

DISCUSS

- This is the second time in just a few chapters that James mentions the importance of watching our words (1:26) in connection to having genuine faith. This second time at length. Is James overdoing it? Discuss.
- James adamantly views the misuse of our words as connected to evil and graphically refers to the imagery of hell. From the passage, other places in scripture, and background shared in the sermon, what is your concept of hell? Is it a concept hard to discuss or accept?
- On the positive, James uses the illustrations of a horse's bit or a ship's rudder, which are things used to control or steer. What are some ways controlling our tongues can benefit, or steer, our life? Brainstorm together.
- What helps you 'think before you speak'?

APPLY

- Review the three reasons based in the text that were shared in the message for watching our words. Which reason struck you most that you need to apply?
- Share one positive pattern in your words thus far and one pattern you personally stumble with, ie negativity, etc.
- When under pressure, what is a practical strategy that you could share to better filter or tame your words?

GROUP PRAYER FOCUS

- Ask the Holy Spirit to help you see both your heart and your words in a true light.
- Ask the Holy Spirit for a softer heart and for fresh strength to exhibit the fruit of the Holy Spirit in self-control.
- Pray for International Worker (missionary) Adam who was with us on Oct. 3 for his direction and God's leading.

Making FAITH + WORK

Book of James

6

Week 6: Filter What You Say

Key Text: James 3:1-12

OPEN

In challenging believers to make sure the 'rubber is hitting the road' in their relationship with God, James goes for the jugular in targeting one area: the use of our tongue. James reminds us of the power of our words. He writes, "With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness" (v.9). What we say can have great effect – both positive and negative. James argues what we all know – that we stumble in sometimes saying the wrong thing. A need we all have is to filter what we say, for which we need God's help. In our passage, James gives us three reasons to tame our tongue, a problem that we need to recognize is rooted in our heart, as we ask Holy Spirit for help.

REFLECT

- James begins our passage with a warning. To who is this warning specifically made and, in your opinion, why?
- In v. 2, he says we all stumble with our words. What does James say will be the benefit to being careful with our words? What will be 'kept in check'? How?
- What imagery and spiritual reality does James connect the misuse of our tongue to? What is the picture here? (v.6)
- What images does James draw upon at the close of our passage that connects our words to the condition of our heart? How do this communicate the root of the problem?