

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



# CHILDREN'S MINISTRY BASKETBALL DEVOTIONS

## 10-18 year olds

Week 2

*In Word*

# In Word

The objective is the goal or main teaching point of this week's study. If you convey one thing to your players, make it this.

Read this passage aloud to the kids, as it will be the focus of this week's study. Each week's memory verse will be in bold.

Our lessons for our older age groups are designed to be more discussion-based. This section is for the coach to read ahead of time so that he/she understands the goal of the discussion and is able to direct the conversation.

**Objective** This lesson will teach the kids about how our speech can be helpful or harmful, and encourage them to use self-control and honor the Lord with their words.

## Scripture Passage:

**“Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless.”** James 1:26, NIV (Memory Verses)

“With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God’s likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be.” James 3:9-10, NIV

## Coaches Guide

In last week’s verse, we saw how God wants us as Christians to set examples for others in several areas of life. The first of these, “in word,” (referring to our speech) is one of the hardest for many believers.

The book of James has a lot to say about our tongues. James warns us that if we call ourselves Christians, our speech has to match. We can’t use our mouths to worship God on Sundays and then hurt people the rest of the week. In fact, James 1:26 says that our claim to be a Christian is worthless if we don’t control our tongues.

James 3:2-12 teaches that our words are very powerful. They can accomplish great things when we use them to praise God, encourage, tell the truth, give thanks, and preach the Gospel. But they can also do great damage when we lie, discourage, gossip, curse, or complain.

Because we are sinners, we often find it easier to use our tongues for evil than for good, especially when things don’t go our way. This is why our memory verse tells us that we need to exercise control over our words. James uses the analogy of riding a horse. If a rider doesn’t use his reins to keep control, the horse will run wild and go places it shouldn’t. The same way, if we aren’t careful about the things we say and keep tight control over our speech, we will end up using our words in sinful ways. Most of our sinful speech could be eliminated by taking the time to think before we speak. It’s important to pause and make sure what we are about to say pleases the Lord before we say it.

Team discussion gives questions to ask your team in order to discuss today's topic. Use the information from the coaches guide to steer the conversation toward the biblical truth.

"On the Court" gives some in-game situations where today's lesson can be applied, while "Off the Court" gives examples from everyday life. Encourage them to do the things you listed during the game today.

These are some final notes/goals to accomplish this week. These are not meant to be read, but are instructions for the coach.

## Team Discussion

1. Have you ever said anything that later you regretted saying?
2. Why is it especially important for Christians to control our tongues? Do you think that you speak in a way that honors the Lord?
3. What does it mean to "keep a tight rein on [our] tongues"? How is controlling what we say similar to riding a horse? Is controlling the tongue easy?
4. What are some positive ways that we can use our words? What are some negative ways? Do you struggle with any of these areas? What are some ways you could improve?
5. Why is it important to stop and think about what you're going to say before you speak? Do you usually think about your words carefully?

### On the Court

- When things don't go your way during the game, your first reaction might be to speak out of anger or frustration. Instead, use self-control, think before you speak, and make sure your words are pleasing to the Lord.
- Use your words to encourage other players when they play well.
- Be sure to thank the coaches and refs after the game today.

### Off the Court

- It's easy to get in trouble when you talk without thinking. Before you speak, ask yourself if what you're about to say is true, kind, and honoring to God.
- Don't complain to your parents. Instead, make it a point to thank them for what you have.
- Praising the Lord, praying, and telling others about Jesus are some of the best ways we can use our tongues.

## The Game Plan

1. Review last week's memory verse, 1 Timothy 4:12, "Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity." Give a ticket to any player who can recite it.
2. Learn and memorize James 1:26 (NIV) with your team. Encourage them to practice the verse over the week.
3. Put an emphasis on the way your team speaks this week. Make sure that you honor the Lord with your words.