

# LORD, WHY IS IT SO DIFFICULT?

*James 3:1-12*

## **Starting point:**

If you have not heard the sermon, please take the time to go to our website, [www.vcfj.org](http://www.vcfj.org) and listen to it BEFORE YOU START this small group lesson. It will allow you take notes along the way and be ready for the questions at hand. Remember, this is not an exercise but rather a group discussion to help you on your journey to greatness. **May the Lord bless your faithfulness.**

## **OVERVIEW**

Read *James 1:19, 1:26 and 2:12.*

- What is James telling us about his concern for our tongue?
- Why is it so difficult to control our tongue?

*Read Matt 12:36-37.*

- What do we learn from these verses and judgement day?

*Read Matt 15:19*

- What part of our body controls the tongue?

## **THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE TONGUE AND THE HEART**

### **It is very difficult to BE A TEACHER — *James 3:1-2***

- *V 1-2* are a warning from James to those who quickly go into teaching. Why?
- Why is it so difficult to teach the Word of God?
- What are the three reasons Pastor shared?
- What is the warning from James to all who seek to be teachers of the Word of God?

*Read Heb 13:17*

- What does this verse tell us to do?
- What is this verse telling us about our leaders?

## It is very difficult to EXTINGUISH A WILD FIRE — *James 3:3-8*

- James gives examples of a small thing controlling or overpowering a large one. What were the examples?
- How do these examples relate to the tongue?
- What illustration is used to show the danger of the tongue? Why would this be a negative example?
- Pastor gave examples of what a “fire” set by a loose tongue can do. What were these examples?
- What can we learn from this?
- James uses harsh words to describe the tongue in **v 6**. What did he say a tongue can do?
- Why should what I say determine the course of my entire life? What does **Matt 12:36-37** say about this?
- Pastor mentioned the saying, “the tongue is set on fire by HELL.” What does this mean?
- What are you thinking after you read **Romans 3:13-14**?
- The tongue has amazing destructive power. Why is it so destructive? Can you think of examples from the bible where the tongue was destructive? Have there been times in your life or career that a tongue has been destructive?

## It is difficult to SURRENDER TO GOD. — *James 3:8-12*

Pastor shared a story written by Charles Swindoll regarding a father with prayer and then complaining.

- What did this story tell us about **vv 9-10**?
- Have you ever said contradictory things? Did they represent your identity?
- What example in **vv 9-10** does James use to show how the tongue is often misused?
- What does **vv 9-12** tell us about our hearts and the choices we make?
- What illustration does James provide to show the incongruity of our speech in **vv 11-12**?  
There is an old saying about having a “forked tongue.” What does that saying mean for us?
- If you were sharing **vv 8-12** with a child what would be your teaching points?

## APPLICATION

There is an old saying, “sticks and stones can break my bones, but words will never hurt me.”

- What are some ways you have been hurt by words? How have you hurt others with your words?
- When you go out for lunch today, would the waitress know that you are a genuine child of God? Have you defined your testimony with complaints and criticism?
- When you drive to work tomorrow morning and the car next to you cuts you off and then you come to a red light where this car is stopping right next to you, would you be free to roll down your window and tell this driver about the Lord Jesus Christ?
- When you go about your daily business, are you willing to make Jesus Lord of your life, but also Lord of your tongue? Are you willing to surrender your speech to the Lord?
- What have you learned from **James 3:1-12** about your “Journey to Greatness?”
- Are these changes you need to make? What is the most difficult part of curbing your tongue?
- As members of VCF what do we need to do to model the words of James?
- As husbands and wives and as parents what have we learned from this message?
- Are you willing to let the Lord work on your heart so your tongue will confirm that Holy Spirit’s work of sanctification is real?