



February 27 and March 1
Boundaries of the Tongue
Kodiak Miller

SCRIPTURE:

James 3:1-8

Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. 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.

When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. 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. 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. 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. All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue.

DISCUSSION:

1. James uses some pretty intense language- "a world of evil", "set on fire by hell"- How does that make you feel about the way we use our words? Do you think he is talking more generally or in the worst case scenario?
2. How have you seen words lead a situation in either a helpful or harmful direction?
3. Kodiak talks about how we use our words in bragging, gossip, and presenting ourselves to the world. Which area do you think you have a greater tendency to lose control in? How would you like to see that change?
4. How do you feel about the idea of having a choice in how you come across and how you influence others? A sense of freedom, or anxiety?
5. Read through Philippians 1 and make note of any instance where Paul mentions the good going on where he could easily mention the bad- (note: he is in prison while writing this!) How do you imagine the way Paul voices encouragement impacted his outlook during a horrible situation?
6. If your group is comfortable enough, take some time to give each person a time in the "hot seat" where everyone says a word of encouragement over them.