

HOME GROUP

Leader Guide



5 LIES OF THE DEVIL
SEPTEMBER 28, 2014
STICKS AND STONES



SHARE THE VISION (<10 minutes)

As you start your group time, please be sure to discuss the following important topics listed below. This is key to keeping OneLifers informed.

TEST DRIVE

Ready to become a OneLife Volunteer? Sign up for Test Drive, a volunteer interest meeting, on September 7th. For more information and to sign up, mark the “volunteer” box on your connection card!

FAMILY FOOTBALL DAY

The University of Tennessee has given us a chance to attend a football game together as a church! The game versus UT-Chattanooga is on October 11 and will cost OneLifers only \$21 per ticket! We will also have a free tailgate on campus that day before the game. Buy your tickets today in the Green Room or at onelifeknox.com/football.

ARE YOU READY TO BECOME A ONELIFE PARTNER?

If you would like to join OneLife Church and officially become one of our partners, come to one of our Partnership Classes. These classes are limited in size and will be led by Pastor Rodney. In these sessions you will learn more about the history, values, beliefs, and vision for OneLife Church and be given the opportunity to commit in an official capacity as one of our partners!

KEY SCRIPTURES FOR THE WEEK:

James 3:1-12 (NLT)

Dear brothers and sisters, not many of you should become teachers in the church, for we who teach will be judged more strictly. ² 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.

³ We can make a large horse go wherever we want by means of a small bit in its mouth. ⁴ And a small rudder makes a huge ship turn wherever the pilot chooses to go, even though the winds are strong. ⁵ In the same way, the tongue is a small thing that makes grand speeches.

But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire. ⁶ And among all the parts of the body, the tongue is a flame of fire. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself.

⁷ People can tame all kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and fish, ⁸ but no one can tame the tongue. It is restless and evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹ Sometimes it praises our Lord and Father, and sometimes it curses those who have been made in the image of God. ¹⁰ And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right! ¹¹ Does a spring of water bubble out with both fresh water and bitter water? ¹² Does a fig tree produce olives, or a grapevine produce figs? No, and you can't draw fresh water from a salty spring.

Romans 1:28-29 (NLT) ²⁸ Since they thought it foolish to acknowledge God, he abandoned them to their foolish thinking and let them do things that should never be done. ²⁹ Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness, sin, greed, hate, envy, murder, quarreling, deception, malicious behavior, and gossip.

Ephesians 4:29 (NLT) ²⁹ Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FROM HANDOUT (35 Minutes)

Jog Your Memory:

- The Lie: My words are no big deal; “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me”
- 4 Reasons that our tongue is a big deal:
 - We’re all going to be held accountable for our words
 - Our tongue has power
 - Our tongue is *humanly* untamable
 - The words that come out of your mouth reflect what’s in the heart
- People are watching/listening to you, what will they see/hear from you?

1. Think of a person in your life who has made a positive impact on you. How did they use their words? You can also think of examples like a public figure, a tv/movie character, etc. How did this positive influence impact your life?

Example from the sermon: Someone encouraged the young Rodney that he was going to become a “preacher” one day; an encouragement that he never forgot and eventually came true.

This question will help everyone in the group break the ice and begin to think about the concept of our words having weight. We’ll end up drilling down on this concept more throughout the discussion.

Words have the power to tear down or build up. When a person’s tongue is tamed by the Holy Spirit, you’ll begin to see words:

- Be “good and helpful?” (Ephesians 4:29)
- Be an “encouragement to those who hear them?” (Ephesians 4:29)
- Bring about “healing” instead of “cutting” (Proverbs 12:18)
- Turns away anger/wrath/conflict instead of inviting it (Proverbs 15:1)

As people discuss examples, help them connect the dots that words do indeed have power. Imagine how the holy spirit’s influence on our tongue will help our one life make a huge difference in our world!

2. James 3 talks about the tongue being untamed. What are some examples of an untamed tongue from these passages: Romans 1:28-29, Proverbs 12:18-19, Proverbs 18:18, Matthew 7:15, Jeremiah 9:23, Ephesians 4:29, and Philippians 2:14-15.

Listed below are some examples of an untamed tongue to help the group get started. Don’t just state these for the group, try to get some discussion going by asking different people in the group to look up the verses below and identify the

example. Then, ask them why each one is damaging to our relationship with Jesus and the mission he has given us.

- Gossip (Romans 1:28-29)
Remember from the sermon: how are Christians often guilty of this? "Prayer Requests"
- Lies (Proverbs 12:18-19)
- Starting/Repeating/Fueling Rumors (Proverbs 18:8).
- False Prophets; or, ideas about God that are opposite of scripture (Matthew 7:15)
- Bragging about ourselves (Jeremiah 9:23)
- Discouragement/belittling (Ephesians 4:29)
- Complaining (Philippians 2:14-15)

3. James 3:1-12 gives four examples of a small thing (something that seems like "no big deal") controlling or overpowering a big thing. What are they? How have you experienced this as the receiver of powerful words, good or bad? How have you experienced this as the speaker of powerful words? Have you ever said something that you regretted later, and why?

This question starts by giving an easy "Sunday School" question to get people talking (the four things from the passage: horse, ship, fire, wild animals). It then aims to get the group talking about how seemingly insignificant words have undeniable effects on both the speaker and the hearer! Our words have weight and power!

A good example of this is Paula Deen – her entire empire crumbled after a racial comment made 25 years earlier surfaced. It revealed what was in her heart at the time.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION OPPORTUNITY: Also, consider the fact that our words not only build up or tear down others around us, but it reveals what's in our heart. Have the group read this verse: "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." (Luke 6:45) Ask them why they believe this to be true? Why does what's on the inside come out of our mouth?

4. Our culture tells us to assert ourselves and say what's on our mind. We say things like: "Somebody had to tell her," and "It was good to get it off my chest," and "Maybe what I said will help him!" Instead of making excuses for saying something, how can we exercise restraint and allow God to tame our tongue? How does what we say impact our ability to live on mission?

At first, your group may come up with a number of really great pragmatic examples like "think before you speak" and "don't respond out of anger." Many of these may even be scriptural.

But, help the group realize that we cannot truly tame our tongue, we have to let the Holy Spirit do the taming. The answer to "how" we restrain our tongue is ultimately giving up complete control of our tongue – and our lives – to Jesus!

When it comes to living on mission, if people are always listening to us then our words dramatically impact our ability to make a difference in the lives of others. Does what they hear coming out of our mouths represent the Jesus we claim to follow?

END YOUR TIME PRAYING TOGETHER (10 Minutes)