

"Taming the Tongue" James 3:1-12 Sunday School Lesson

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Print off this Sunday School lesson about using the tongue to honor God. It is based on James three and will help children see that God is pleased when we speak in right ways. God himself is our example on righteous speech. This lesson was intended for a Sunday School classroom setting but could also be modified for a children's church lesson about the tongue.

Bible Truth: Good speech can honor God – using the tongue.

Scripture: James 3:1-12

Target Age Group: Age 7 – 12 (U.S. 1st – 6th Grade)

Original Learning Context: Sunday School

Target Time Frame: 30 minutes

Supply List: white/black board; writing tool; paper, matches, and cup of water

Learning Goal: After this lesson, children will understand proper speech that honors the Lord and others.

Learning Indicator: By retelling the lessons taught in the passage back to the teacher with understanding to James teaching on the tongue.

Optional: Download our [Book of James Bible coloring page](#).

Learning Activity #1

Active Listening: Divide the children into two groups and assign the first group the task of listening for the ways that James compares the tongue. Assign the second group the task of listening for the importance of controlling the things that they say.

Immediately following the reading of the passage call on some volunteers from each group to share what they discovered in the listening assignment and write their answers on the white/black board.

Learning Activity #2

Agree/Disagree: Read the following statements and have the children take turns telling whether they agree or disagree with the statement. Encourage them to give a small statement about why they agree or disagree about the statement from the passage read in James.

- 1) The tongue can be tamed. Disagree. (Js 3:2, 8)
- 2) We stumble in many ways with what we say. Agree. (Js. 3:2)
- 3) As Christians our tongue can only bless God now. Disagree. (Js. 3:9)
- 4) A rudder is small but controls the ships directions. Agree. (Js. 3:4)
- 5) A fountain can give bitter and fresh water at the same time. Disagree. (Js. 3:11)
- 6) A small flame can cause a forest to burn down. Agree. (Js.5)

Learning Activity #3

Open Discussion: Help the children understand the difficulty of controlling the tongue especially without the Lord by using paper and matches. The first time you burn a small piece of paper talk about how you can't do anything to control how quickly it burns the paper and its direction. With a second piece of paper, dip $\frac{1}{2}$ of it in water and as it burns the half not wet talk about the wet side representing how when we give the Lord control of our tongue, the Holy Spirit can temper the damage our tongue can do by controlling its direction.

Test: Ask several volunteers to give examples of ways they can use their tongue to bless the Lord and others. Ask several others to give examples of ways the tongue can be used to curse the Lord and others.

Connection with the Gospel:

This lesson gives an opportunity to speak to the children about the way the Lord can make a difference in their lives when they put their faith and trust in Him as Savior. The children should be told that the Holy Spirit resides within them when they become Christians, and it's the Holy Spirit that enables them to live in obedience to the Lord.

Present the opportunity to the children to personally accept Christ as their personal Savior by giving a simple presentation of the gospel to them. Have all the children bow their heads with their eyes closed and ask any children wishing to pray and seek Jesus as their Savior to raise their hand. Be sure to pull them aside separately to speak with them and determine their understanding and desire for salvation.

Connection with Life:

Help the children elaborate on ways they can use the things they say to encourage others and be examples to those around them that do not know Jesus as their Savior. Talk to the children about common areas of sin and encourage them to seek forgiveness from the Lord for the times they have used their words to hurt others. Challenge them to seek forgiveness from those they have said unkind things to that day.