

STUDY NOTES

JAMES: A FAITH THAT ENDURES

a series at New City Church

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message "Taming the Tongue" on 3/3/19 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these study notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective community groups.

PRAYER

Pray and ask God to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.

SCRIPTURE: JAMES 3:2-12

REGRETS WITH WORDS

James tells us that we've all made mistakes with words. No one can perfectly control their tongue. This seems like a strong accusation, but we all know this to be true by our own experience. Most of our regrets are probably from something that we said, or from something that started with words.

- *What is your experience with most of your regrets starting with something that you said?*

THE POWER OF WORDS

Most people grew up hearing the phrase, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me." At some point we realized that was far from the truth. Words are actually a powerful force. James gives us some examples of how powerful words can be. He even says that the tongue is a "restless evil filled with deadly poison."

- *Why do you think words carry so much weight in our hearts and minds?*
- *How does one negative statement ruin the influence of positive statements? What is your experience with negative words ruining positive words?*

HYPOCRITICAL WITH WORDS

James continues to say how people, who say that they are Christians, praise God with their mouth, but then curse their brother or sister with the same mouth. That sort of hypocritical action should not be consistent with the Christian life.

- *Why is it hypocritical for people to praise God and then talk bad about people?*

USING YOUR WORD FOR GOOD

Read Ephesians 4:29-32. The apostle Paul agrees with James and tells us to not let unwholesome talk come out of our mouths. He says that we should build one another up with our words. However, in order to do that, we must get rid of the bitterness and anger from our hearts. To quote Jesus in Luke 6:45, "From the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks."

- *Why does Paul link bitterness, anger, and malice with unwholesome talk? How do you need to hear that?*
- *Where do you most need to work on using your words for good?*
- *Pray with each other to use your words to build others up, not to tear them down.*