

# Is Your Tongue Tied?

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James 3, let's go there this evening. James 3 as we continue through this book on Sunday night, a wonderful wonderful practical book. James the pastor of a local church is getting down to brass tacks down to where the rubber meets the road and just dealing with stuff in his church member's lives. Um, have you ever heard the phrase "I'm fed up"? Does that ever come across your lips or maybe your parent's lips or whoever lips? "I'm fed up." That's what I sense James, James rather is feeling as we get to what is our chapter 3 as he's dealing with some issues among the body there and I think he's saying, "I'm fed up with this and I'm gonna call this what it is and deal with this in the church and see if I can't get this straightened out."

Um, let's look at it together. James 3, beginning in verse 1. By the way, the words in that song, "Finding a settled rest," don't, don't miss those things. A settled rest, and I may be anxious at times and I may fret at times, but thank God there's an anchor in our souls, we have found in Christ a settled rest.

Just Pam and I have been dealing with, um, friends and others who have some challenges, illnesses, deaths, and, um, I thought about my own death this afternoon. Have you ever done that? You think you're gonna live forever? And I thought, um, I hope, by the way, I've said this before but if, if, if I'm sick and close to going home, fill my room with Scripture. Give me the word. I want the word of God in those moments. But I thought hopefully in grace I'll have the faith to wonder over and rest in the fact that I have found higher pleasures, greater delights in the one to whom I'm about to go to. So I'm actually leaving nothing but gaining everything. Settled rest. Boy, I want to walk in that more faithfully, don't you?

James 3:1, James writes to his church, a hurting church, a suffering church but they're still able to sin a lot.

1 Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment. 2 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. 3 Now if we put the bits into the horses' mouths so that they will obey us, we direct their entire body as well. 4 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. 5 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! 6 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. 7 For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. 8 But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison. 9 With it we bless our Father and God, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; 10 from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way. 11 Does a fountain send out from the same opening both fresh and bitter water? 12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, produce olives, or a vine produce figs? Nor can salt water produce fresh.

Now almost you just want to read that and meditate for a while and go home. I mean, that's strong, someone said that's strong as dog's breath. It's strong. I mean, it just penetrates and it's very very humbling.

Now James has already written about, ah, a number of things to his people concerning Christian maturity and he's, first of all, started off talking to them about these terrible trials they were going through and I think from a physical viewpoint, you and I cannot relate to that at all. Ah, losing your job because of your faith. Martyrdom because of your faith. Being scattered around the known region, ah, by your enemies just because of your faith. These people were suffering and James says, "Consider it all joy when you encounter various trials." Are, are you facing a trial? A difficulty? Something that brings anguish to your soul? Hurt? Disappointment? Anxiety? Then you must consider it all joy. You've got to determine God ordered this for my good and for his glory. Now you don't always see it right off but he did.

So he's basically saying, "That's the mature way to grasp this." And by the way, I, in my experience that's something of a process to I get, to get to that point, rather, where I say, "I can embrace this." Now don't justify the wickedness that's been done or the maliciousness that's been done, whatever's been done that hurts, but "I can consider it all joy because my God knows what He's doing." He said, "That, that marks when you're reaching maturity when you can see God's hand behind those things."

He's talked to them about, um, ah, being patient in trials and overcoming those things. Um, there's one other one here. Oh, practicing truth, of course, chapter 2. Then we come to chapter 3 and then he gets to this thing of showing your maturity by having some discipline in your speech and so I call, I, I entitled this "Is Your Tongue Tied?" Is your tongue tied? Is it tied to Christ? Is your tongue tied to selflessness? Is your tongue tied to wisdom where you don't speak just out of your thoughts, you speak saying, "What's God up to here before I respond? What's God doing here before I just give my spouting off of what I think?" Are you tied, is your tongue tied to God's glory? Does this glorify God? Is your tongue tied to Christian love? Sometimes folks assume that Christian speech is only

sweet and meek and, and, and, and kind. Well, no, sometimes Christian love has reproof, rebuke and correction in it. Is your tongue tied to Christian love?

Think about what a privilege the tongue is. With your tongue you can praise God, you can preach the word, you can lead the lost to faith in Christ. Also you can tell a lie and hurt one's reputation or break someone's heart. What a power. I mean, just in a moment the tongue can go from one to the other.

Let's talk first of all, I., about the power of the tongue in verses 1 through 5. The power of it. Boy, there's a lot we can say but to not pull out maybe everything that's there, we'll take five verses in this section and he begins there in verse 1, "Let not many of you become teachers," of course, teachers use their tongue, their speaking a lot. He says, "Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren," that's the second time, ah, he uses brethren, he uses it again in verse 12. So the context here, again, is local church life, my brothers and sisters in Christ and how we correspond in intercourse one to another in verbiage. And he says, "Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment." Now I think, first of all, the, the, the teacher here is the office of teaching, the elder of the church, and one scholar suggests that since, um, ah, James has already pointed out that salvation is by grace through faith and it's not of works, that a lot of people were thinking, "Well, then I don't have to have any kind of, um, qualification. I can just say, 'I'm a teacher. I ought to have that authority and that office.'" And so many people were popping up thinking they could be teachers but he says, "Be careful. Teachers will incur a stricter judgment."

Now while I believe he's primarily referring to the office of elder in the church, the office of teacher in the church, I believe that does trickle down to you folks and many of you in here tonight are Sunday school teachers or small group teachers. You will incur a stricter judgment and that's why I, I would like to remind you on this Sunday evening that your Sunday school class is not your kingdom to do with as you please. Your Sunday school class, your small group is not your little church. You're an extension of the overall teaching ministry of the preaching pastor and the church elders and that's why I would strongly advise you to always, and I don't know of anyone who doesn't do this, but always stay within the outline and the teaching that we give you to teach. Why? Because there is a responsibility to that that you will give an account for. If you stay under your elders, you're covered by their authority. If you get out on your own, I think God may indeed judge you as if you were an elder because you took that place, in a sense, by force. Stay under the authority of your church leaders.

Ah, it's very very very common in churches today for small group leaders just to study whatever they want to study. I think that is an outlandishly foolish notion. How can I as a pastor give an account to God for the people in my church when I don't even know what they're studying? I don't even know what they're learning? There needs to be some systematic structure and style or purpose to why we study what we study, when we study, so I'll know what you have learned and what you haven't learned, what you have been exposed to, what you haven't been exposed to.

So those of us who feel called into Gospel ministry shouldn't be flippant about it or careless about it. There is a strict and awesome judgment for those who stand and teach. The teacher is in a position to do much good or great evil and one needs to remember, if you desire the perceived prestige or power of the office of teacher in the church, you must also bear the responsibility and the accountability before God of being a teacher in the church. I have, ah, earlier in my ministry ran into many a person who wanted the authority in the church but they didn't want to take responsibility before God for the church or they hadn't thought it through.

So first of all, in using our words he said, "Understand the power of this thing. You need to be careful desiring the office of pastor/teacher in the church and in teaching in general." Now look at verse 2, "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." The point he's saying is, is that the most difficult member to keep in line is the tongue, the speech, and I think James's point, and I know this same, the root word of this word "perfect" here is used earlier as a, in a, in a statement that means "come to maturity," and maybe that's what James means here. If you're able to have discipline over your tongue, spiritually speaking, you, you, you're walking in a very mature state. Or maybe he means it, ah, hypothetically, if you can control your tongue, which nobody can really do, then you are absolutely perfect because it's all downhill from there. If you can keep that rascal under control, everything else is easy. The power in it, what we're talking about here.

Then, ah, it's neat when the Bible gives you the illustrations so you don't have to think them up yourself. James gives us the illustrations. Verse 3, "Now if we put the bits into the horses' mouths so that they will obey us, we direct their entire body as well." Then he uses a rudder on the ship, verse 4, "Look at the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, they are still directed by a very small rudder wherever the inclination of the pilot desires." So the bit and the rudder are small but they have a great effect and he said compared to your brain, your tongue's small, compared to your feet or your hands, your tongue is small, but though it's small, it's very powerful. Just like the rudder on a ship, it may be a massive ship and comparatively speaking the rudder's a small part but it directs the path of the ship. It has great power. A horse is mighty but you can put one bit into its mouth and the way that bit works in pressure on the hollow horse's mouth, you can control that great horse. Small but a powerful element of our bodies.

No wonder the psalmist said and, O God, makes this our prayer, Psalm 141:3-4, "Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth." I think what the psalmist is saying is, "I'm no match for my mouth. God, You're gonna have to do something here. Help me with my own mouth." "Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my lips. Do not incline my heart to any evil thing, To practice deeds of wickedness With men who do iniquity; And do not let me eat of their delicacies." So we come to that truth that I want to, well, I'm constantly emphasizing to us, that the heart is the key. Dr. Adrian Rogers used to say that the heart of the human problem is the problem of the human heart. So true. The heart's the key. Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.

The psalmist is basically saying, "O God, help me to have a right heart and then my speech should flow out of that."

When Jesus is Lord of the heart, he's Lord of the lips also and the power to direct is in the tongue and it has power that effects the lives of others. For example, if that horse isn't controlled by that bit, he can trample those around him. If a ship doesn't have an effective rudder, it can run aground or, or, or, or come into some other calamity and destroy many lives and so it is with our tongues. The power there, it's small but it's so powerful.

Now, now you may think with the vile, evil, call calloused slander and maliciousness that we see on social media today and through media today, you, you, you may think how did man get so vile and corrupt and evil? He's always been that way, we just have social media now to splash it everywhere. Used to we only could listen to a few crazy people, now every crazy person is spewing stuff out there. You need to study some history. You think, "Well, our political campaigns are so wicked and mean and awful of the lies, all the stuff." Look at some of the ancient, ah, ancient, or the campaigns of history in early America, they were vicious. No, the heart hasn't gotten any different, it's just that now we're exposing it a whole lot more and it is ugly and it proves the point here that this tongue is a little thing but it is powerful. Think about it, the tongue of the judge says guilty and everything changes. The tongue of the President declares war and everything changes. The power of the tongue.

Look at verse 5, "So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things." This tongue can speak and speak great things that it has no, ah, capacity to control or really to carry out, but this thing of a, of a fire comes up in the text, um, the last part of verse 5, "See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire!" Um, just researched fires and, ah, there was a fire in London in 1666, in old Londond, 1666. A fire started, it lasted five days just raging out of control in downtown London, 13,200 homes were lost, 87 churches were destroyed, and historians say that 70,000 of the 80,000 citizens of London were left homeless. Why? Because one baker was a little careless making his bread that morning. Just a little flame that he didn't watch carefully and almost destroyed, almost completely destroyed one of the greatest cities of that day in the world. And I know we've had little songs about it as children, the fire in Chicago, what, when was that? In 1871, and the, the fable is because we don't know for certain, but the, the rumor was that Miss O'Leary was milking her cow in a shed and the cow kicked over the lantern. Now you've got the little song in your mind, don't you? She kicked over, the cow kicked over just a little flame, probably a two inch flame on a lantern, fell into the hay, started the fire and all of Chicago soon was in a blaze. As it spread, 100,000 people were left homeless, 12,500 buildings were destroyed, 300 people died, and in that day's calculation it cost \$400 million dollars in damages from one little flame.

That's why the text says the tongue is like a flame. It can cause super-great damage. I think what happens as we're kind of like the psalmist in Psalm 39:3 where he says, "My heart was hot within me, While I was musing the fire burned; Then I spoke with my tongue." That's when you could, should be quiet. Don't speak when you're angry. Don't

speak when you're hurt. Don't speak while the fire's burning within you. You're very very able to start something that can destroy and damage so many and hurt so badly.

Proverbs 17:27 and 29 reminds us, "He who restrains his words has knowledge, And he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding. And he who is slow to anger has great understanding but he who is quick tempered, exalts folly." Somebody said hot heads and hot hearts lead to burning words that we later regret. "Well, I'll tell them." Don't be a fool. When you tell, now look, you may be dealing with a fool but Proverbs says don't even give an answer to the fool, don't give him the answer he's looking for, don't get on his level. Hold your words in.

I, I'm just wondering, does this convict you? It does me because if I was able to completely control my tongue, I'd be a perfect man but I'm gonna tell you what, James is writing to the brethren and what he's saying among the regenerate family of called out assembled ones, the local church, you guys can do better than the world does. You, your patterns should not be like the world's pattern. You don't seek revenge like the world seeks revenge. You see God behind things that happens to you. You don't destroy with the tongue because you're defending yourself. The child of God and the church of Jesus Christ is better than that and can I say a, a, a, from my perspective a very grateful word to you? We just don't have a lot of that around here. I, I don't see people, ah, getting full of themselves over power and control or wanting their way in the church and spouting this off and spouting that. But you just don't, I'm I'm sure we do stuff like that but I don't see it. I don't and I'm very grateful that, um, I see a, a good level of discipline in the body about, "I'm not gonna hurt the body of Christ over these things. I'm gonna hold my tongue."

Never underestimate the power of the tongue. I found this some time ago but on April 22 in 1855, a Sunday school teacher named Edward Kimble went to the Holston's Shoe Store in Boston because there was a boy in his Sunday school class he was burdened for and that boy's name was Dwight L. Moody, and there that, thank God for faithful Sunday school teachers who try to reach their boys and girls for the Gospel. There he pleaded with D. L. Moody to come to Christ. D. L. Moody comes to faith in Christ and we may not agree with everything about Moody's methods but God did use Moody to win countless thousands to Christ, millions and millions and millions sat under his preaching.

He and Charles Haddon Spurgeon were, were quite close friends. There's a story just to show you the humanity of guys, this is not off my, I'm not gonna share that story. I'm going somewhere else.

Number, um, number 2. It didn't have anything to do with the tongue. Well, actually it did. Let me tell it to you. It does have something to do with the tongue. D. L. Moody was a big barrel-chested beefy guy across the middle and D. L. Moody, the story goes, went into Charles Haddon Spurgeon, now Spurgeon's the greatest Baptist preacher as far as popularity and his writings had the greatest circulation of any preacher of all time, I guess you would say, as far as circulation goes, and Moody's this world-renowned evangelist and Moody walks into Spurgeon's office and Spurgeon's smoking a cigar. That didn't

quite have the, ah, ah, taboo that we have on them today, but it still wasn't, well, anyway, he's smoking a cigar and Moody walks in and points at his cigar and says, "Spurgeon, that's sin!" And Spurgeon pointed at D. L. Moody's belly and said, "Yeah, and that's sin!" Their words. That's how it connects to this sermon. Now these were men who loved each other and they were having some fun together, but nevertheless the word, the tongue is powerful.

Secondly, the perversity of the tongue. Notice the perversity of the tongue, verses 6 through 8 here. I use perversity because perverse means self-willed and he uses the illustration of beasts and that's the way beasts are. Beasts don't think about anything but fulfilling their own self-desire and he says the tongue has a tendency to be like that. Um, if you will, um, look at verse 6, "And the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity." What a statement. What a strong weighty, the very world of iniquity. The idea is the world of evil. Stafford is in a nursing home today, by the way, some of you remember Brother Bill, a dear friend of ours over many years but, um, Bill Stafford said he was preaching on, on gossiping and on the tongue and a lady came up in his church who was well-known for her gossip and she said, "Brother Bill, I want to lay this tongue on the altar." He said, "Honey, you'll have to fold it up several times to get it on there, it's so big." It's just got the world of iniquity in it and you know, and, and, and I'm not promoting any vice or any sin but sometimes some sweet little lady in the church will get upset because a guy chews tobacco, or maybe he's battling smoking a cigarette here and there or maybe he was in the backyard working on the lawnmower, he let's a word fly that he shouldn't let fly, I'm not condoning any of that, by the way, but here's what I'm gonna say: that probably in the eyes of God is a tiny thing compared to a sweet little church lady that runs her tongue in gossip almost all the time. It has a perversity in it. The idea is it's killing, it's destroying as opportunity allows it. It has the capacity to be totally self-willed.

Notice how he continues and, and, and James just lays it on here, verse 6 again, "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." It sets itself up among the members of one's anatomy corrupting, spotting, soiling, staining, polluting the entire body. Verse 6 says it, "sets on fire the course of our life." Scholars say this has a picture of a wheel and it's like the center of the wheel has the little fire in it but as the wheel spins, the fire, ah, spreads and consumes the entire wheel. He said that's the way the tongue is, it's got a capacity just to set everything on fire, spread to everything its perversity. The end of verse 6, he said, that's not enough, I want you to really get my point. I think of James again, this local church pastor saying, "I'm fed up with this stuff." Last phrase of verse 6, "and is set on fire by hell." He said, "One thing I want you to realize is your tongue is just the wick, what's flowing out of it comes from the center of hell. I mean, it comes from the depths of hell and perversity." That is a powerful powerful state. If, if, if you ever one who has not come to see your need of Christ, if this doesn't convict you to know that if you don't have a mighty miraculous salvation, you're lost forever, nothing will because you can see the weightiness of our fallenness and sinfulness through our tongues.

Verse 7, he says, "For every species of beasts and birds, of reptiles and creatures of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. But no one can tame the tongue." It's unruly. It's staggering. It's reeling. It's uncontrollable. Now all of this is in the natural man. The child of God, of course, is the implication, the balance of biblical truth is that, that, that the regenerate man can begin a pattern of walking in control, he doesn't have to live as the victim of whatever his tongue wants to do.

Verse 8, he says, "But no one can tame the tongue; it is a restless evil," look at this phrase, "full of deadly poison." It's loaded with venom, the venom of hate, the venom of slander, the venom of malice, the venom of gossip. It's a poison. Being a poison, just a little poison sometimes can go a long long way, that concept of injecting a little poison in a conversation so that maybe that poison will spread and hurt the person we want to be hurt. An unruly tongue has no place in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ anymore than a ferocious beast does. I saw a man the other day and he'd killed a 2,700 pound Cape buffalo. There's no way we could let that thing loose in here. He could literally rip all of these pews up and kill everybody and get around. You wouldn't let that loose, well, James is saying, "Well, that's the way the tongue is if it's not controlled, it's like a vicious beast." Ricin is a poison. Scientists tell us you can take two or three grains of ricin, the size of grains of salt, and it'll kill you. Just two or three little tiny grains, barely big enough to see like salt and it will kill you. James says that's what the tongue can do. It is a such a poison, it is such a perverse thing.

Now notice the tongue's pollution verses 9 through 12. "With it we bless our Father, our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the likeness of God; from the same mouth come both blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be this way." He talks about water here, verse 11, the fountains, "Can a fountain send out both from the same opening fresh and bitter water?" Isn't it interesting that water can be most wonderfully refreshing. I've been trying to work outside off an on and we've had a little break but, my goodness, the heat and humidity, it's just amazing how much water I can drink and it is just wonderful when you're that hot. At the same time, water out of control is deadly and destructive. I read about the famous Jamestown flood of 1889, 2,200 people were killed and \$10 million in property were destroyed and that's in their dollars that day. That's the way the tongue is. Just like water that produces both fresh and salt water, the tongue that blesses God on Sunday morning and curses his brother in Christ on Monday is in bad need of adjustment. This is incongruous, it's inconsistent. It's like the forked tongue of a snake.

Proverbs 18:4 reminds us, "The words of a man's mouth are as deep waters; And the wellspring of wisdom as a flowing brook." Oh, what a blessing our tongues can be. Proverbs 10:11, "The mouth of the righteous man is a well of life." Proverbs 13:14, "The law of the wise is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death."

Now I think, don't lose the context here. He's talking about local church life together, that the children of God should not function this way. Now don't get unbalanced here. Some of the most vicious, scathing, public, cutting statements I've ever read are from the tongue of Jesus Christ. Read the Gospels. On one occasion Jesus was invited to a supper at the



home of a Pharisee. He was the honored guest. They fed him food and after the food was over, he just cut them to pieces over their wickedness and hypocrisy. Now two things here. First of all, you and I aren't Jesus so be careful with your reproofs and rebukes. But secondly, sometimes if it's for the glory of God and out of love for the person, there needs to be some sharp things said.

I was in a meeting many many years ago with a, a church leader who was obviously not being truthful and it was the potential of damaging the church was great, and I said, "Somebody here is lying and I want to pray," and in my prayer I asked God to kill them if they didn't get honest about it. I didn't finish my prayer before that person confessed to their sin. Never done that before, never done that since. Sometimes there's a place for strongly dealing with something but you'd better make sure it's for the glory of God and for the good of the person. Most of the time it's better to have some grace. Sometimes you're a parent, other situations there needs to be some firm words and those come, can come from a loving and Spirit-filled heart.

Well, 1 John 10:3 says, "By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious. Anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God nor the one who does not love his brother." And then 1 John 4:20-21, "If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar," that's pretty strong, isn't it, strong words, but important and accurate words. "For the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also." Here's the point: be careful with your tongue because you should now have the changed regenerate heart that has a deep deep love for others who are God's children.

Pain caused by the tongue can be severe. Have you ever been the subject of false gossip? Of slander? Or someone who took your words and spun them out of context? It is very painful. It's very difficult. It's like a hot dagger. Think of the times in our marriages we speak words that are way too hurtful. Sometimes getting frustrated with our children, we can say words that are far too hurtful. Be careful. It's almost impossible to get them back but, once again, the point is not the word itself, it's the heart the word comes from.

The heart of the problem is the problem of the heart and I think we get a little insight here again like we saw up in verse 3, he calls them my brethren and then in verse 12 he said, "Can a fig tree, my brethren," in other words, he's saying, "You as Christians ought to have more consistency here. We're the body of Christ. We deal with each other differently." Now what does the Bible say? Even with it comes to situation where you might have a rightful lawsuit with a brother, he says don't go to, to secular courts and settle that, rather be defrauded than to take it into public that you have a conflict and an outward problem with a brother in Christ. Now I understand you and I live in a culture today where everybody in the South calls themselves a brother in Christ and they're not. That's different, but I'm talking about folks within the same local church.

Proverbs 4:23 reminds us, "Keep thou heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life," and if we fill our heart with God's word and yield to the Holy Spirit, he can use

us to be a fountain of delight to others. In the last few years, I've thought more about what I want to be like when I grow old but when you're almost 60, you're getting old. You know, they, they told a 55 year old man one time, "Well, how does it feel to be middle-aged?" He said, "Middle-aged, how many 110 year old men do you know?" And it's beyond middle. But I'm really, you pray for me, I'm really working on it that I will grow old sweet and kind, tender-hearted. Well now, listen, if something needs to be justly condemned, I want to be a man and deal with it. What did they say Abraham Lincoln was? He was steel velvet. I want to be that kind of person.

I don't know where I found this, 12 words you can start using more than could transform your life. You want to hear the 12 words? Please, thank you, I'm sorry, I love you, I'm praying for you. What, boy, a word spoken in the right moment can have powerful help to a brother or sister in Christ.

So this evening is your tongue tied? Is your tongue tied to Christ? Is your tongue tied to selflessness? Is your tongue tied to wisdom? What's God doing here? You don't have to defend yourself, God's doing something. Is your tongue tied to God's glory? Is your tongue tied to Christian love? Is your tongue tied to the word of God? Is your tongue tied to the Holy Spirit? If it is, then it is a great power for good. It needs to be because if not, it's a powerful, perverse, polluting, poisonous, spreading destroyer everywhere it goes.

Look, while the major context here is the body of Christ, Christians everywhere should talk differently than the world. There should be a marked difference. And do you know what I think one of the most powerful things in the world is? Is when you blow it and you go back maybe in that secular place of work, maybe with kids at school, and you say, "You know, I, I shouldn't have said that and I'm a Christian and I'm convicted that that was wrong. Will you forgive me?" That's sometimes one of the most powerful things you can do.

Well, this is very convicting to me. What does the Bible say? Where there is a lot of words or many words, transgression is unavoidable. Well, my work is to use words and you, you, you yourself could bear witness that I've had to come to this pulpit and ask forgiveness for saying things that either they didn't come out right or they came out the way I meant to but it was still wrong. Is your tongue tied?