

# The Power of Words

---

## The Tongue

### James 3:3-5 (NIV)

- (3) When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal.
- (4) 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.
- (5) 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 bible describes the tongue as a small but powerful part of our bodies. It can have a huge impact on the people around us, and our own lives, for good or bad. Therefore it's in everyone's best interest that we learn to control the words that come out of our mouth.

### Proverbs 18:21 (NIV)

- (21) The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit.

## Words

Read the following scriptures and make a comparison between good and bad words.

### Proverbs 15:2 (NIV)

- (2) The tongue of the wise adorns knowledge, but the mouth of the fool gushes folly.

### Proverbs 15:4 (NIV)

- (4) The soothing tongue is a tree of life, but a perverse tongue crushes the spirit.

### Proverbs 12:18-19 (NIV)

- (18) The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.
- (19) Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue lasts only a moment.

### Matthew 12:35-37 (NIV)

- (35) A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.
- (36) But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken.
- (37) For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned."

Our tongues speak out of who we are. What does this scripture say about the connection between words and hearts?

### Proverbs 13:3 (NIV)

- (3) Those who guard their lips preserve their lives, but those who speak rashly will come to ruin.

How are people who control their tongue blessed?

### Proverbs 21:23 (NIV)

- (23) Those who guard their mouths and their tongues keep themselves from calamity.

How can we stay out of trouble?

## How?

### James 3:7-12 (NIV)

- (7) All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind,
- (8) but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.
- (9) With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness.
- (10) Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be.
- (11) Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring?
- (12) My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

Is it right for praise and cursing to come out of the same mouth?

**James 3:14-16 (NIV)**

- (14) But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth.
- (15) Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic.
- (16) For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

What kind of wisdom is this? Name the three areas that jealousy and selfishness come from.

**James 3:17-18 (NIV)**

- (17) But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.
- (18) Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

What kind of wisdom do we need? Please describe.

## Words That Bring Blessing

Describe how words can bring blessing.

**Psalms 45:1 (NIV)**

- (1) My heart is stirred by a noble theme as I recite my verses for the king; my tongue is the pen of a skillful writer.

**Proverbs 16:24 (NIV)**

- (24) Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

**Ephesians 4:29 (NIV)**

- (29) 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.

## Ask

Do you find it easy or hard to control your tongue?  
Can you share a story about learning to control your tongue?

## Application

How can you apply something that you learned from this study to your life?  
What new thing can you do this week to bless someone with your words?

## Prayer

Lord, please help me control my tongue. I want to be a person who blesses people with good words.

## Key Verse

**Proverbs 15:1 NLT**

- “A gentle answer deflects anger, but harsh words make tempers flare.”