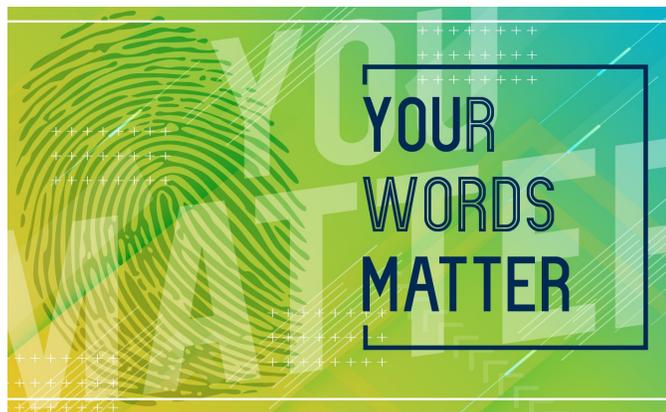


SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE
OF PEACE**
Called to Connect



Words

September 28 & 29, 2019

Our words are so powerful. When we use our words to build others up, bind up broken relationships, reflect honesty and integrity and calm conflict, people take notice. Especially because we live in a world that too often uses words to tear down. Because the words we speak come from the overflow of our heart, we need to ask the Spirit to continually shape our hearts to use our words to build others up.

SCRIPTURE TEXT: JAMES 3:3-12

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

At the time of James' writing Christianity was still a relatively new movement. The teachings of Jesus were still being circulated verbally and perhaps in some written fragments...compilations of the sayings of Jesus. The early Church was still struggling to understand the full meaning of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. There was no broad agreement about a number of issues in Christian community. There were no colleges or seminaries to prepare teachers. Qualified teachers of the Christian faith were rare, which meant that the door was open for all sorts of unqualified people to step into the role...not because they wanted to teach the truth but because they wanted the status. They wanted power. They wanted ego-gratification. This was a serious problem in the early Church, which is why James begins with a warning, "Not many of you should become teachers..."

What hope, then, do teachers have? What hope do any of us have? On our own, none. What we all need, is something beyond ourselves. We need something that James referred to back in chapter one, something that God freely and generously gives: wisdom. We need wisdom to control our tongues.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Tell a story of when someone's words profoundly impacted you positively or negatively.
- When have your words impacted someone else positively or negatively? What motivated you to say what you did?
- What makes it so difficult to "tame" your tongue?
- What helps you "tame" your tongue? What habits, disciplines, or practices?

APPLICATION: This week, take note of the words you speak to others. Did your words have a positive or negative impact? Consider one practice to implement to help "tame" your tongue.