



My Big Fat Mouth Sticks and Stones

#nmpmybigfatmouth

Week 2

2 of 4

January 13, 2019

Bottom Line: Words are helpful or hurtful—you choose.

Icebreaker: If you had your own talk show, what two living people would be your first guests, and what would you want them to talk about?

Key Verse: *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.* James 3:2

Words. We are all pretty much who we are today—for good or for evil—because of the words we have heard; the words we have chosen to believe. The words have raised or lowered your confidence. We all can especially remember the words that have hurt us, and a few words that built us. Words are the most powerful tools in our lives. How we receive them and how we use them is crucial.

James instructs us that our words are so powerful because they determine the direction of life. We know that is true. The tone of our day can change in a second, based on the words we hear. Those words can be so damaging or uplifting that they impact far past that day into the future. He says the words we speak and hear can destroy relationships. You can think of a relationship in your own life that has never been quite the same again after a specific conversation or remark. No wonder James says the tongue is set on fire by hell! James also says my words show what's going on in my heart.

My big mouth is not a small thing to be ignored or excused. It can't be conquered or even controlled without absolute vigilance. Salvation doesn't take away the power of my words or their potential to destroy or damage my life. It does give me access to the power of God to help me succeed at guarding my heart and my mouth as I work with God. It gives me the ability to fill my heart with the attitudes and love of God so that when my "mouth speaks what the heart is full of" (Jesus, Luke 6:45), my words uplift and build. When I maintain control of my mouth, I avoid regret and move toward life, for myself and others.

THINK IT OVER >>>

What impacted you most from the message?

Did anyone ever try to teach you to believe when you were young that "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me"? How did it work for you?

Think a moment. Whose words weighed the most in your childhood? Whose weigh the most now? Who would say your words weigh the most in their life? Do you think they would say the impact is primarily building or damaging?

"You can do more damage with your words than with any other thing you have at your disposal." Agree/Disagree? Discuss.

"When we wound with our words, we say, 'I didn't mean it.' If you start a fire accidentally, you are still responsible for starting the fire." Discuss.

LOOK IT OVER <<<

The way to control the uncontrollable mouth is to . . .

- Recognize the power of words (life and death). What practical ways can you keep this in mind?
- Surrender your heart to God. You are already saved—what does this surrender entail?
- Confess and own your part in the damage done by words. How is confession to people, not just to God, a deterrent to repeated offenses?

David prayed for God to set a guard over his mouth (Psalm 141:3), and Solomon said we must guard our hearts because the heart determines the course of life (Proverbs 4:23). Jesus said that our mouths speak what our hearts are full of (Luke 6:45). Our hearts and mouths must both be guarded in order for life to go well. What is God's responsibility and what is mine?

NEXT STEPS

This week consider taking some next steps together as a group:

- 1) Recognize that your words are powerful.
- 2) Ask God to help you be quick to listen and slow to speak.
- 3) Don't explain or excuse, but own the fires you start.

EVALUATION/ACTION

Realizing and reaching your full potential in Christ

Bottom Line: Words are helpful or hurtful—you choose.

Rate yourself from 1 to 10 1 (never), 10 (always)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating?										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
Do you know someone who demonstrates this bottom line well? What do you admire about that person?										
What specific action can you put into practice to raise your rating?										
At the end of this week, reflect - where did you see the bottom line show up in your actions throughout the week?										

PRAYER

List group members and their prayer requests for this week:

DAILY STUDY

Want to dig deeper? Check out **The Daily** this week at newpointe.org/daily:

Monday: Ephesians 4:29

Tuesday: Matthew 15:11

Wednesday: Matthew 12:36

Thursday: James 1:26

Friday: Proverbs 15:1

Don't let the conversation stop here. Keep talking it over with others throughout the week.

(Don't forget to bring this paper to your next small group meeting)