

## Message Discussion Guide

### FAITH SPEAKS

*The Church at Brook Hills,*

*Deric Thomas*

*October 4, 2009*

*James 3:1-12*

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This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

### **Connect . . .**

*Use one or both of the following options to introduce the discussion time to follow.*

#### **Option 1**

Invite learners to describe a time when their lives were positively influenced by someone's words to them. Ask the following questions:

- Why do you remember this time in your life?
- What does this time indicate about how important words are in your life?

Encourage learners to share their experiences. Then, explain that today we will look at the power of words.

#### **Option 2**

Invite learners to describe a time when their words have gotten them into trouble or caused a problem. Encourage learners to explain how they tried to resolve the situation.

Explain that today we will look at the power of words and why we are prone to use them incorrectly.

### **Review the Message . . .**

#### **God Speaks...**

- **Recognize the importance of words (Creation)**
  - **God creates by the power of His Word (Gen. 1:3, Ps. 33:6-9, Heb. 11:3)**
  - **God reveals Himself by words spoken and written (Gen. 1:27-28, 2:16, 12:1, 2 Tim. 3:16)**
  - **God speaks to Himself (Gen. 1:26, Ps. 2:7-9, Jn. 15:15, Jn. 17:1-26)**

#### **Discussion . . .**

- Enlist three learners to read Genesis 1:3, 1:26, and Exodus 20:1-7. How did God use words?
- How did God's words in the giving of His law to His people reveal His character?
- Point out that, as the Creator, God gave mankind the ability to communicate and use words. How does God's creation of words indicate their value?
- How did He create words as a means to relationship and revelation?

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#### Application . . .

- How do we give intrinsic value to words? Do the words we use have value in and of themselves?
- How is our speech affected when we considered it a creation of God?
- How can seeing our speech as a right given by humans negate God's role in our ability to speak?

#### Satan Speaks...

- **Recognize the cunning and deceptive words of the serpent (Fall)**
  - **Satan's words contradict, distort, and twist God's Word (Gen. 3:1, 4-5)**

#### Discussion . . .

- Enlist a learner to read Genesis 3:1-7. How did Satan distort God's words to His creation?

#### Application . . .

- How has Satan's perversion of God's words at the very beginning affected our speech today?

#### People Speak...

- **Recognize the great responsibility of teaching God's Word (Jm. 3:1)**
  - **God's Revelation (Word) alone is what we should teach (1 Tim. 4:1-2, 2:15)**
- **Recognize the great potential of sinning in what you say (Jm. 3:2)**
  - **All people have sinned in many ways (Rom. 3:13-14, 23)**
- **Recognize the great power of the tongue (Jm. 3:3-6)**
  - **A small spark can start a large fire (Prov. 16:27, 26:1)**
  - **Think of ways the words of people have affected you positively and negatively (Jm. 1:19)**
- **Recognize your inability to tame the tongue (Jm. 3:7-10)**
  - **We are in a helpless predicament on our own (Jer. 13:23, Mr. 10:25-27)**
- **Recognize that your words are an indication of your heart, and therefore your true spiritual condition (Jm. 3:11-12)**
  - **Our problems are deeper than most people think (Mk. 7:14-23, Lk. 6:43-49)**

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#### Discussion . . .

- Enlist a learner to read James 3:1-12.
- Why would a teacher of the Word be held to a stricter judgment for his words?
- Read 1 Timothy 4:1-2. What is the standard for teachers to meet?
- In vs. 2, what does James indicate about the power of the tongue for sinning?
- How does James describe the power of the tongue in a person's life?
- In vv. 7-8, James states that mankind cannot tame the tongue, despite his ability to tame everything else. Why can't mankind tame the tongue?
- Enlist a learner to read Mark 7:14-23 and James 3:9-12. What does the tongue reveal?
- Why should the tongue not speak both sinfulness and righteousness?

#### Application . . .

- What is the importance of speech in our lives?
- What care do we take to make sure that we hold to God's standards for our teaching, blogging, and other conversations?
- How does our communication with others affect all areas of our lives?
- How do our tongues affect our own bodies? How do our tongues direct our lives?
- Why does something small we say often turn into a big problem? How can these issues often be avoided?
- Why is controlling our speech so difficult? What are some of the most difficult ways that we struggle with this discipline?
- How do we use our speech to disguise what is really inside of us? Who most often is hurt by this behavior?
- What does our speech most often reveal about us?

- **God Speaks to the Fallen, the Dying, and the Hopeless...**

- **Recognize God's provision for the imperfect words you have spoken and the imperfect words you have believed (Redemption)**
  - **God has revealed a Word of Gospel promise (Gen. 3:15)!**
  - **God has revealed His Word of Gospel Wisdom (Prov. 9:1-6, 1 Cor. 1:30, Col.2:2-3, Jm. 3:17)!**
  - **God has revealed His Word incarnate (Jn. 1:1, 1:14)!**
  - **God has the final Word (Js. 1:18, Jn. 19:30, 20:26, Rev. 21:5-7)!**

#### Discussion . . .

- Remind learners that James clearly stated that people cannot tame the tongue.
- Enlist two learners to read Genesis 3:15 and John 1:1. How did God provide for a way to redeem the evil nature of the tongue?

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#### Application . . .

- If the tongue reveals what is in the heart, how should the gospel change our speech?
- How should our speech reveal the gospel?

- **The Church Speaks...**

- **Recognize our responsibility to speak the truth in love to each other (Eph. 4:15-16)**
  - **Each part of the body of Christ needs the other parts to grow to maturity (Eph. 4:11-16)**
- **Recognize our responsibility to take this Gospel (good news!) to our neighbors and the nations (Is. 6:1-8, Rom. 10:14-17)**
  - **How will they hear if we don't open our mouths?**
  - **Never heard the Gospel? = 1 Billion + / No Bible in their language? = 4,000 +**
  - **Genuine faith can't remain silent because... FAITH SPEAKS**

#### Discussion . . .

- Enlist two learners to read Ephesians 4:15-16 and Romans 10:14-17. What power does redeemed speech hold?
- What is the responsibility of a follower of Christ regarding his or her speech?

#### Application . . .

- How should our faith affect our speech?
- How can our responsibility as believers direct the content and method of our communication with God? With our family? With the lost?