


HILLSIDE STUDENTS


Taming the Tongue

CONNECT

 Set out snacks! Add new students to the groups app! Take Attendance!

 Play **SHERLOCK!** Everyone groups together. Each round, the player who is the detective will take 30 seconds to look at the group then leave the area. While they're gone, a change will take place (ex: two people change places, everyone unties their shoes). After the change, the detective comes back in and attempts to guess the change.

WATCH

 **Set up Discussion:** We all struggle to control what we say. When we talk bad about others, lash out in anger toward our parents, or use language we shouldn't, our relationships suffer. What would change in your life if you watched your words? Let's look at what Scripture tells us about taming the tongue.

 **Pre-Video Question:** Have your group answer one or both questions below!

- Would you rather have the power to control the weather, but only within a 10-foot radius, or the power to control time, but only for 5 minutes at a time?
- If you could live on the set of a TV show or movie, which one would it be and why?

Split up into smaller groups and navigate the discussion below:

- What stood out to you from the video?
- **Read James 3:3-8.** Do you agree that it is hard to control what we say? Why or why not?
- Are there specific moments when it's more challenging to speak in a Christ-like way?
- **Read James 3:9-12.** What is the problem with trying to praise God while continuing to say hurtful things to (or about) others?
- **Read Luke 6:45.** Based on your words, what would the people around you say is stored in your heart? What are the things you want to store up in your heart?
- **Quiet Reflection:** Read Psalm 51:10 to your group. Have them answer these questions to themselves. (They can write in their notes app, on a notecard, or just think about it...they are NOT expected to share aloud!)
 - Is there anything currently stored up in your heart that you want to get rid of?
 - Is there anyone you need to apologize to or make things right with for how your words have hurt them?
- **Prayer:** End group by praying Psalm 19:14 over your students!

READ + DISCUSS

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We know that words matter, because they can build up or break down. However, what comes out of our mouth starts in our hearts. In Luke 6:45, Jesus said, *"A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of."*

One of the most important decisions we make is what we put in our hearts, because it is what fills our minds and overflows into our words and actions. And our hearts are filled by our surroundings. The music we listen to, the shows and movies we watch, the books we read - everything we take in affects our hearts, and our words follow.

We can choose to fill our hearts and surround ourselves with things of this world, or we can choose to fill our hearts with the things of Christ. Are we speaking in a Christlike-manner or in a way that reflects the world?

Leaders - this week, share how you have seen a difference in your words/life when you were surrounded by poor influences vs Christ-centered truth. Take time to walk through Psalm 51:10 with your students and reflect through a quiet time of prayer.

Read James 3:3-8 *When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. ⁴ 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. ⁵ 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. ⁶ 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. ⁷ All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, ⁸ but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.*

Read James 3:9-12 *With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. ¹⁰ Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. ¹¹ Can both fresh water and saltwater flow from the same spring? ¹² My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.*

Read Luke 6:45 *A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.*

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

Read Psalm 19:14 *May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.*