

TWA: Talking or Typing While Angry

Guarding the Tongue, Choosing Life-Giving Words, and Letting the Holy Spirit
Lead

Pastor Mark Johnson

Friday, August 14, 2026

Program Summary

In this Friday edition of Mark & Friends, Pastor Mark Johnson continues the study of James 3 and the power of the tongue. He introduces a memorable warning—TWA, “Talking While Angry”—and the group expands it to include “Typing While Angry” in texts, emails, and social media. Using James’s picture of a tongue set on fire, Pastor Mark contrasts words driven by anger and the flesh with speech led by the Holy Spirit. The conversation calls believers to establish biblical rules for communication, listen carefully, refuse words designed to wound, receive the Spirit’s help in taming the tongue, and become life-givers whose words build rather than tear down.

Key Takeaways

- James 3 teaches that the tongue is small but powerful enough to steer a life, ignite destruction, bless God, or wound people made in His image.
- TWA—Talking While Angry—is spiritually dangerous because human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires.
- In today’s world, TWA also means Typing While Angry; texts, emails, and social-media posts can cause lasting damage when sent in frustration.
- Mature communication requires values and boundaries established before emotions rise, including words and threats that are simply off limits.
- Speech driven by anger tears down, while speech led by the Holy Spirit should edify, strengthen, and bring life.
- Reading the Bible merely to know information is not enough; Scripture must become the rules of the road for daily speech and relationships.
- James’s statement that no person can tame the tongue points me toward dependence on the Holy Spirit rather than self-control alone.
- Listening well means taking another person’s concern seriously rather than dismissing it as “a big deal out of nothing.”

- Coarse language is not the only destructive speech; gossip, slander, ridicule, belittling, intimidation, and disrespect can curse others without profanity.
- Because people bear God's image and every word matters before Him, I should judge my speech by the fruit it leaves behind: are people strengthened or wounded?

Scripture References

- James 3:2-12
- James 1:19-20
- Acts 2:1-11
- Matthew 12:35-37
- Galatians 5:22-23
- Ephesians 4:29
- Proverbs 15:1
- Proverbs 18:21
- Colossians 4:6
- Psalm 141:3

Quote of the Day

"I want to be a life giver, not a life taker. I want to water and build relationships, not tear them down."

Broadcast Notes

Pastor Mark opens with a personal story about a great-aunt who was killed by a drunk driver and asks why people still drive under the influence despite knowing the danger. He then applies the same logic to speech: believers should not be "talking while angry." Mark Burns extends the memorable TWA acronym to "typing while angry," noting how easily frustration can spill into email, texting, and social media. Pastor Mark urges listeners to establish values before conflict comes—especially in marriage and other close relationships—so certain words, threats, and deeply wounding subjects remain off limits. He contrasts the tongues of fire in Acts 2, where Spirit-empowered speech proclaimed God's glory and built hearers up, with James's warning about a tongue set on fire by hell, which rips and tears others down. A driver's-education handbook becomes an illustration of the difference between reading merely to pass a test and learning rules in order to live by them. The discussion closes by stressing dependence on the Holy Spirit, reflective listening, respect for people made in God's image, and the sobering truth that careless words matter before God.

♥■ Practical Applications

- Before an important conversation, ask whether I am calm enough to speak from wisdom rather than anger.
- If I write an angry email, text, or post, wait before sending it; reread it after my emotions settle and pray over what should actually be communicated.
- Establish a short list of words, threats, insults, or subjects that are off limits in my closest relationships because their purpose would only be to wound.
- When someone is upset with me, reflect back what I heard and ask whether I understand correctly before defending myself.
- Refuse to dismiss another person's pain by saying, "You're making a big deal out of nothing." If it matters deeply to them, treat it seriously.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to tame my tongue in the areas where willpower alone has repeatedly failed.
- Review my recent speech for gossip, ridicule, belittling, intimidation, or disrespect—not merely profanity.
- Use Galatians 5:22-23 as a speech test: do my words show love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control?
- Before correcting someone, remember that the person bears God's image and choose words that seek restoration rather than humiliation.
- Speak one specific, sincere, life-giving word today to someone who may be discouraged or overlooked.

Today's Challenge

Practice a 24-hour TWA rule. If I become angry or frustrated, I will not send the text, post the comment, make the phone call, or continue the argument until I have paused and prayed. Before speaking or sending anything, I will ask: Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it loving? Is it led by the Spirit? Will it build this person up or merely release my anger?

Closing Prayer

Father, set a guard over my mouth and teach me to use the tongue You have given me for life rather than destruction. When anger rises, help me be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry. Keep me from talking or typing while my emotions are driving me. Forgive me for words I have used to gossip, belittle, intimidate, ridicule, wound, or tear others down. I cannot tame my tongue in my own strength, so fill me with Your Holy Spirit and let His fruit shape my tone, timing, motives, and words. Teach me to listen carefully, honor people made in Your image, apologize quickly when I am wrong, and establish wise boundaries for what I will never say in anger. Make me a life-giver whose words bring grace, truth, healing, courage, and hope. In Jesus' name, Amen.

About Today's Speaker

Pastor Mark Johnson

Pastor of Calvary Church, Springfield

Pastor Mark Johnson serves at Calvary Church in Springfield and regularly joins the Mark & Friends studio audience for verse-by-verse Bible discussion. His teaching combines careful attention to Scripture with practical illustrations drawn from family, ministry, counseling, and everyday life. In this continuing study through James 3, Pastor Mark challenges believers to recognize the spiritual weight of their words, establish wise rules for communication, and depend on the Holy Spirit to shape not only what they say, but when, why, and how they say it.

Proofread Broadcast Transcript

Mark & Friends Welcome Song

*We're glad you're here, we're glad you're here,
Fellowship is sweeter, knowing you're near.
It's so good to see you, we hope that it's clear,
Everyone loves you, we're glad you're here.*

We're glad you're here. We're glad you're here. Fellowship is sweeter, knowing you're near.

It's so good to see you. We hope that it's clear. Everyone loves you.

Fellowship is sweeter, knowing you're near. It's so good to see you. We hope that it's clear.

Everyone loves you. A reading from James 3, 2 through 12. For we all stumble in many things.

If anyone does not stumble in the Word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and when we turn their whole body. Also look at ships.

Although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. Even so, the tongue is a little member and it boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles.

And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body and sets a fire on the course of nature. And it is set on fire by hell.

For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile or creature of the sea, is tamed and it has been tamed by mankind. But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men who have been made in the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceeding blessings and cursings, my brethren, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring set forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt and water and fresh.

That was the reading from James 3:2 through 12. And that was Robert Frazier reading that and sharing that with us all. In fact, I was encouraged when I saw his van in our parking lot because I thought, I think Robert's among

us.

He was a part of Testimony Tuesday a week or two back. So I listened to that on the archive program for a blessing as he shared some of his faith journey and life story. And before that, Stan prayed up the program.

So listening friend, you should be encouraged today because Stan prayed that you would glean some truth. You would recognize God's love for you. You would learn some points of application for your faith journey today as you walk to represent Jesus, to be God's ambassador and Jesus' faithful disciple.

That's our prayer for you. It's the prayer for all of us as we're gathering on this Friday to share from the book of James. I think it's been three weeks we've been talking about taming the tongue.

It's an area that I think affects all of us. And James hits it right on the mark by giving us practical insight and understanding of what we say and how we should say it. And so Pastor Mark Johnson continues with the study and says, I think there's more to still share about the tongue.

And we read today James chapter 3 verses 2 through 12. You know, Mark, as we think about this, there's one thing in our culture that I don't understand much. When I was a boy, about sixth grade, I had a great aunt.

She was at work, and about five o'clock in the evening she left work and was going to the church for choir practice. On the way to choir practice, there was a man who had been drinking all afternoon at a bar and ran a stop sign and hit her and she lost her life. I never understand when I read in the paper somebody who's been arrested driving under the influence.

Haven't we had enough accidents? Haven't we had enough deaths? Haven't we had enough information to know that we should not be driving under the influence of alcohol or any other state-altering drug or anything? But people do it. They must think that they're immune. They must think they haven't been drinking, they didn't drink enough.

They must have some thought in their mind to justify going and getting behind the wheel of that car and driving. Now, you say, what does that have to do with talking? I would say TWA. Talking while angry.

We should not be talking while angry. James says it in these passages earlier. He says, The anger of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

So think about this. How many extremely painful things have been said to you or have we said to others while we were angry? This is one of the rules of learning how to talk instead of just learning how to speak that we talked about last week. I'm going to be very, very careful as I feel my emotions stirring that I am not responding out of the anger instead of out of the righteousness of God.

The Bible says, Be slow to speak. Be quick to listen. And it goes on to say, For the anger of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

So every word is going to be judged, good or bad, reward or cost. Today, I really want to concentrate on this passage and ask, have you weighed out what is driving your life in regards to the words that you say? Are there well thought out values that drive your words? I have certain values. I love my wife.

I don't want to hurt her. I'm not going to say things that hurt her no matter what is going on or how much I don't understand what she did. She has that same value with me.

I have certain values in the church, certain values in society. There's plans. I put things in place because I don't want my tongue to get out of control.

I back up with it. I don't want it to get out. And when it does, I've got to go and apologize and get things right if that ever happens.

Hey, Mark, I took some more liberties with the TWA. I love it. Talking while angry.

How about typing while angry or frustrated? We talked about this or touched on it last week. It's the same thing. Like you said, would you say something in public that you would type in the same way we can fall into the trap of typing something when we're frustrated or angry and then regret it the next day or after it's been sent? And I've heard some people say sometimes when you're angry or upset and you write something, wait till the next day to send it.

Review it, and then if you're going to still send it, oftentimes you would have changed it. Well, especially if you're quitting your job, especially if you're yelling at your wife, especially if you're saying something where somebody has some power. Yes, all of that we should weigh out and say, okay, I am angry right now.

I need to be careful because this is a powerful thing that I have and it can have long-term results. So I don't want to be a person who is out of control. People quit their jobs.

They make threats. They use knowledge that inflicts pain. They draw lines in the sand that now they feel stuck in.

They set a course of life, and it's all really just the anger. It flows from a heart that is angry and it sets the tongue out of control, out of control. So we guard our tongues, and we say, no, I want to be a life giver, not a life taker.

I want to water and build relationships, not tear them down. So listen to what it says in James 3, 6b, and is itself set on fire by hell. I've become convinced as I've studied this verse in James.

He's not simply talking about hellfire, though there is that implication there. Let me give you an example. In the second chapter of Acts, tongues of fire rested upon the believers, and they spoke in tongues.

They spoke in tongues so that people from all around the world, from different nations, understood their speaking and their native language, and they proclaimed the glory of God and the good news of Jesus. On the day of Pentecost, they spoke in languages by the power of the Spirit of God in them. I speak today from my mind, from my thoughts, with the ability of man.

When we pray in the Spirit, He carries us away, and we pray through the Spirit, not through the mind. When the Spirit of God is on someone, they speak and pray out of the Spirit, led by the Spirit. And what does that do? It edifies yourself, it builds you, and it builds the hearer.

They are strengthened by it. When your tongue is set on fire by hell, you do the same thing, only instead of being led by the Spirit, you're being led by your anger. Instead of edifying and building, you are ripping and tearing.

In fact, we use those words to describe what we do. What do we say? I tore into him. I ripped him up one side and down the other.

I was so mad I was on fire. I lit him up. I tore him down.

I took him to pieces. I crushed him. Well, that's not what we're trying to do in life.

That's what the enemy does. So we're confessing what we're doing. The tongue was lit on fire by hell, and we say things many times that are needless, that are senseless, that are godless, that are aimed at hurting instead of aimed at building.

I've said this several times on this radio program. I could go to my wife right now, and in 15 minutes, I could have her in tears. She could come to me, and in 15 minutes, have me extremely upset by the words she's... You know what that means? Those words are off limits.

Those words can never come out. Those words can never be part of an argument. Those words can never be something aimed at her or aiming them at me because they do not bring about the righteousness of God that he declares for us.

That's where also many marriages will say, we'll never bring up the D word. Divorce. And I wrote down the difference between being led by the spirit, led by the flesh.

Those things come out of the flesh. You know, Mark, I went down into our seniors class years ago. I was doing a series on marriage, and I talked about four couples that their marriages had lasted over 50 years.

And I talked to them, and they almost all said the same thing in just a little bit different way. They would say what you just said. The D word was never a word.

It was in our vocabulary. And one of the women looked at me after her husband said that, and she said, yes, but murder was. It was there.

It was there. She was talking about the intent of the heart was we're going to make this work. With God's help, if you have two Christian married people loving God, Jesus as Lord of their life, there's no reason for divorce.

It's when one of them gets out of that that we get to have a real problem. It's when one or both of them are no longer keeping Jesus as Lord that we can begin to cause real pain that can break up a marriage. So, here's this.

I was talking to this guy, and he was talking about reading. And he said to me, he said, there's this book that everybody, more people in Illinois have read than any other book in Illinois. More high school kids have read than any other high school book.

Kids that don't like to read, read this book. Kids that have a hard time learning and reading, read this book and learn it. It's the most popular book in high school, most popular book, most well-read book in the state.

He said, do you know what it is? I said, no. He said, it's the handbook for driver's education. Those kids want to be able to drive.

They're reading that book. People want to get their driver's license. They're reading that book.

Now, what's the difference between the kid who reads that book simply to pass the test and the person who reads that book to understand the rules of the road? That's what we have sometimes with Christians. We understand we read the book because we're supposed to, but we don't apply the lessons to the rules of our life. And this whole chapter is about the lessons to the rules of our life about how to use the tongue that God has blessed us with.

I was thinking like prayer or the Lord's prayer, maybe specifically, it can become just a ritual, something you do, but the intent behind it isn't that you're worshiping or loving God. You're saying words. Exactly.

All kinds of things like that. So in this verse, it says, but no one can tame the tongue. So what are, what are we destined to? Are we destined to blow up our relationships? Are we destined to lose control? Because no man can control the tongue.

Well, I would say no. What he's saying is you can't do this on your own. Yes.

You need the Holy Spirit. You need the Holy Spirit to help you do this. You need to submit that tongue.

You need to admit, look, I have used this tongue to curse. I've used this tongue to destroy. I've used this tongue to attack.

I've used this good weapon that was supposed to be used for good. I've used it for harm. Now I need to learn the rules.

And I would say the first rule is don't talk when you're angry. Right. Shut up when you're angry.

Yes. You know, just back up and say, you know, I need to think about this for a little bit and calm down a little bit before I jump into this conversation. And never listen or two.

You know, for me, if someone is angry at me, or forcefully or so, I should have the courage or the ability to walk away without saying something or responding. But oftentimes, you get into it with the other person and then it makes it worse. You know? I think, Jean, I think one of the key moments in that is learning, again, learning how to listen and to be able to say, look, I do not want to belittle anything you said to me.

I understand you're very upset. I want to understand why. What you said was this.

Is that why you're... Did that make you... My actions in this way made you angry. Okay, I'm going to pray about that. I'm going to think about that.

Let's find a healthy way through this and we will set boundaries so I won't break that boundary again. And, you know, I think one of the worst things you can say to somebody in a moment like this, you're making a big deal out of nothing. It's a big deal.

Whatever it's made out of, it's a big deal. And if you treat it in a trivial way, it's going to make it worse. Yeah.

I was going to say, you know, I've seen people in circles where people drink and do all of that and where I live and people will say inflammatory things and the worst is where they start laughing at certain people, you know? And I'd like to say I never did that myself, but when I was young especially, I did. And I try to make sure I don't do that now, even though some people try to tempt me and say, no, why don't you laugh at that person? I'm not going to do that because, what, I'm turning 69 next month? I've got to be straight on things. And, you know, people laughing at other people, that's the worst one that I have, at least that I've seen.

I just kept it simple. You know, my mother told me a long time ago, I always hear her voice say, if you don't have anything good to say, just don't say nothing. Yeah, that's a good idea.

You know, so that's a good principle to at least have you pause before you say anything. That's your mom trying to teach you how to talk. Yeah, yeah.

That's how you do that. And, Pastor Mark, you've shared when we went through the Sermon on the Mount and I always default on are the fruits evident? Is there love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, self-control? Are all those things at work? Jesus operated perfectly in all that fruit all the time. But anytime we're impatient and we say something out of our impatience or our frustration, and that TWA, I'm going to hammer that home for everyone in the days ahead.

Mark mentioned that's talking while angry, but I'm also going to include typing while angry because we respond so much now with our computers, with social media, with emails, with texting. So TWA, is that airline still around anyone? Trans World Airlines? Well, anyways, TWA was around years ago, but talking or typing while angry, we do not recommend it. I would say there are certain rules that the Bible makes really clear.

Coarse language. I don't need that in any aspect of my life. I can curse a man and not use foul language.

I can slander him. I can gossip about him. I can say things that, you know, put him down and belittle him or discourage him.

The man who belittles his wife's opinion does not curse her with foul language. But the words that he uses are rejection of her and a lack of respect towards her. A teacher who laughs along with a cutting remark made from one student to another may not use foul language, but undermines the student's trust in himself, undermines the health of the classroom, and undermines that student.

The manager who lets loose, you know, cannon blows off on people in the workplace may not use foul, improper language, but allows for intimidation and frustration in the workplace. Listen, this happens in church choirs. This happens in churches.

This happens among friends in churches, because we didn't learn how to talk. Part of learning how to talk is learning how to make sure we hear each other, we understand each other, and we hold each other as a valuable person who represents the image of God. They may be immature.

They may have said something silly. They may have done something harmful to others. How do I deal with that? This whole conversation, Mark, reminds me, it's a good thing, of what Pastor Mark was talking about, the heart and the spirit.

But I'm thinking of Matthew 12, 35, where basically it says that a good person would do a good deed. An evil person out of the treasury of his heart does evil things. But the last part of that verse is what I want everybody to keep in mind, and that is, at the day of judgment, at the last day, every idle word that you speak you will either be condemned or acquitted for.

And who's going to be the judge of all that? The Lord Himself. So just be careful of your words. Have you ever been driving down the highway and it's fairly crowded, a little bit of room, and here comes somebody, and they are weaving in and out of traffic, driving as fast as they can, maybe a guy on a motorcycle, weaving back and forth in and out of traffic as fast as they can.

Do you think that person thinks they're a bad driver? No. They think they're a great driver. Yeah.

Look how fast I'm getting down the road. They're actually a reckless driver. I've had to bury people because of people like that.

They're reckless. And they think they're really good. They think they're sharp.

So we've got to judge ourselves rightly and say, is this healthy? Is this good? Are people left in my wake wounded? And am I controlling my tongue and talking? Or am I being reckless in the way I'm driving? Oh, listening friend, and I'll close out with this real challenging concept, this truth. With the tongue, we praise our Lord and Father, and with it, we curse men who have been made in God's likeness, men and women in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing.

My brothers, this should not be. Think twice before you speak. Maybe before you make that phone call, pray up what you would be led to share and say.

Before you type that post or that message or that text, consider how they might receive it and what do you really want to communicate. And as Pastor Mark shared, TWA, whether it's talking or typing, don't do it when you're angry. Or if you type something down, wait a day before you send it off and revisit it and see if that's what God would really have you communicate.

Oh, listening friend, a challenge for us all. I hope you benefited by tuning in. And if you know somebody that can be blessed by our conversation or that can be equipped to share that good news message of Jesus with all around them, invite them to stop by greatnewsradio.org or wluj.org and they can listen to the program, read the transcripts, or view other helpful resources to help them on their faith journey.

So stop by greatnewsradio.org or wluj.org. Thanks for listening. Thanks for being a part of our radio listening family. This is Mark Burns and Pastor Mark Johnson in a room of friends with the Ministry of Great News Media.

God bless you and have a great day, night, and weekend.