

# Discussion Questions

## LifeGroups



Date: December 13, 2020  
Sermon Series: Ugly Christmas Sweater  
Sermon Title: Ugly Words  
Sermon Text: James 3:1-12, Matthew 12:36

### Bottom Line

The truth of God, in the hands of a life fully surrendered to God, is a powerful force in defeating the lies of the evil one.

### Scripture

James 3:1-12 (NLT)

*1 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.*

Matthew 12:36 (NLT)

*36 And I tell you this, you must give an account on judgment day for every idle word you speak.*

Proverbs 18:12 (NLT)

*12 The tongue can bring death or life; those who love to talk will reap the consequences.*

## Gratitude, Prayer and Accountability

What happened this past week that you are grateful for? What would you like to prayer for today? How did God work in your life since the last time we were together? What is He doing through you as it relates to your Adopt 7?

### Let's Start

When is the first time you remember being wounded by someone else's words? Why do you suppose the words that others speak about us have such power?

### Let's Talk

1. Read James 3:1-12. What are some of the principles that we learn from this passage? What does it teach us about those who would desire to be teachers in the church? What does it teach us about the power of the tongue? What does it teach us about humanity? What does it teach us about how we were created? Why do you suppose that God allowed those He created to be capable of inflicting such pain on others?
2. Read Matthew 12:36. Who said these words? What is the greater context of this teaching? How does this passage make you feel? How would taking these words to heart change the way that you live your life?
3. Read Proverbs 18:12. How have you seen words bring life to others? How have you seen words bring death to others? What do you suppose is meant by the words, "those who love to talk will reap the consequences?"
4. Pastor Dales said something very important in his sermon. He said, "You cannot love and reach people for Christ if you're verbally maligning them!" How has the church been guilty of this in the past? How can we do better?
5. Our culture has seen quite a bit of nasty rhetoric over the past year. So many terrible words have been exchanged politically on all sides. What used to be constructive criticism has turned into destructive denigration. How does Romans 12:19-20 tell us to handle conflict?
6. What do the following passages teach us about the use of our words:
  - Proverbs 12:18
  - Proverbs 20:19
  - Proverbs 16:28
  - Ephesians 4:29
  - Colossians 4:6
  - Colossians 3:9
  - Ephesians 4:15

## Let's Act

Pastor Dale ended his message with the acronym THINK. Dr. Alan Redpath used this acronym to keep his words in check, especially if he was dealing with anything controversial. Use this acronym as a reminder for you this week, before you speak.

T – Is it true?

H – Is it helpful?

I – Is it inspiring?

N – Is it necessary?

K – Is it kind?

## Notes:

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Last week, Wooddale Church's devotional, *I Said, "Yes!"* was added to the catalog of Bible App devotionals. If you are a user of the Bible App, consider using the 7-Day devotional, *I Said, "Yes!"* to grow in your walk with Christ this week. Invite others to take the devotional journey with you. You'll read the stories of seven people whose lives were changed by saying, "Yes!" to Jesus. You'll find it in the "Plans" section of The Bible App on your mobile device, or by visiting: <https://www.bible.com/reading-plans/23135-i-said-yes>.