



WORDS MATTER (from 2/05/17 sermon - Spencer Teal)

I. **OPEN** - See if there is anyone who wants to share a short testimony, or if there are there specific praise updates to begin CG.

II. **PRAY**

III. **READ ALOUD Colossians 4:6** - *“Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.”*

Q - Sermon takeaways from those who were in attendance?

IV. **REFLECT**

In the book of John chapter 1 we read that “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” The word that is used here is logos, which simply means word or reasoning expressed by words. So, we see Jesus described as the *Word* of God...God’s intent, purpose, and reason expressed in the Son. This is astounding and oh so important for us, because the fact that Christ would be called the “Word” is a strong indicator to us that words are very important and originate from God Himself. In other words, words really do matter. One of the most important and influential thing we will ever do is to speak words. In fact, our ability to do so shows that we really are made in the image of God.

Discussion - At the beginning of Col 4:6 we see that we are to “LET our speech be gracious...” This would seem to indicate that we do indeed have a say-so as to what comes out of our mouths.

Q - How would the people who spend the most time with you describe the words that typically flow from your lips...strong...soft...judgmental...positive...uplifting...encouraging...stern...etc?

Q - How do/should the truths of the Gospel impact our speech? Explain your answer.

If we take a look at the rhythms of our speech on a regular basis and do not like what we see, it’s critical for us to remember as we read in Matt 15:18 and Luke 6:45 that “...*out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.*” We say what is already within our hearts. So, for example, this is why when we’re in an argument with someone and are in the flesh we may suddenly blurt out things that we may have to go back and apologize for later? Why is that and where do those words come from? Unfortunately, the answer is that they are rooted in our hearts. This awareness needs to drive us back to the Gospel over and over again. The Gospel should remind us of God’s unconditional forgiveness in Christ for us, and that should prompt us to forgive others in the same manner. The mercy of Christ shown toward us should cause us to be merciful toward others. The love of God displayed in His incredible kindness shown toward us should prompt us to love others and be kind to them as well. And how is our forgiveness, mercy, and kindness often shown/given/received? Through words.

This Colossians passage tells us that we are to let our speech “**always be gracious...**” The word used seems to imply that our words be full of grace, that they be pleasant, that they be pleasing to the hearer of them. **Q** - This of examples in which Person A and Person B each attempted to convey the same message except that the words of one was full of grace and the other...well...not so much so. What were the differences? How was their posture different...and their pace...and their tone...and their inflection? How about the specific words that they chose? Discuss.

Piper - Seasoned with Salt - “I take this to mean that what we say about Christ and about the Christian life should be made as appetizing as possible. When food is not salted, its taste is bland. People don't want to eat it. It's unappetizing. Our speech is not supposed to be like that. This is one of the most refreshing things I have ever heard anyone say about personal evangelism. Think about it for a moment. How can you develop the ability to speak about Christ so that there is an appetizing flavor to it? How do you learn to talk about Christ in a way that makes people's mouth water? I think the answer is simply to spend time every day reminding yourself from Scripture why the gospel tastes good to you. Some of us who have been Christians for a long time begin to neglect the crucial business of enjoying Christ. Then an opportunity comes along to commend him to someone and we realize that all the reasons he is wonderful have been neglected and the keenness of our own taste buds has grown very dull. It's hard to salt your speech with the deliciousness of Jesus when you haven't been enjoying the taste yourself. So the wonderful thing about Paul's advice here is that the best way to prepare to be an advertisement for the satisfying taste of Jesus is to enjoy him yourself. Every day we should go to the Bible and look for reasons why knowing Christ is the greatest thing in the world. And when we get up off our knees with our hearts happy in him, we will be in the best position to make our speech appetizing for Christ.” (John Piper, Sermon: Walk in Wisdom Toward Outsiders)

We are also told in this Colossians passage that our speech is to be “**...seasoned with salt...**” Carefully read the excerpt above from John Piper. **Discuss what impacted you the most.**

V. FURTHER APPLICATION -

As we have discussed, our words should be full of grace and savory toward others, and especially toward outsiders/unbelievers (v.5). What adjustments do you need to make as you consider the daily rhythms of your own speech...especially as we remember, as Jesus reminded us, that “*out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks*”?

VI. CLOSE

Final thoughts?

VII. BE ON-MISSION -

- a) Is there anyone you need to go to to apologize for less than gracious and/or savory words that you may have spoken? b) Who are unbelievers in your life that you should be prayerful and intentional with in regards to your speech?