

# T-H-I-N-K Before You Speak

Calvary Baptist Church

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Matthew 16:23; James 3:1-12 et. al.

## INTRODUCTION: (Ps. 52:2; 140:3)

In **Matthew 16:23**, Peter stands in front of Jesus. Peter, as always, had something to say. Jesus then said, "Get behind me, Satan." Satan wasn't standing there, at least not in the flesh. Peter was. But **Peter** had just used his mouth to say what the **Devil** wanted said. **Believers** can do that too!

## SIX IMAGES IN JAMES 3:1-12

#1 THE **BIT** IN THE HORSE'S MOUTH

#2 THE **RUDDER** ON A SHIP

#3 A DESTRUCTIVE **FIRE**

#4 A DANGEROUS, WILD **BEAST**

#5 A **FOUNTAIN** OF LIFE OR DEATH

#6 A **FRUIT** TREE

- What James is telling us is, don't go around claiming to be a fig tree if you keep dropping **persimmons** to the ground!

Using the acronym **THINK**, try to ask these 5 questions before you speak.

**T – True** (Ps. 15:2-4; Pr. 12:22; 20:19; 25:23; Jn. 7:24; Eph. 4:15)

**ILLUS:** If I counsel a couple, and listen to only one **side** and then make my judgment, that would not be very professional. In fact, it would show poor judgment and be downright **tacky**. I agree. And whenever anyone hears **half** the story, repeats it to others, gets them all worked up, without ever hearing the other **side** of the story, that's pretty **tacky**.

**NOTE:** I am responsible for what I **pass along** just the same as if I had originated it!

**QUOTE:** Chuck Swindoll recommends asking, "Can I quote you on that?"

**H – Helpful** (Pr. 16:28; Eph. 4:29)

Will your words help bring about a **solution** to a problem?

**I – Inspiring** (Pr. 12:18,25; 25:11; 1 Thes. 4:18; Col. 4:5-6)

Will your words **build up** someone?

**ILLUS:** Boy with the birthmark.

**N – Necessary** (Ps. 141:3; Pr. 10:19; 11:12-13; 13:3; Ecc. 3:7; 1 Tim. 5:13; James 1:19; Ps. 39:1)

Do we **have to say** anything at all?

**QUOTE:** There are men who pride themselves on their candor, and it degenerates into brutality. One such man said to John Wesley once, "Mr. Wesley, I pride myself in speaking my mind; that is my **talent**." "Well," said John Wesley, "the Lord wouldn't mind if you **buried** that! - *Griffith Thomas*

**K – Kind** (Ps. 12:3; Pr. 15:1; Rom. 3:13; Eph. 4:15)

Are your words based on a desire to **help**?

**QUOTE:** Someone has said that great minds discuss **ideas**, average minds discuss **events**, and small minds discuss **people**. The church that James is writing to was full of small-minded people who gossiped about each other and tore one another apart with their tongues. I wonder if we're a bit like that church today? Brian Bill

## CONCLUSION:

1. God does not look favorably upon the **gossip!** (Lev. 19:16)
2. An unchecked tongue may reveal an **unconverted** heart (Jam. 1:26)
3. A look into the mouth may reveal heart **disease!** (Mt. 12:34; 15:19)

**ILLUS:** Body Screenings.

4. God's **recorder** is running. (Mt. 12:36-37)
5. God will bring **secret** conversations into the light! (Mt. 10:26)
6. I can save myself a lot of **grief**. (Proverbs 21:23)
7. I want to **please** the Lord in everything. (Psalm 19:14)