

# **The World's Smallest but Largest Troublemaker**

James 3:1-12

# 1. Power to Direct: The Bit and Rudder (3:1–4)

*Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. <sup>2</sup> We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.*

*<sup>3</sup> When we put **bits** into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. <sup>4</sup> 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.*

## 2. Power to Destroy: the Fire and Animal (3:5–8)

<sup>5</sup> 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. <sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> All kinds of **animals**, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, <sup>8</sup> but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

## **Power to Delight: The Fountain and Tree (3:9–12)**

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

“Please”

“Thank You”

“I’m sorry”

“I love you”

- God can use our tongues to direct others into the way of life and delight them in the trials of life
- The tongue is a little member, but it has great power.
- Give God your tongue and your heart each day and ask Him to use you to be a blessing to others.