

Help Prevent Forest Fires

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I. Introduction.

- A. There are many arenas of testing.
- B. One of the most important areas of testing involves the tongue. (Proverbs 21:23; 10:19; 18:21)
- C. Text: James 1:26.

II. The tongue is a fire.

- A. We are not to set ourselves above the law.
- B. Judging others is rebellion. (James 4:11-12)

III. Controlling the tongue.

- A. Prayer. (Psalm 141)
- B. Fill your heart with the word of God. (Luke 6:45-46)
- C. Re-evaluate one's own convictions.
 - 1. God is sovereign. The alternative to belief in God's sovereignty is bitterness. (Genesis 45:8; 50:20; Romans 8:28)
 - 2. The Bible is the Word of God and is adequate.
 - 3. The individual is valuable. (I Corinthians 12:18)
 - 4. God has called everyone to be a servant. The alternative is interpersonal conflict. (Mark 10:43-45)
- D. It is important to know where we are headed and not be discouraged by where we are at with our convictions. (Psalm 37:6, Exodus 14:14, Proverbs 8:9, Acts 24:16, Ephesians 4:29)

Application questions:

- 1. Why does James call the tongue a "fire?"

2. Which tip for controlling the tongue do you think is most helpful?

3. When have you seen the tongue destroy others? How have you learned to control the tongue through negative and positive experiences? Explain.
