

## How Did Jesus Speak?

### 1 Peter 2:22-23

Good morning! Today, we're continuing our series on "How Did Jesus Do?" We're studying from Scriptures Jesus' attitude toward serving, speaking, praying, sharing the good news, and loving others. Our objective is to emulate the characteristics of Jesus so that we may become more Christ-like in our thoughts and attitudes. Last week, we looked at how Jesus served. And we saw that Jesus served with love, in humility, and knowing that true greatness comes from serving. Today, we're going to see how Jesus spoke. We'll look at how Jesus related to others in the way he spoke to them. Basically, in our message this morning, I'm going to share with you the wise and right use of our tongues.

All of us have a lot to learn from Jesus in this aspect. The Bible says in **1 Peter 2:22-23**, "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." **When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly."**

As Christians, we try to model our lives after Jesus. Jesus is perfect but he doesn't expect us to be perfect. Yes, there's an admonition for us to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect but that is said in the context of our trying ourselves to be as blameless as we can be. In this life, we cannot achieve perfection. Is anyone here perfect? If you think you are, try walking on water. Some teachers will tell you it's possible to be perfect. That's a pipe dream. Not biblical at all. But we can be transformed from glory to glory as **2 Cor. 3:18** says, "And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit." In other words, as we grow in our Christian faith and as we trust God to do his work in us, the Holy Spirit can make us more and more like him.

And I think the first thing that others can notice that we are like Christ or not like Christ is the way we use our tongues. We can hide what's inside our minds, we can fake our attitudes, but we cannot deny what comes out of our mouths. How do you catch a fish? By its mouth. So you can know the character of a person by his mouth.

James has an interesting thing to say about our tongues. Please turn to James 3. Beginning verse 3, he says, ...verse 12. James really said a mouthful about the tongue, didn't he?

No one can deny that it's just a tiny member of our body but it can build or destroy. It can encourage or hurt. It can strengthen or wreak havoc. It can praise and curse. This double-sided nature of the tongue is what makes it the most complex part of our beings. That's why James is saying we should learn to tame the tongue. How do we do that? That is what I aim to do in this message. Together we'll learn from the Bible how to put our tongues in order. How to put it under control. How to make it behave in a more Christian way. And this way is shown and exemplified for us by our Lord Jesus.

So, how did Jesus speak?

#### 1. He spoke with encouraging words.

Jesus as God came to earth because he knew our sorry plight. He knew our sorry condition. His heart is broken knowing that all mankind is lost and we're all desperate for love and attention. Since the start, when our first parents sinned, people have been searching for the main thing that would set them free from their pain and misery. Sadly, instead of turning to God, many have sought refuge in other things that they thought would give them true joy and happiness. Which, of course, continues today. People in the past had and today are trying to liberate themselves from their desperate lives through artificial means. It could be vices, it

could be materialism, it could be grabbing power through politics or business or even religion, or it could be cheating others, or causing trouble to others.

So, Jesus invaded earth about 2000 years ago, and on one Sabbath in a synagogue in Jerusalem, he took up a scroll, and read these verses from Isaiah 61 and applied them to him, “The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” (Luke 4:18-19)

What was the effect on others? Verse 22 says, “All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips.” That is all, as in, everyone. Everybody who attended the Sabbath service that day and heard Jesus spoke those words were greatly astounded. They had never heard someone speak like Jesus before. And notice, Luke described the words of Jesus as being gracious. In other words, he spoke with kindness and pleasantness. Like a whiff of fresh air. I’m sure that’s how his audience felt.

You see, all these people, under Roman rule, felt oppressed and discouraged. They were carrying a great burden emotionally. They needed something to lift them up. And Jesus came at the right time. He gave them hope. He greatly encouraged them. He lifted their sagging spirits.

It didn’t end there. Because the gospels describe to us other instances wherein Jesus said things that encouraged his hearers. His Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5 is one great example of his encouraging words. He starts every statement with “Blessed” like “Blessed are the poor in spirit, Blessed are those who mourn” then completes it with an encouraging note, “for theirs is the kingdom of heaven, for they will be comforted.”

Moment after moment everywhere he went, Jesus provided hope and comfort with his words. That’s why when Jesus asked his disciples if they wanted

to leave him like the others, Peter said, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” (John 6:68)

Peter wouldn't want to hear from anyone else except Jesus. Because Jesus with his words always gave hope and peace.

I hope that's how others would feel around us when we open our mouths. When we speak, do people want to hang around or do they want to go somewhere else? Are they encouraged or are they deflated? The Bible says, “Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.” (Col. 4:6 ESV) Paul is encouraging us to speak like Jesus, use gracious words. Like every now and then you say to someone, “Sister, brother, you're a blessing!” I heard those words, when I was in Australia years and years ago and new in my faith. My Christian friends greeted me with “Nakaka-bless ka” “You're a blessing!” And, I myself was blessed when they said that to me.

Let's practice that. Say to the person next to you. “You're a blessing!”

Every person in this world needs to hear an encouraging word at least once a day. Especially our wives. Women need to be praised or affirmed. They need to be praised for their cooking, their looks, their hair, their dress, their bag, their shoes, what else? Husbands need to compliment their wives even in little things, right? That's how women know they are loved and appreciated by their husbands. And husbands, what do we need? We just need quiet. Just kidding.

What men need are the unwavering support of their wives. I googled this and this is what I found: 4 Ways You Can Encourage Your Husband –

1. Say “I Love you”. Yes, men need to hear those words, too, not only women.

2. Say “Thank you”. Like when you ask him to put out the trash, or change the light bulb, say “Thank you.”

3. Tell him why you love him, and remind him often. Men are forgetful you know.

4. Encourage him to be more. Tell him that he has great potential and he can be what God wants him to be.

5. Share with him what you need. That, I don't know why it's in there. Seriously, men want to be a part of your life.

Obviously, every person in this world needs to be encouraged. Because we all want to be loved, affirmed, and accepted. Like this little girl who said to her father, "Dad, I'm going to throw the darts. Every time it hits the dartboard, you say, "Wonderful".

I have a friend in college. He is bright but he seemed to lack self-confidence. He is timid and very quiet, in fact. I wondered why until one day he confided in me. He said that when he was a young boy, he was big and looked older than his age and sometimes people made comments about that. Like when he was 13, he said that he and his parents went to a restaurant for dinner. The waiter approached them and asked them what they want to drink while waiting for their order of food. His parents asked for soda, and then the waiter turned to him and said, "And how about you, sir, do you want beer?"

The waiter obviously did not mean anything by that, but those words hurt my friend. This happened to him repeatedly as he grew up and he kept them inside. Some people actually intentionally hurt him. I met him again when we were in our 30's and my friend was still the same. He never married, wasn't working, living in his parents' home. He was deeply affected by words that were wrongly said to him.

Ephesians 4:29 says, "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen."

So, if it's unwholesome, don't let it come out of your mouth. Only say things that would be a benefit and a blessing to someone. Don't put others down with our words. Lift them up instead.

Jesus spoke with encouraging words. Also,

## 2. Jesus spoke the truth always.

Following a great sermon on lifestyle evangelism one family thought they had better do something to witness to Jesus. So they invited their neighbours to dinner the following Friday night. When it came to the meal, the hostess was keen to show their neighbours that they upheld Christian standards in their home. So she asked little 5 year old Johnny to say grace.

Little Johnny was a bit shy. "I don't know what to say" There was an awkward pause, followed by a reassuring smile from the boy's mom.

"Well darling," she said, " just say what Daddy said at breakfast this morning."

Obediently, the boy repeated, "Oh God, we've got those awful people coming to dinner tonight."

I'm sure dad wasn't happy to have a truthful son that night. But we all want to hear the truth, don't we? We expect people to be transparent, to say it as it is. No cover-ups. No fake news. Like the health crisis we're having. We want the news to be truthful in telling us the real situation in our community, in our state, in our country, and in the world.

Is there anyone in the world whose word you can trust? Today, it's not only lawyers and politicians you can't trust, you can't even trust some religious leaders. We've heard of some priests and pastors who have been involved in some kind of scandal. Can you even trust people close to you? The reason why some marriages break up is because of lack of trust.

Jesus stands out from the rest of us. As we read earlier, the Bible says, “no deceit was found in his mouth.” He always speaks the truth. The Bible says, “...it is impossible for God to lie.” (Hebrews 6:18) People ask me all the time, "Is there anything God can't do?" Yes, there are things God can't do. He cannot lie. Why? Because God cannot be what he is not. God cannot deny His own nature. Jesus says, "I am the truth." And in a world where we no longer value truth, who do you turn to? Romans 3:4 says **" God is always true even if every man lies." (Romans 3:4 NLV)**

Because Jesus always speaks the truth, we can, therefore, trust him. We can follow him. We can allow him to take control of our situation. We can trust him to do what is right for us. We can trust him to protect us and help us get through the coronavirus outbreak. And because we can trust him, we don't have to be afraid in the midst of our uncertain circumstances. We don't have to fear, to be anxious about anything. One of the truths that Jesus tells us is this, “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart of hearts! I have overcome the world.”

Do you want to be trusted like Jesus? Tell the truth! Don't lie. When you make a promise, fulfill it. When you make a commitment, see through it. Let your yes be yes, and your no be no, as the Bible says.

There are a couple of reasons why you should tell the truth even when it's inconvenient.

### **1. Telling the truth is good for your health.**

Whenever we tell lies, it's easy to think of them as harmless or even beneficial to us or the people we tell them to. But when you look at it from a medical perspective, that is the farthest thing from the truth.

People who tell lies frequently have a variety of complaints, including being more prone to feeling anxious. Because you're constantly thinking, “Will it ever be

found out?” They also have frequent headaches, runny noses, diarrhea and even more extreme physical ailments like back pain. Lies aren’t as harmless as we think, and if you’re currently dealing with any of these issues but can’t seem to find the cause, the reason may be lying.

## 2. Telling the truth is better for your reputation.

Somehow, before we tell a lie we always fool ourselves into thinking that nobody will find out. Or that they’ll forget eventually, so there’s no reason to think that lying can damage your reputation. However, the truth is that no matter how hard you try, the truth will always get out. And when it does, you can easily become a social pariah — or at the very least, have a bad reputation that precedes you.

Lying is a sin. The Bible says, “...your sin will find you out”. (Numbers 32:23b) God knows the truth. Remember what happened to King David. He tried to cover up his sins of adultery and murder. He was exposed by God and the consequences were severe.

Lies damage relationships, both professional and personal. And it can be difficult, or sometimes impossible to regain the trust of others after you have damaged it with a lie. In fact, just one lie can completely ruin your reputation.

Jesus spoke with encouraging words. He also spoke the truth always. Thirdly,

## 3. He spoke only when necessary.

All of us know that it’s hard to keep our mouths shut. From the time we were born until now, our mouths open automatically when there’s something we want to say. Notice I didn’t say we need to say. Because sometimes, we really don’t need to open our mouths. It’s better that they’re kept shut. But our mouths outperform our minds sometimes and without control, they open, then our words follow. There are people whose mouths are faster than their minds. You know who

are the talkers in class. You ask a question and immediately they've got their hands up even tho' they don't know the answer. They just want to say something. For some of us, being told to shut up is torture.

There was a guy who joined the Trappist monastery. That monastery was known for training the monks to practice silence. Now, for three years the guy was given a probation period where he was not to speak at all, but at the end of each year he could say two words. The first year at the end he said, "Bed hard." At the end of the second year he said, "Food cold."

At the end of the third year he's about had it. He comes in and says, "I quit". The head monk says, "That doesn't surprise me. All you've done is to complain since you got here."

It's hard to keep our mouth shut especially when we are hurt. When someone says something bad about us, our immediate reaction is to retaliate in kind. We even talk against someone's back when we can't confront the other person. We spread lies and rumors.

Our verse says about Jesus, "When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly."

I remember the story I heard on the radio about this student. He was a freshman in college. I don't remember his name but let's say it's Rick. In the dormitory, he was rooming with another guy. There were no problems in their relationship until one day he was accused by the other guy of stealing money from him. Apparently, the guy had hidden some money in his drawer and he it wasn't there anymore. Worse, the guy spread rumors about him. Naturally, he explained that he didn't take the money. The guy wouldn't believe it and treated him badly.

Rick, being a Christian, didn't respond in kind. He didn't spread rumors or slandered the guy. He just prayed about his situation and left everything to God.

Weeks passed until one day, the other guy came to him to apologize. It turned out the missing money was not in his drawer but in his backpack.

Folks, I hope we have learned a few things about how to speak from the example of Jesus. The tongue can be controlled when we put it under the control of the Holy Spirit. Submit your tongue to him and he'll change the way you talk. The Bible exhorts us in **James 4:7, "Submit yourselves, then, to God."** Surely, that includes the tongue. Now, what does it mean to submit your tongue to his control? "Holy Spirit, here's my tongue. (stick out tongue). Do with it as you wish." No. It's more than that. In fact, your tongue doesn't have anything to do with the kinds of things that come out of your mouth. It's just an organ of your body that creates the sound of the words. The words you speak actually come from something deeper. In your heart. The KJV says, **"out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."** (Matt. 12:34) The NLT puts it this way, **"whatever is in your heart determines what you say."** And in computer language, that's GIGO, "Garbage In, Garbage Out."

So, for the Holy Spirit to control your tongue, let him control your heart. Give him free rein in examining what's inside there and allow him to do a clean-up job. David says in **Psalm 139:23 "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."**

A time will come when everyone will use their tongues for what God really intended it for. The Bible says this about Jesus in **Philippians 2:9-11, "God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."**