

SERMON NOTES

“Washing your mouth out with hope” | Pastor Matthew Ruttan October 18, 2020 – Westminster Church, Barrie – Live Stream

This sermon is Part 5 of a teaching series on the book of James called “Down-To-Earth.” Today we explore James 3:1-12. Make sure to have your Bible with you. Don’t be afraid to take notes of insights you have about the text.

1. A childhood expression is “Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me.” Given the power of words, Pastor Ruttan suggested a slight alteration to that expression that may be more accurate: “Sticks and stones may break my bones but words may _____ hurt me.”

2. James 3:3-4 says: “When we put _____ into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small _____ wherever the pilot wants to go.”

3. Verses 5 and 6 say: “Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small _____. The tongue also is a fire, a world of _____ 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.

4. Looking at verses 9 and 10, why does James think it’s not right for us to curse other people?

5. Some of you will have had the experience of getting your mouth washed out with soap. What is this symbolic act intended to teach?

6. The tongue is the _____ muscle in your body.

7. What James says about spoken words applies to _____ words.

8. Pastor Ruttan talked about knowing specifically how to use—and not use—words. He offered biblical examples of each. List a few of the examples you think are most important:

9. Since our words flow out from inside of us, why is it important that we work on our hearts?

10. Dietrich Bonhoeffer said: “The child learns to speak because his father speaks to him. He learns the speech of his father.” Why did Pastor Ruttan use this quote?