

## ***The Ultimate Litmus Test: The Tongue!***

### ***Legit Faith: All Day, Everyday! Pt. 4***

James 3:1-12

April 24, 2016

**James 3:1**, *Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. <sup>2</sup>We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check. <sup>3</sup>When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. <sup>4</sup>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.*

#### **4 Truths About Our Tongues:**

##### **1) Our Tongues Are The Ultimate LITMUS TEST**

**James 3:1**, *Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. <sup>2</sup>We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.*

**Matthew 12:33**, *“Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. <sup>34</sup>You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. <sup>35</sup>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. <sup>36</sup>But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken. <sup>37</sup>For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.”*

##### **2) Our Tongues Are Influential: For GOOD OR BAD**

**James 3:3**, *When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. <sup>4</sup>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.*

##### **3) Our Tongues Are DESTRUCTIVE**

**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. <sup>6</sup>The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. <sup>7</sup>All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, <sup>8</sup>but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.*

**Psalm 141:3**, *Set a guard over my mouth, Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips.*

**James 1:26**, *Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless.*

##### **4) Our Tongues Are CONFUSING**

**James 3:9**, *With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. <sup>10</sup>Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. <sup>11</sup>Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? <sup>12</sup>My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.*

**Ephesians 4:29**, *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.*

**Cottonwood “One-Week” Challenge:**

1. **This Week:** I will not use my tongue destructively to gossip, insult, lie or please my own ego by tearing someone else down.
2. **This Week:** I will use my tongue positively to encourage, praise, tell the truth even if it hurts me and build up other people.
3. **This Week:** I will use my tongue to witness to someone else by sharing the gospel, inviting someone to church or offering to pray for someone else.
4. **This Week:** Before I say anything, I will ask myself, “Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it beneficial? Do I have permission to share it? Is my motive pure?”
5. **Next Sunday:** Come back next Sunday and let’s see how we did.

**What’s Next:**

- For all our guests, we would like to invite you to a Question and Answer time with Pastor John Mark on Sunday, May 1. We will meet in the Game Plan Center after the 11:00a Worship Service.
- Follow the Pastor’s daily blog “[www.johnmarkcaton.com](http://www.johnmarkcaton.com)” on the book of James. You can also follow it on Twitter @johnmarkcaton or on Facebook at /johnmark.caton.
- Join a Life Group@Church or a Life Group@Home for the next 3 weeks as we study the book of James. To find a Life Group, go to our website at [cottonwoodcreek.org/lifegroups](http://cottonwoodcreek.org/lifegroups). An alternative James class is available on Sundays at 4:15p in room B126.