

Calvary Chapel  of Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY BASKETBALL DEVOTIONS

4-9 year olds

Week 5

Taming the Tongue

Taming the Tongue

The objective is the goal or main teaching point of this week's study. If you convey one thing to your players, make it this.

Read this passage aloud to the kids, as it will be the focus of this week's study. Each week's memory verse will be in bold.

Here is where we will discuss today's passage with the players. This can be read off the page or summarized and explained in the coach's own words.

Objective This lesson will look at James 3 to study both good and ways to use the tongue.

Scripture Passage:

"If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body... For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. **Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.**"

James 3:2, 7-10 (Memory Verse, James 3:10, in bold)

In the Word

What do you think the most powerful part of the body is? Our feet? Our hands? Our brain? In James 3:1-12, James says that it's our tongue, because our tongue allows us to talk. Words are powerful things. They can be used to please God and help others, but when we use them to sin, they can hurt people. Because the tongue is so powerful, James tells us that it is important that we control it and use it for good.

The problem is, our tongues are very difficult to control. James compares our tongues to wild animals. Animals like horses or lions are incredibly powerful. In the wild, this power can be dangerous, but people have learned how to tame these animals so that we can use their strength for good. We use horses to carry people around, and lions can be seen at the zoo and can even learn tricks. Humans have learned to tame all these animals but have not tamed the tongue. Verse 2 says only a perfect person can live without sinning with their words. All of us struggle in one way or another with sinning in what we say.

That doesn't mean that all we ever do is sin with our tongue. I'm sure everyone hear has praised God, prayed, or encouraged someone this season. But none of us are perfect, and so all of us sin with our words eventually. Do you ever talk disrespectfully to a parent or teacher? Say something unkind to a classmate? Make fun of a brother or sister? All of these are examples of sins with our tongue. James points out that we use the same mouth to sing praises to God as we do to say bad things to other

In the Word (Continued)

people. This is not right! Mouths that say both good things and bad are like a water fountain that shoots out both water and poison.

Taming our tongue means both avoiding the sinful uses of our tongue and doing our best to speak good things. Lying, complaining, teasing, gossiping, and using bad words are all examples of bad ways to use our tongues. Instead of doing those things, we should use our words to tell the truth, give thanks, encourage others, and praise God. As we try to do this, there is both good and bad news. The bad news is that our verses tell us that taming the tongue is impossible. Only a perfect man never sins with his words. The good news is that we know the Perfect Man, the one who never sinned with His tongue: Jesus! We can pray and ask for His help to tame our tongue.

“On the Court” gives some in-game situations where today’s lesson can be applied, while “Off the Court” gives examples from everyday life. Encourage them to do the things you listed during the game today.

On the Court

- Instead of using our words to discourage teammates when they messed up, we can encourage them when they do well and offer help where they need it.
- Thank the coaches and refs for volunteering their time rather than yelling at them or complaining about calls.
- Watch the way you speak to the other team. Use kindness and love in the way you talk to them.

Off the Court

- Compliment people instead of tearing them down with teasing.
- Whenever you are tempted to use your mouth to complain, instead give thanks for what you do have.
- Use respectful words when speaking to adults.
- The best thing you can do with your tongue is tell other people about Jesus.

These are some final notes/goals to accomplish this week. These are not meant to be read, but are instructions for the coach.

The Game Plan

1. Review last week’s memory verse, James 2:1 (NIV). Give a ticket to any player who can recite it.
2. Learn and memorize James 3:10 with your team. Encourage them to practice the verse over the week.
3. Focus on one way your team can work on using their tongue today. At the end of the game, evaluate how you did.