WHAT IF I TOOK CONTROL OF MY WORDS?

What If – Explore the Possibilities – Part 4

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**James 3:2 (NIV)**   
We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check.

***James 3:1-12 Scripture Reading***

Our mouths get us into a lot of trouble. James talks more about the tongue than anybody else in the New Testament. Every chapter in the book of James says something about managing your mouth. *"We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check."* James says, if you can control your mouth, you're perfect. He's not talking about sinless. The word "perfection" in Greek literally means "mature, healthy". When you go to the doctor and say, “I'm not feeling well,” the first thing he says is, "Stick out your tongue." Your tongue reveals what's going on inside of you, not just physically but spiritually. James says that you've got to learn to manage your mouth. You've got to learn to tame your tongue. You've got to get your tongue under control. I was tempted to title this sermon "Don't Let Your Tongue Lick You."

**What Happens If You Don’t Control Your Words?**

* **Wrong Words Can Destroy Relationships**
* **Wrong Words Can Make A Bad Situation Worse**

**What Good Will Controlling Your Words Do?**

* **You’ll Become A Better Person**

**James 3:2 (NLT2)**   
Indeed, we all make many mistakes. For if we could control our tongues, we would be perfect and could also control ourselves in every other way.

**Luke 6:45 (NLT2)**   
A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. What you say flows from what is in your heart.

* **You’ll Build Others Up**

**Ephesians 4:29 (NIV)**   
Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

* **You’ll Give Glory To God**

**Psalm 63:3 (NIV)**   
Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you.

**HOW TO PUT IT INTO PRACTICE**

1. **Don’t Say Everything You Know**

**Proverbs 17:27 (NLT2)**   
A truly wise person uses few words; a person with understanding is even-tempered.

1. **Don’t Say Everything You Think**

**Proverbs 17:28 (NLT2)**   
Even fools are thought wise when they keep silent; with their mouths shut, they seem intelligent.

1. **Don’t Repeat Everything You Hear**

**Proverbs 16:28 (NLT2)**   
A troublemaker plants seeds of strife; gossip separates the best of friends.

**Proverbs 17:9 (NIV)**   
He who covers over an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.

This week try putting these three steps into practice. Don't say everything you know, don't say everything you think, don't repeat everything you hear. Do you know what this comes down to? Speaking less. The secret to taking control of your words is to use less of them. Proverbs says...

**Proverbs 10:19 (NIV)**   
When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise.