



Bibles & Bows: It's A Jungle Out There!

February 6, 2024



Thumper Story

"If you can't say something nice, don't say nothing at all."

Can you guess tonight's lesson?

Here is my scripture for the month.

Proverbs 18:21 KJV: *Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.*

Negative Tongue:

Backbiting
Gossip
Criticism
False Flattery
Insult
Lie
Slander
Stirring the Pot!

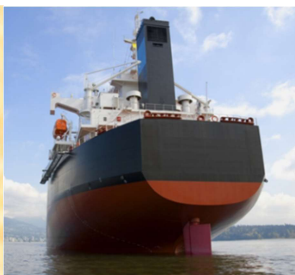


Positive Tongue:

Prayer and Praise
Peacemaking
Spreading Truth
Encouragement
Edification
Sincere Compliment

The recurring theme? **Don't be deceived.** Although very small, the tongue is powerful and should not be underestimated in its ability to do harm.

In James chapter 3, James contrasts sizes in his three analogies about the tongue: a horse's bit turns its whole body; small rudders direct large ships; and a little flame can ignite a great forest fire.



If I am singing God's praises Sunday morning at church but spreading juicy gossip on Monday morning, something is wrong with my heart, and it shows through the words that pass by my tongue. I don't become saved by the words I speak (salvation is through Christ alone). But *because* I am saved, my words are supposed to reflect the presence of Jesus in my life. Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh!

**Gossip dies when it hits a wise person's ears.
Rumors are started by haters, carried by fools, and believed by idiots.**

Your mouth can literally block all the blessings God has for YOU!

The greatest snare in the wilderness is ***murmuring*** and ***complaining*** - -

over your present situation,

before you reach the place God has for you.

☑ Remember, instead of four—it took forty years for the Israelites to reach the promised land because they were found grumbling.

Sometimes, you are simply delaying God's promises to work in your life, *because of your mouth!*

Let that soak in for a minute!

The same mouth should not produce praise and cursing. For example, an apple tree produces apples. It doesn't produce apples *and* oranges. Following Jesus is an "all-in" endeavor. You can't produce apples and oranges, blessing and cursing when you've been made into a new creation. It's like fb – pick a side!!!!

Does that mean we'll always speak righteous words at the right time, never lashing out in anger or impatience? No, James tells us in our key verse that "*no human being can tame the tongue.*" Verse 3:2 says "*we all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect*".

What's the use in trying if no one can be perfect or tame the tongue? The emphasis shouldn't be placed on how far we fall short. Instead, we can focus on how far forward we can progress. When we obey God's Word to become more like Jesus, we are being perfected. We are getting closer and closer to what Christ is like. We are not expecting perfection from ourselves. But by the grace of God, we are striving towards perfection. Maybe Thumper is not a bad idea in churches today????

