

The Problem with the Tongue

James 3:1-12

1. THE TONGUE HAS _____ FOR HARM.

James 3:3-6 NIV *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. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.*

2. WE MUST CONTROL THE TONGUE, _____.

James 3:7-10a NIV *All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing.*

3. ONLY SOMEONE WHO _____ CAN CONTROL THE TONGUE.

James 3:2b NIV *Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.*

4. THE TONGUE IS NOT THE PROBLEM, THE _____ IS.

James 3:11-12 NIV *Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.*

5. _____ CAN CONTROL THE TONGUE.

James 4:6-10 NIV *But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.*

The Way Forward:

- Humbly admit we can't control our tongue, even though we must.
- Confess our failures with it and seek God's forgiveness.
- Learn from God's Word how to use the tongue.
- Ask God daily to tame and transform it.