



3.20.11/James 3:1

Materials Needed

None.

Opening Discussion

Imagine you're on the playground and playing a game of "Tag!" Let's pretend that a few of your friends have never played before, so one of your friends decides to teach everyone the rules. However, your "friend" says that after you tag someone out, you have to also say something mean about that person. This does not sound like a good idea to anyone, but your "friend" promises that's how you play the game. After a few minutes of playing, the principal overhears some of the hurtful things that are being said and she stops the game. She talks to all of the children that were involved in the game and tells them that they have to miss recess the next day as a punishment. However, your "friend" who taught everyone how to play the game has to miss TWO days of recess. Why do you think the principal gave the other "friend" a greater punishment? *Because he taught people to play in a mean way. The other children are still accountable for agreeing to play but the person who taught the game started the problem.* Tell the children that today we're going to learn about why "teachers" will be judged more strictly than others.

Read James 3:1

"Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly." -NIV

Discussion Questions

1. Our pretend example about the game of "Tag" talks about teaching, but in this passage, James is specifically talking about teachers in the context of the church. What do those in the church teach? *Teachers in the church instruct others about God's grace, His mercy, His forgiveness and His character. Most importantly, they tell people about Jesus, what He did on the cross and His redemptive plan for everyone!*
2. How would you feel if someone told a lie about you? How would your mom or dad feel if someone told a lie about you? *They would be upset!* This is how God feels when people don't tell the truth when they teach others about His son, Jesus. What problems would happen if teachers were not teaching honestly about who Jesus is? *If they did not teach honestly, they would be misrepresenting who God is. Those who are seeking to have a relationship with God must know who He truly is! If we do not understand the truth about what Jesus did for us, it will be hard for us to believe it, and for us to live our lives as a reflection of the Good News.*
3. God has given each of us talents and gifts that we are to use to help others and bring glory to His name. Some people have been given the intelligence and natural ability to teach others. Why then do you think James says, "not many of you should become teachers?" *Because teachers affect many people, and while they can do a lot of good, they can also do a lot of bad if they do not do their jobs well. Just like the example of the boy who taught mean rules for the game of Tag, teaching people bad things can lead others to act poorly. Teachers should be confident that God wants them to teach others because their jobs are very important.*
4. When someone teaches that we should all do things a certain way, do you look to see if the teacher actually does what he/she says? *Absolutely! In the same way, when people in the church teach others, everybody watches to see if the teacher actually lives out what he/she is teaching. If the teacher doesn't live it out, it sends the message to those who are listening that the instruction really isn't that important, but if the teacher DOES live it out, then the students know it's a very important message indeed!*



Reflection

Thank God in prayer for all of the teachers in our church: our pastors, the teachers in our V21 Kids rooms and our Community Group teachers. Pray that they would be humble men and women that only teach true things about who Jesus is and how He saves all those who trust in Him. Remember that all of the things that you say about God to your friends or family should also be true and should reveal how good and amazing He is. Pray that God would guard your heart from anything you hear that is not an honest reflection of Him.