

The Normal Christian Life - Restrained In Speech

Because of un-restrained speech the usefulness of many true Christians to Jesus Christ is seriously curtailed.

Instead of being powerful instruments in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ, they make little impact on account of the constant leakage of effectiveness through their careless talk.

James 3:11 [New King James] *“Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening?”*

If a Christian talks inadvisedly about all sorts of things, how can they expect to be used by their Lord Jesus Christ in the utterance of His Word?

James 3:1-2 [New King James] *“My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment. For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body.”*

If God has ever put His Word on our lips, then a solemn obligation is upon us to guard our life for His service alone.

Ecclesiastes 5:2-3 [New King James] *“Do not be rash with your mouth, and let not your heart utter anything hastily before God. For God is in heaven, and you on earth; therefore let your words be few. For a dream comes through much activity, and a fool’s voice is known by his many words.”*

In the multitude of words we can detect the voice of a fool. We betray our folly by our talkativeness.

There always seems to be a good reason in human thinking for the need to tell something to someone. Oh how some of us love to talk, and love above all to relay what others have said!

In the first place, let us note the kind of talk we enjoy listening to.

In this way we can get to know ourselves, for the kind of talk we relish indicates the kind of people we are.

Some people never confide in you because they know you are **not** the sort of person who would respond to what they say, whereas other people come straight to you and pour into your ears all the latest information they have because they have sized you up as being the type of person who wants to hear that type of thing.

You can judge yourself by stopping to note the things people come and talk to you about.

What about the tales we most readily credit, for what we are prone to credit reveals our own dispositions. We are more gullible in one direction than in another, and the direction of our gullibility betrays our constitutional weakness.

Our temperamental tendencies sometimes trick us into crediting the incredible, especially when statements made to us are backed by the assertion that the speaker has them on good authority.

Let us also note if, when we have listened to people’s stories and accepted them at “*face value*,” we are in the habit of passing them on to others.

Let us also observe the propensity in some speakers to make inaccurate statements. They tell the same tale on different occasions, but the records do **not** tally.

Matthew 21:23-27 [New King James] *“Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, ‘By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?’ But Jesus answered and said to them, ‘I also will ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things: the baptism of John, where was it from? From heaven or from men?’ And they reasoned among themselves, saying, ‘If we say, “From heaven,” He will say to us, “Why then did you not believe him?” But if we say, “From men,” we fear the multitude, for all count John as a prophet.’ So they answered Jesus and said, ‘We do not know.’ And He said to them, ‘Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.’”*

The result of the chief priests and elders was to evade the truth, their answer was a deliberate falsehood.

Matthew 5:37 [New King James] *“But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.”*

1 Corinthians 3:18 [New King James] *“Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you seems to be wise in this age, let him become a fool that he may become wise.”*

In the spiritual realm worldly human wisdom is of no avail. The trouble is that many people have never learned in simplicity to say “yes” when the facts demand it and “no” when they know that what is really true. Their statements are always suited to their own interests.

We need to be watchful lest we, because of our natural curiosity, hear more than is good for us to know. There is such a thing as lust for information about other people’s business and we need to be well-aware of what is the sin of lust as much as any other physical lustful desire.

We need to be restrained in our speech, but if we are to exercise restraint in what we say we must first exercise restraint in what we hear.

The question arises of gaining and retaining people’s confidence as a true Christian.

We cannot serve the Lord Jesus Christ if we betray confidence that has been placed in us.

We need to treat confidences as a sacred trust and guard them faithfully.

People who cannot bridle their tongues cannot be trusted with any work from Jesus Christ, as our Lord and Saviour.

In considering the matter of speech we have to include the evil habit of telling lies.

John 8:44 [New King James] *“You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.”*

Always remember that you become a child of Satan when you tell a lie.

All utterances that are made with intent to deceive come into the category of lying.

If we are asked a question that we are unable to answer we can politely refuse to reply, but we dare not deceive the questioner.

Every true Christian desires people to know the truth as expanded in God’s Word, the Christian Bible.

None of us humans dare lay claim to utter accuracy of speech constantly, [James 3:2] but we must cultivate the habit of being true and avoiding all careless utterance.

2 Timothy 2:24 [New King James] *“And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient,”*

A true Christian should have themselves under control so that they do **not** give way to noisy conversation or anything that borders on quarrelling.

Loud talking usually indicates lack of power and it always indicates lack of self-discipline.

We may be perfectly right in what we say, but there is no need for loud affirmations of the truth, the truth itself has all the power it needs in itself.

Self-control in the matter of speech will rule out much light talking and jesting to which Paul refers to in his letter to the church, as *“not fitting”* in a Christian, [Ephesians 5:4]. This will rule out scoffing also and much else that is unseemly in the life of a true Christian.

If you acquire the habit of carelessness in speech you will be a careless Bible reader. For careless characters approach God’s Word, the Christian Bible, lightly and cannot hope to arrive at any true understanding of it.

This lack of true understanding is illustrated by the Sadducees who certainly read the scripture, but did not know the scriptures, [Matthew 22:23-32].

When we stand before Jesus Christ’s judgement seat, [2 Corinthians 5:10-12] we may discover, too late, that the damage done by light loose talk, [Matthew 12:36-37] exceeds that done in many other ways, for it works great havoc in others’ lives as well as our own.

Words that have once escaped our lips cannot be recovered, they may go on and on from mouth to ear and ear to mouth, spreading damage as they go.

We can repent of our folly, we can be forgiven, but we cannot retrieve what we have released.

The Greek word used in Matthew 12:36 for “idle” words, were uttered in the past, and always have been useless and barren, the meaning of the Greek word “argōs” but they are still active working havoc and certainly not idle in the sense of inactive.

A detrimental statement directed towards a person years ago, can still be brought back to that person on sight of the person who made that hurting remark.

James 3:5-10 [New King James] *“Even so the tongue is a little member and 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 on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and 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 proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so.”*

We all need help from God to control our tongues that can do such damage.

Only the active presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and our constantly following His lead will the Godlike character that is being developed in us **ensure that the words that do come out of our mouths are generated by the Holy Spirit in our mind before we utter them.**

Galatians 5:22-26 [New King James] *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those*

who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another."

With these characteristics within us no hurtful words will leave our lips.

This is the end goal that the Creator God has to ensure harmony in His created eternal family.