

# Hope for My Big Mouth

Series: A Hopeful Life

Dr. Les Hughes, Senior Pastor

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**Scripture:** James 3:1-13

<sup>1</sup>Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment. <sup>2</sup>For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well. <sup>3</sup>Now if we put the bits into the horses' mouths so that they will obey us, we direct their entire body as well.

<sup>4</sup>Look at the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, are still directed by a very small rudder wherever the inclination of the pilot desires. <sup>5</sup>So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things. See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire!

<sup>6</sup>And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell.

<sup>7</sup>For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race.

<sup>8</sup>But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. <sup>9</sup>With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; <sup>10</sup>from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way.

<sup>11</sup>Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? <sup>12</sup>Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor can salt water produce fresh.

## Group Session

### Opening Questions

Has anyone in your workplace really lost it verbally in the last month and said something they shouldn't have?

### Discussing the Scripture & Life

1. Read the focus passage, James 3:1-12. How would you summarize what the James is saying in this passage?
2. God wants our speech to reflect the heart that's been changed by His spirit. When we fail, what is the cause of that failure?
3. We put too much stock in the things people say to us, but we underestimate the impact of our words. Do you agree with that statement? Why or why not?
4. Now let's talk about this statement: "People of influence will be judged strictly by God for what they say." Should it be that way? Is that fair?

5. What does Proverbs 28:23 teach us?

*He who rebukes a man will in the end gain more favor than he who has a flattering tongue.  
Proverbs 28:23*

6. We can have a major impact by saying only a few words. Do we feel that we gain impact with more words? How can less be more?

7. Discuss the truth or falsehood of this statement: My speech is an indication of what's in my heart.

If we now know that our heart is sick, what steps do we take?

(Make sure of your salvation. Spend time in God's word. Develop spiritual disciplines that change the heart. Get some accountability.)

*"But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man unclean. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander." Matthew 15:18-19*

8. Read the following reasons to have godly speech. Which one motivates you most?

- a. For your own person witness and reputation. Titus 2:8 – "and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us."
- b. As a example of others – 1Tim. 4:12 – "...but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity."
- c. To have a good life – 1 Pet. 3:10 – "Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from deceitful speech."
- d. To show wisdom – Prov. 10:19 – "When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise."
- e. To help heal others – Prov. 12:18 – "Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing."
- f. To develop friendship – Prov. 22:11 – "He who loves a pure heart and whose speech is gracious will have the king for his friend."

9. Read the following passages as the groups closes their eyes to meditate on the scriptures:

"Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God." Matthew 5:8

"The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks." Luke 6:45

Above all else guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life. Proverbs 4:23

"Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." Psalm 51:10

### Closing Challenge

Look for opportunities to build people up this week. Share some examples with the group of what that might look like?