

WHAT CAN HAPPEN WHEN YOU LOSE CONTROL?

DAY 4

Find a paper plate and grab a marker. Place the plate on top of your head and draw the following objects as best you can, without taking the paper off your head.

A CIRCLE
TWO EYES
A NOSE

A MOUTH
A TONGUE

Now take the plate off your head and look at it. How does it look? It's probably a little bit crazy? When we lose control of our tongues, it's like we're drawing blind. Sometimes we can't see in the moment how our words, and how we're saying them, are causing a big mess.

Grab another sheet of paper and draw the same objects: a head, two eyes, a nose, and this time, a smiling mouth with a tongue sticking out. Things probably look a little bit better now, right?

Thankfully, we're not alone when it comes to taming our tongues. The Holy Spirit can open our eyes to the power of our words and how we say them, and can give us the strength we need to have self-control! Then our words can bring order, healing and even joy!

LIVE
FOR GOD



DAY 1

READ JAMES 3:3-10

There is a lot of imagery in James 3—descriptive words that appeal to your senses. We can feel (and even taste?) the metal in our mouths as we read about the horse bit.

We can feel the cold, strong water the rudder pushes against, and hear the sound of the waves crashing. What senses do you experience in the rest of this passage?

Just as this text is powerful enough to affect all of our senses, our tongues are that powerful too.

The words you say can make someone **feel** warm and loved, or cold and alone. They can **sound** harsh, or gentle. They can **taste** bitter or sweet as they leave your mouth, and the person who hears them may **see** you as an enemy or a friend.

OUR TONGUES ARE A POWERFUL TOOL, BUT WHEN WE CHOOSE SELF-CONTROL, WE CAN USE THAT POWER FOR GOOD.

PRETEEN

HEAR
FROM GOD

WEEK 4



People have tamed all kinds of wild animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures. And they still tame them. But no one can tame the tongue, (JAMES 3:7-8A, NIRV).

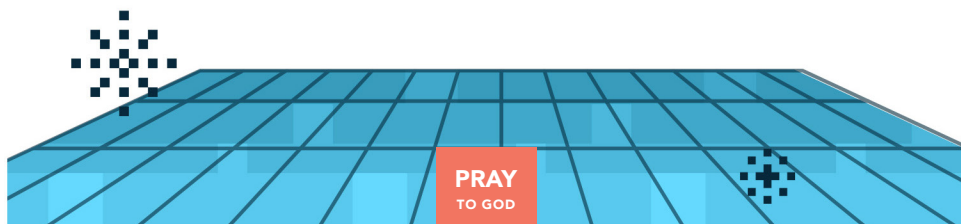
Have you ever seen the difference it makes to tame an animal? With a little bit of work (okay, sometimes a lot of work), the same puppy that was running circles and using the bathroom anywhere he pleased, can “sit” on command and even let you know when it’s time to go outside to use the bathroom.

It takes work to tame our tongues too, but when we do, we will experience the freedom that comes with self-control. We won’t hurt our relationships or make a mess of things when we have self-control with our words.

HOW CAN WE DO THAT?

Even the Bible says “no one can tame the tongue.” Yes, that’s true. But with the Holy Spirit, we can be powered up to do things that don’t come naturally.

So when you feel the urge to say something you shouldn’t say, talk to God instead. And go ahead and start now. Each day, start your day asking God for self-control. Throughout the day, check back in and ask Him to give you the strength to control your tongue.



EVERYONE HAS TROUBLE AT SOME POINT CONTROLLING THEIR TONGUE.

- o For some, it’s gossip—it seems impossible to resist talking to your friends about other people behind their backs.
- o For others, it’s bad or hurtful words that they struggle to contain.
- o And sometimes it’s not so much the words someone uses, but the way they say (or shout) them.

It can help to talk to someone else and find you’re not alone. Today, find a friend, a sibling, or even your mom or dad and have a quick chat about what you find the hardest to control when it comes to your tongue.

Ask them what’s hard for them too, and then pick a challenge for each of you. Maybe it’s to not raise your voice for the rest of the week, or to go an entire day without saying anything negative about someone else.

Arrange a time to check back in to see if you completed the challenge, and also give each other permission to call each other out if you see that you’re losing control. And most importantly, take a minute to pray together and ask God for the strength to have self-control.

