

Materials I Need:










Legend:


-  = Option 1, Appropriate for 1st – 2nd Grade
 = Option 2, Appropriate for 3rd – 6th Grade


Memory Work:

“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.” James 3:5

Hook:


- Listen to Your Heart (Activity).** ,  Bring in a stethoscope, and have the students take turns listening to each other’s hearts. Talk about the differences between our physical and spiritual hearts. Explain that our spiritual hearts are the cores or souls of who we are. They direct what we think, what we do, and what we say. When we become Christians, we have given our entire beings over to Christ. The Holy Spirit now directs our spiritual hearts, and Christ is revealed through what we do and what we say. This morning we will hear James tell us that our speech is like a loudspeaker from our spiritual heart. We can know what a person is really like by what comes out of his or her mouth.
- Find the Common Thread (Discussion).** ,  Bring in a bit (bridle), a rudder from a boat, and a match. Ask the students what these three items share in common. Give them clues to help keep them interested by showing pictures of horses, boats, and forest fires. Tell them that the answer will be revealed in this morning’s Bible Adventure.
- Steering a Small Boat (Activity).**  You will need a toy boat with a working rudder and a plastic tub filled with water (a small swimming pool outdoors would be great if weather permits). Have the students take turns blowing the boat across the water. Which way does the boat turn? How does the rudder affect the direction of the boat? Tell them to listen to today’s Bible Adventure to hear how our tongues are like the rudder of the boat. They are small, and yet they play a large role in the direction that our lives go.
- What Goes Together? (Worksheet).** ,  Give each student the **JAM03.GF1** worksheet to complete. Discuss how these things work together or affect each other.
- Pairs of Pairs (Activity).** ,  Bring to class several pairs of items that go together and also two or three items that do not have mates. Put one of each pair on a table where the children can see them, along with the unmatched items. Have the other items in a large paper bag or box. Take one item at a time out of the bag, and call on a student to tell you what it goes with and how it relates (how one affects the other). Examples of pairs: bit/toy horse, match/picture of forest fire, rudder/toy boat, tongue/heart, pencil/paper, battery/radio, lace/shoe without laces, hammer/nail.


 **The World's Deadliest Animal! (Object Lesson).** 🦋, 🦋 Purchase a cow tongue at the local supermarket or butcher shop, and put it inside a cage (a birdcage or something similar). Make sure that the entire cage is covered with a cloth so that the students can't see what's inside. Let them know that you have brought into the classroom "The World's Deadliest, Untamable Animal." Ask them if they know what "animal" this might be. Share with them that since God created this animal, no one has been able to tame it! It is also poisonous and has the rare ability to start a fire. When they're unable to guess what it is, slowly remove the veil. You may even want to unwrap the cow tongue and unroll it from its packaging. **Debrief:** Did you know that the tongue is the world's deadliest animal? Our speech has the ability to hurt and destroy others. And today, we're going to learn what God thinks about our speech and how we can tame our tongues.

 **Forest Fires (Discussion/ Visuals).** 🦋, 🦋 Bring in pictures of a forest fire, burned down homes, or anything else that has been dangerously affected by fire. Ask the students what they think caused the fires. Ask them how fire might be used in a good way and how fire is used in a destructive way. **Debrief:** The Bible tells us that our mouths and the words we speak can be like fire. Our words can hurt and destroy other people's feelings and wound them. We're going to see how we can train our tongues to speak words that are for good use rather than for destruction.



Book: **Presentation Ideas -**

 **Guest Fireman (Guest Speaker).** 🦋, 🦋 Ask one of the fireman from FBC to come and share with the students their personal experiences with fire and the dangers related to it. They may even want to dress up and bring in some fire-fighting equipment and gear. Here are some suggestions: John Smith, Sr., Dan Stout, Casey Parr, Brian Viehouser.

 **Keep Your Tongue from Evil (Song).** 🦋 As a conclusion to today's teaching time, teach them Steve Green's song called "Keep Your Tongue from Evil." (For a copy of the song, please request it on your order forms.)

Bible Adventure –

The book of James was written to help those who claimed to follow Christ examine themselves to discover whether they had true faith. James did not want them to mistake a dead faith for a living one. A true believer will become a new person in thought and action. If there is no change, that person's faith is dead.

So far in his letter, James has encouraged his readers to take two tests to see if their faith is real. He wanted them to test their reaction to trials and temptations. Were they responding joyfully? He also wanted them to test their reaction to people who were different from them. Did they give all their attention to the rich, powerful, or attractive people, or did they treat everyone equally? Now, in chapter 3, James sets forth a new test. Can you guess what it is? Let me give you a hint from Matthew 12:34. Jesus is speaking and says, "For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks." That's it. James is giving us the test of the tongue. Why is this so important? Because our speech is like a loudspeaker hooked up directly to our hearts. Our words show everyone what we are really like inside.

The tongue is a very powerful thing. James gives us three different word pictures of what the tongue is like. Each of the pictures shows us the awesome influence a small thing can have on something that's big.

The first picture James gives us is that of a bit. In these days of automobiles and airplanes, many of us may not understand what a bit is or what its purpose is. A bit is part of a bridle, a kind of harness put over a horse's head that the rider uses to direct the horse. The bit is a metal bar that is placed in the horse's mouth right over the tongue. When the rider pulls on the bridle that is attached to the bit, the horse's head turns, and it goes in that direction. James tells us that "when we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal" (v. 3). That small bit controls a very large animal.

The second picture is that of the rudder of a ship. The rudder is a broad, flat piece of wood or metal attached to the back of the ship. In comparison to the size of the ship, the rudder is quite small, but it serves a very important purpose--it steers the entire ship. The point of the pictures of the bit and the rudder is that the tongue is also a small thing compared to the rest of our body, yet it can control something that is very large--our speech. Though our words may not seem important, they play a large role in directing our entire lives.

James gives us a third word picture about the tongue that is a little different from the first two. In this one, he focuses more on the power of the tongue to destroy. He compares the tongue to a fire. Listen to James 3:5: "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." Even though it can begin as a small flame, fire can quickly spread and wipe out an entire forest or city. That's the way our words can be--even one careless word can damage or destroy another person. James says that the tongue "is set on fire by hell." Those are strong words, and he means that Satan can easily use the tongue for evil purposes. Out of God's control, the tongue has enormous power to wound, poison, and demolish.

Because the power of the tongue is so great, James tells us that it is basically uncontrollable and cannot be tamed the way an animal can. It fights against our efforts to tame it. With our tongues we praise God, and in the next breath we curse a person who is made in God's own likeness. No human being is able to tame the tongue in his own power. "Then what hope is there?" you might ask. No human being can accomplish it, but God is well able to tame the tongue. King David of Israel wrote in Psalm 141:3, "Set a guard, over my mouth, O Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips." God is able to help us speak words that will be a blessing to those who are listening. If a person is unable to do that and can only speak hurtful, sinful words, it means they do not have God's Holy Spirit living inside them. They do not pass the test of true faith.

As you think about God's message about the tongue, take a close look at your own heart by judging your speech. Do your words prove that you are a Christian, or do they reveal that your heart has not been touched by God? Remember that Jesus said that the mouth speaks what is in a person's heart. A sinful heart cannot pour forth loving words. Would the people closest to you, your family and friends, say that your words show you love God more than anyone else in this world? Or would they say that your words show you love yourself best?

If you are a Christian, be challenged to watch what you say! The Bible is full of cautions to use our words to build up others and to encourage them. God wants us to speak what is right. We should not say any careless word ever! When we do, God is grieved by it (Ephesians 4:30). So let's follow King David's example and ask God to set a guard over our mouths. Remember that you are God's child; use your tongue not for cursing but for blessing!



Aim Questions:

1. **What are the three pictures of the tongue that James gives us?** *A bit, a rudder, and fire.*
2. **Why does James use these three illustrations?** *Each picture demonstrates the power that something small can have on something big.*
3. **How is the tongue like fire?** *We can cause great damage to others with one careless, sinful word.*
4. **Why is the tongue so important to a person who thinks they're a Christians?** *It is a way to evaluate whether or not we're really saved.*
5. **Can anyone tame their tongue on their own?** *No! Only God can tame the tongue.*



Look:



The Heart and Tongue Connection (Worksheet).   Using **JAM03.GF2**, have the students choose those "speech bubbles" which glorify God. Have them cut pieces of yarn and glue them to connect the heart in the center of the page with the bubbles they chose. They may then color the worksheet.

- Gummy Tongues (Snack Idea).** 🍬, 🦋 Gummy tongues can be purchased at the 99-cent store in Lincoln Heights Shopping Center. They are individually packaged and about 6" long. The students will love them.
 - Taped Conversation (Object Lesson).** 🍬, 🦋 Make a tape recording of two children's speech. One child's speech should clearly reveal an unsaved heart. This person's speech is selfish and always self-centered. He or she constantly use the word me, gets angry when they don't get their own way, gossips, grumbles, and complains. The other child's speech should clearly reveal a saved heart. This person's speech is selfless and loving towards other. He or she encourages with their words, readily forgives, talks about God, doesn't get angry, confronts sin, and admits their mistakes. **Debrief:** Ask the students which child they think is the Christian and why. Remind them that the mouth speaks out of that which is in the heart. As they evaluate their own speech, they should be able to see what their own hearts are really like.
 - Talking Hearts (Craft).** 🍬 What we feel in our hearts is what we express through our lips. Look up the following verses and discuss the power of the tongue. Once words come out of our mouths, they cannot be taken back. Even if we didn't mean to say them, or we're sorry, the damage has already been done. Read Matthew 12:34; Proverbs 12:14, 18-19, 15:1-2, 4, 16:23-24, 17:27, 21:23; 1 Peter 3:10. As you review these verses, give each student a sheet of cardstock or construction paper. Have them fold it in half, and cut out half a heart shape. Have them open the paper again, and they should have a heart shape large enough to make a mask. After coloring the masks, students need to cut out holes for the eyes, nose, and mouth. Make sure the hole for the mouth is large enough to fit the lips through. Attach a piece of yarn to each side of the mask and tie it around the back of the student's head. Now have the students practice saying things to each other that are pleasing to God.
 - Tongue Treat (Snack Idea).** 🍬, 🦋 Bake a 9x13 single layer strawberry cake, cut it into the shape of a large tongue, and cover with pink frosting. With the pieces cut from the corners, you may make small teeth and cover them with white frosting. Talk about how God gave us our tongues to be able to speak and how He gave us the choice to speak good or evil things. He also gave us our tongues to taste wonderful treats!
 - Passage Review Questions (Worksheet).** 🦋 This booklet contains many questions from the Scripture passage covered in today's lesson. Students may work on them in class and complete them during the week at home, **JAM03.GF3**.
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Took:

- Tame Our Tongues (Craft).** 🍬, 🦋 Taming our tongues is much more difficult than taming a wild animal. We can control animals by keeping them in cages or placing restraints on them; it's not so simple with our speech. This craft is a bit silly, but it illustrates the point we are trying to make. Using small fruit baskets (as found in the grocery store for berries), have students tie a piece of yarn to each of the sides to secure it over their mouths. Next, have them paste a verse label from **JAM03.GF4** across the front. Review what was covered in the lesson, and encourage the students to use this cage as needed during the coming week if they cannot restrain themselves from using unkind language. If fruit baskets cannot be obtained, a dust mask will work.

“When Our Tongues Speak, People Listen” (Craft). 🦷, 🦋 This will be quite a noisy craft. Each student will need:

(2) sets of teeth and (1) Bible verse from **JAM03.GF5**

8 ½” x 11” piece of pink paper

party blowers

tape

glue

scissors

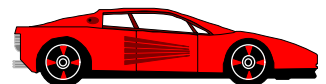
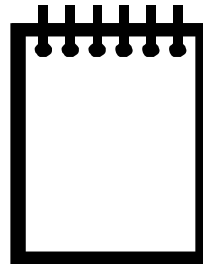
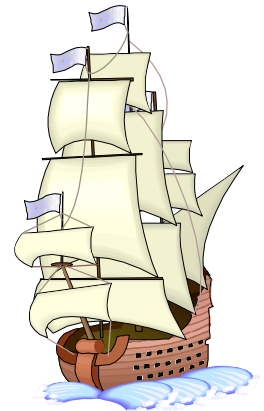
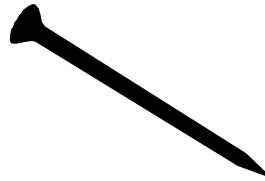
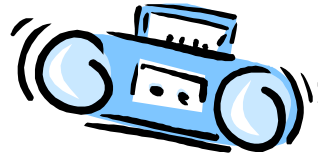
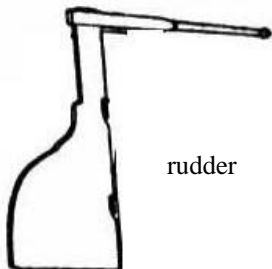
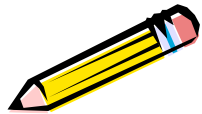
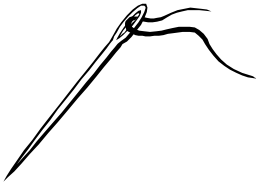
Have each student tape a full sheet of 8½ x 11 pink paper to a blower and roll it into a cone. Then have them trim the ends to make round openings. They may glue or tape teeth onto the top and bottom of the openings. Next, have the students glue the memory verse onto the side of the cones. The students may color lips or cut them out of construction paper and add them above and below the teeth.

Focus of the Heart (Worksheet). 🦷, 🦋 Is your heart good or bad? Draw a line from the tongues to the correct heart, **JAM03.GF6**.

The Impact of the Tongue (Worksheet). 🦋 Look up the verses on **JAM03.GF7**, and draw a line to the correct statement on the right.

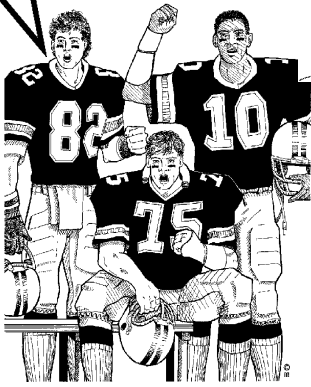
What Goes Together?

Draw a line from each item in the left column to an item in the right column by matching up those things that work together or have an effect on each other.



The Heart & Tongue Connection

I'll do anything to win. Even if I have to cheat!



God has given me the abilities to work hard. If I try my best, God will be pleased.



I love my older sister. She is allowed to do things that I am not, but some day my parents will let me do those things too.



I hate my older sister. She always gets special privileges.



The movie sounds like fun. I hope everyone will be able to come. I'll call the new kids, you call the others.



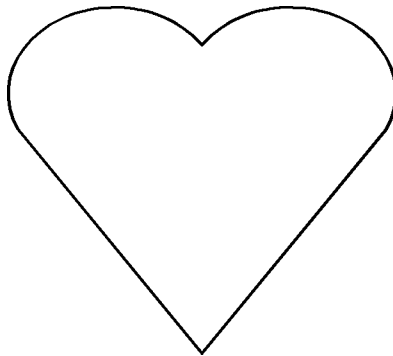
Let's meet at the movie later. Don't let that new girl, Mary, know that we're going. She's kinda dorky.



Suzie makes me sick. Seems like she has a new dress every week.



Suzie sure looked nice in her new dress at church last Sunday.



Passage Review Questions

James 3

What kind of person is judged more strictly? 3:1

What do we all do in many ways? 3:2a

A _____ man is never at fault in what he says, being able to keep his whole _____ in check. 3:2

Why do we put bits into the mouths of horses? 3:3

Although ships are very large, they are steered by a very small _____ . 3:4

Likewise the _____ is a small part of the body. 3:5a

What does the tongue make? 3:5b

What can be started by a small spark? 3:5c

To what thing is the tongue compared? 3:6a

What can the tongue do to the whole person? 3:6

What can no man tame? 3:8a

What is the tongue full of? 3:8b

What two things do we do with our tongue? 3:9

What also comes out of the same mouth? 3:10a

Should this happen? 3:10b

How does one show wisdom and understanding? 3:13

If we harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in our hearts, we are not to _____ about it or _____ the truth. 3:14

“Wisdom” like this does not come down from _____.
3:15a

Where does this kind of “wisdom” come from, and what is it?
3:15b

Where you have envy and selfish ambition, what do you find?
3:16b

James 3:17 says that the wisdom that comes down from the heaven is:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

“Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a _____ of _____.” 3:18

What does this mean?

“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.” James 3:5

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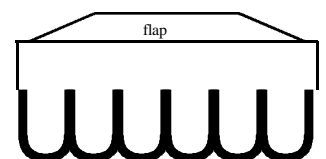
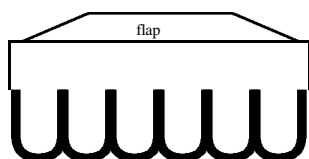
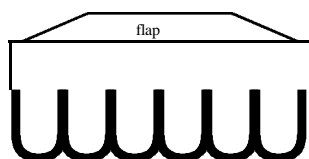
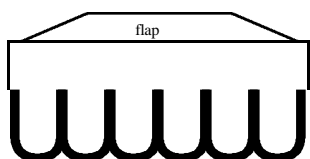
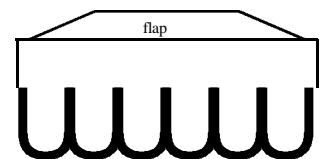
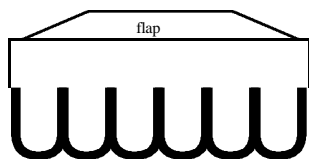
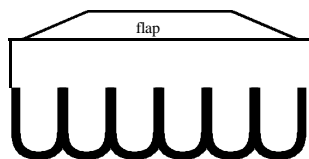
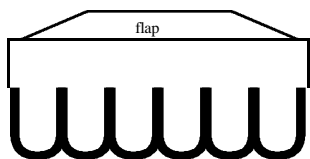
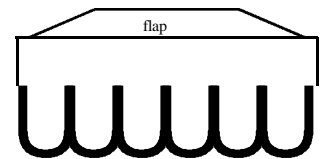
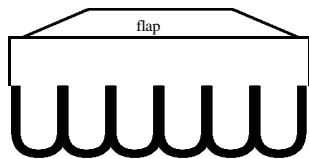
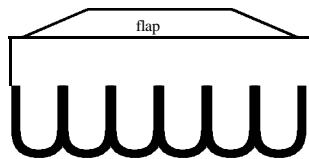
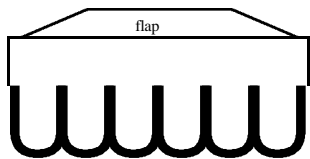
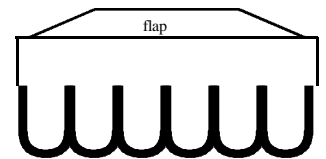
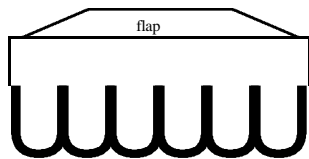
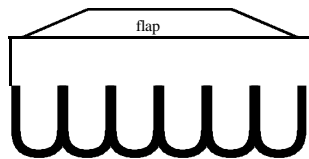
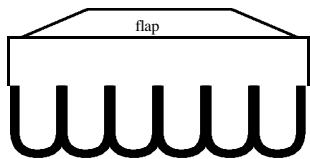
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Focus of the Heart

Is your heart good or bad?
Draw a line from the tongues to the correct heart.



My parents have given me a good home. I should help.



I will go to bed when told and not complain.



I don't want to get up. I want to sleep in today and be lazy.



God tells me to watch my tongue because it is my heart that is speaking.



I need to memorize my memory verses and read my Bible.



Why do I have to help by looking after my sister? I'd rather be at the mall.



Do I have to help set the table for company? I'd rather play my Nintendo.



Is there anything I could do to help you? You have a lot to do.



Why do I have to turn my music down?



I will clean my room and then do my homework.

The Impact of the Tongue



Look up the verses below and draw a line to the correct statement on the right.

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Ephesians 4:29-30 | a) God forbids "silly talk" and profanity. |
| James 3:9 | b) Wise words can bring healing. |
| Proverbs 16:28 | c) Our speech shows what is in our hearts. |
| Ephesians 5:4 | d) When there are many words, sin will be unavoidable. |
| Proverbs 6:17 | e) Our hurtful speech grieves God. |
| Matthew 12:34 | f) God hates a lying tongue. |
| Proverbs 10:19 | g) Our speech can both bless and curse. |
| Proverbs 12:18 | h) Gossip separates close friends. |