

Speaking Bible

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There are a variety of ways to be obnoxious in our interactions with people. One of them is to always speak in holy tones as if we are super spiritual. Another is to use trite Christian phrases when we greet people, such as, “How’s the Lord blessin’ you today?” We may mean well with such words, but they often come across disingenuous and sometimes create embarrassment.



But, we *should* speak Bible truths. I don’t mean that we should quote passages of Scripture to each other at every turn, but that there are *many* appropriate times for the Bible to show up in our speech. The truths God puts in us, if meaningful, should find expression through our lips—God’s words in our words. Our mouth should reflect our affections. There should be a natural desire to express what is impacting us.

“Let the redeemed of the Lord say so,” said the psalmist.

Our speech should contain many good things, such as words of encouragement and compassion and concern and even warning. The Lord has given us the church in order to bring God’s truths to bear on our lives. Other believers help us walk obediently though what they say to us. Often we need reminding and stimulus to forge ahead through the maze of life.

How can we do that best?

Speak what is fresh

Old milk isn’t good for drinking, nor are shelf-worn vegetables good for eating. When we speak with each other, bring something fresh to the table. If we wish to be truth speakers, then we have to daily ingest the “pure milk of the word.” What you find enlivening that day or in recent days, share with others. It may seem awkward at first, if you are not used to it, but when you have new insight, or renewed insight, you can communicate to other believers what you’ve received. “I read something very interesting today about how we’re to handle conflict in the home. I’d like to see what you think about what I’m seeing.”

Speak what is internalized

I don’t do this often enough, but through my journey as a believer in Christ, I’ve tried to memorize certain passages of Scripture. As I meditate these days, using a method

of repeated readings of a passage, I find that things stick with me much better than they did years ago. Sometimes it is these deeply-thought-through truths that are most exciting to share with others. I want to express with my family and friends what speaks to me personally. “I believe that God was ‘reading my mail’ this morning as I was going over the passage I’ve been working on. It is changing my perspective. Did you know Jesus said *this*? . . .”

Speak what is applicable

Sometimes we are to reach back into our quiver for the perfect arrow to deal with a current situation. For instance, in expressing the gospel, your answers to questions might draw on fitting passages you’ve tucked away in your mind. Or, among believers who are in need, God’s Spirit can bring the truths from the Bible to mind that will address the behavior or attitude appropriately.

Speak what is sincere

Nobody appreciates insincerity. The genuine person who truly seeks to apply the Scripture to himself or herself will make the biggest impact on others. Authenticity goes a long way, even if we stumble a bit in our use of the Bible. It isn’t a sin to “try” to be genuine, since the effort in itself is against our pride and shows love to others. We don’t always have to feel a certain way, but we should do our best to be “real” people, expressing ourselves honestly and thoughtfully to each other.

Speak what is natural

We must learn to speak truths from God without that kind of fear and self-consciousness that makes things awkward. Relax, and talk from the heart about the things that are true. If God has said something that fits the situation, even when talking with an unconverted person, just say it. If you are natural, it will relax your listeners.

Self-consciousness works against good speech. But when God meets us in His word He can overwhelm our tendency to think about ourselves over others. I have no doubt that early followers of Christ, while He was still on the earth, found it easy to talk about all that He said and did. After Pentecost, His disciples also illustrated that kind of affection that alters speech when they said, “We cannot help talking about what we have seen and heard.” I want my speech to be like that, and I hope you do as well.

The Lord knows that we need it.