

## **The Rudder**

### **Ready:**

“And consider ships: Though very large and driven by fierce winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So too, though the tongue is a small part of the body, it boasts great things. Consider how a small fire sets ablaze a large forest. And the tongue is a fire. The tongue, a world of unrighteousness, is placed among our members. It stains the whole body, sets the course of life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.” – James 3:4-6

### **Set**

No one knows why certain words stick with us, and others fall to the wayside.

A positive affirmation from your coach could become a battle cry and mantra for you later in life. Conversely, a rude and negative remark could haunt your memory forever. As I am writing this, floods of words said to me by coaches and teammates fill my brain, ones I'm sure they do not remember, but they have stuck with me for years.

It is marvelous how one of the most minor muscles in our bodies can cause the most damage. Our tongue is a fierce weapon that can be yielded for good or destruction. Most of the time, we think our strength comes from our arms, legs or brain. While those parts of the body can have an impact, Scripture explicitly calls out the tongue as a source of great strength.

James invites us to picture large and powerful ships cutting through the waves at top speed. This large vessel, in all its glory and honor, is guided not by its speed, durability or power. The ship is directed where and how to proceed by a small rudder under the water guiding its direction.

This is an excellent picture of the power of the tongue and our words. A rudder can guide the ship to safety or lead it straight into the wreckage. Our tongue can either guide us safely or pass us into troubled waters.

Today, ask yourself, am I headed for troubled waters?

### **Go**

- How have someone's words impacted you?
- How can your words impact the ones around you?

### **Workout**

Proverbs 2:6

Ephesians 5:15-16

### **Overtime**

“Lord God, You have designed our bodies to be living vessels used for Your service. Frequently, we use them to serve ourselves and our agenda, including what we say. We pray for forgiveness today for how our words might have hurt our friends. We desire to be wiser with what we say and how we use our words in the future. Amen.”



Fellowship of Christian Athletes © 2025  
8701 Leeds Road | Kansas City, MO 64129 | 800.289.0909  
Comments or Questions, [fca@fca.org](mailto:fca@fca.org)  
[Privacy Policy](#) | [Report a Problem](#) | [Copyright](#)

---

**Source URL:**<https://fcaresources.com/devotional/rudder>