

Introduction of the Series:

“Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.”

~Psalm 19:24

“The tongue is the spiritual thermometer of the human heart.”

~John MacArthur

The heart-tongue relationship revealed in Scripture:

- Psalm 19:24 (Above)
- Luke 6:45
- Proverbs 15:14
- Proverbs 15:28
- Psalm 17:3
- Romans 10:9

THE POWER OF THE TONGUE

(James 3:1-12)

Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit. ~Proverbs 18:21

1) **The tongue has the power to condemn.** (James 3:1-2)

- You- Cf. Romans 10:8-10
- Others Cf. Mark 9:42

2) **The tongue has the power to control** (3:2-4)

“If we want to focus our Christian life on one thing, if you and I want to get our act together, if I want to bring my whole spiritual life in control, I should work on... the tongue.” –John MacArthur

With words wars are started, murders are incited, lives are ruined, days are dampened, peace is reached, hopes are dashed, lives are restored.

3) **The tongue has the power to consume** (3:5-8)

- Chicago City Fire-small spark, big damage
- Is set on fire by *hell- Gehenna*- burning trash site; used for hell
- Valuable words: “I’m sorry, I was wrong, I appreciate you.”
- Venomous words: “I hate you, Did you hear what he did...”
- Vindictive words: “I’m just joking” -Proverbs 26:18-19

4) **The tongue has the power to confuse** (3:9-12)

- Confuses self: An untamed tongue on a believer leads to doubt.
- Confuses others

Salt + Fresh = Salt perceived
Gospel + Garbage = Garbage perceived

You don't dirty the gospel, it is pure no matter what. But you do cloud the perception of others in how they see it.

The following story is found in *The Life You Have Always Wanted*, by John Ortberg. It is not verbatim, but close.

Clifton Fadiman tells a wonderful story about Charles Steinneck, a genius of an electrical engineer for GE in the early part of the 20th century. On one occasion after his retirement, when the other engineers around GE were baffled by the breakdown of a complex machine they finally asked Steinneck to come back to see if he could pinpoint the problem. Steinneck spent several minutes walking around the machine, then took a piece of chalk and made an X-mark on one particular piece of the machine. He told them to open it up, and there would lay the problem. To their amazement, when the engineers disassembled the machine, the X rested over the precise location of the problem. A few days later they received the bill from Steinneck for \$10,000. Shocked at the outlandish amount, they sent a request for the bill to be itemized for their understanding. They received back the following itemized billing:

\$1- Chalk marked X
\$9,999- Knowing where to put it.

The truth concerning the tongue:

*"But no **man** can tame the tongue..."* ~James 3:8a

The hope for the tongue: (see Problem and Proverbs messages also)

*"... with **God** all things are possible."* ~Matt. 19:26b