (Ephesians 4:27, 29)

### **IV. The untamable power of the tongue (v. 7-8)**

\*Picture of lion tamer

- A. The tongue cannot be tamed by man alone

“Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips.” (Psalm 141:3)

B. The tongue seeks to spread its evil intent

C. The tongue can deliver deadly poison

“I am in the midst of lions; I lie among ravenous beasts – men whose teeth are spears and arrows, whose tongues are sharp swords.” (Psalm 57:4)

V. The revealing power of the tongue (v. 9-12)

A. The tongue should be used to praise God

B. The tongue should not be used to curse men

“Bless those who persecute you, bless and do not curse.” (Romans 12:14)

C. The existence of praise and cursing is hypocritical

D. The tongue will reveal what is in the heart

“For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks.” (Matthew 12:34)