

## **When You Open Your Mouth**

Pressure Points – Part 4 of 5

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**Our words either blow up or diminish life's pressure points (James 3:2-18)**

- **Controlling our tongue is the key to controlling ourselves**

James 3:2-5a For we all stumble in many ways, and if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. <sup>3</sup> If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. <sup>4</sup> Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. <sup>5</sup> So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. ESV

- **Careless words ignite serious trouble in our lives**

James 3:5b-8 How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! <sup>6</sup> And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. <sup>7</sup> For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, <sup>8</sup> but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ESV

### **How to choose words that diminish the pressures we face:**

James 3:13-17 <sup>13</sup> Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. <sup>14</sup> But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. <sup>15</sup> This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. <sup>16</sup> For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. <sup>17</sup> But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. <sup>18</sup> And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. ESV

*Screen our thoughts before we speak...*

- Pray: ask God to help you know when to open your mouth
- Reject bitter jealousy and selfish ambition (vv. 14-16)
- Replace foolish words with godly wisdom (vv. 17-18)

**Next Steps:**

- Read and meditate on James 3:17-18 this week.
- Ask God to show me a situation where I increased the pressure with my words—go back and clear it up.