

WE ARE THE BODY MOUTH THAT SPEAKS

OPEN: Before Jesus left for home (Heaven) He told us: “Go and make disciples” (Matthew 28:19). You will be my witnesses. (Acts 1:8).

- We have good news to share...the Holy Spirit convicts and convinces, but we must learn to speak with clarity.
- What shall we talk about?

1) LET’S **TALK** ABOUT JESUS. *(PRO PRESENTER SLIDE BULLETIN OUTLINE)*

- ❖ Perhaps we can learn from the disciples (Apostles)...how did they approach this matter?
 - It may not surprise you...Peter would be the first to boldly proclaim Jesus to the crowd outside the Temple.

Acts 2:22-24 (NLT) - ²² “People of Israel, listen! God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs through Him, as you well know. ²³ But God knew what would happen, and His prearranged plan was carried out when Jesus was betrayed. With the help of lawless Gentiles, you nailed Him to a cross and killed Him. ²⁴ But God released Him from the horrors of death and raised Him back to life, for death could not keep Him in its grip.

Acts 2:32-33 (NLT) - ³² “God raised Jesus from the dead, and we are all witnesses of this. ³³ Now He is exalted to the place of highest honor in Heaven, at God’s right hand. And the Father, as He had promised, gave Him the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us, just as you see and hear today.

Acts 2:37-39 (NLT) - ³⁷ Peter’s words pierced their hearts, and they said to him and to the other apostles, “Brothers, what should we do?” ³⁸ Peter replied, “Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away—all who have been called by the Lord our God.”

Acts 2:41 (NLT) - Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day—about 3,000 in all.

- Side note: Those who repented and turned to the Lord for salvation, where to identify with Christ through baptism.
- Baptism doesn't produce forgiveness, but declares one has been forgiven. Baptism is an act of obedience and it becomes synonymous with salvation.
- Peter (in his message) encouraged people to examine their lives...recognize their need for salvation. He assured them if they would turn from their sin and put their trust in Christ they would be forgiven and given the Holy Spirit (Heaven's helper).
- We too can be forgiven and set free from the bondage of sin with the help of the Holy Spirit.

❖ This became the message of the early church.

Acts 3 (lame man at the Temple healed).

Vs. 12-19 (NLT) - ¹² Peter saw his opportunity and addressed the crowd. "People of Israel," he said, "what is so surprising about this? And why stare at us as though we had made this man walk by our own power or godliness?" ¹³ For it is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the God of all our ancestors—who has brought glory to his servant Jesus by doing this. This is the same Jesus whom you handed over and rejected before Pilate, despite Pilate's decision to release him. ¹⁴ You rejected this holy, righteous one and instead demanded the release of a murderer. ¹⁵ You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. And we are witnesses of this fact! ¹⁶ "Through faith in the name of Jesus, this man was healed—and you know how crippled he was before. Faith in Jesus' name has healed him before your very eyes. ¹⁷ "Friends, I realize that what you and your leaders did to Jesus was done in ignorance. ¹⁸ But God was fulfilling what all the prophets had foretold about the Messiah—that he must suffer these things. ¹⁹ Now repent of your sins and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped away.

- Peter relates to them and then tries to connect the dots for them.

Acts 3:24-26 (NLT) - ²⁴“Starting with Samuel, every prophet spoke about what is happening today.²⁵ You are the children of those prophets, and you are included in the covenant God promised to your ancestors. For God said to Abraham, ‘Through your descendants all the families on earth will be blessed.’²⁶ When God raised up His servant, Jesus, He sent Him first to you people of Israel, to bless you by turning each of you back from your sinful ways.”

- The message of Jesus went forth...not all believed, but many did.

Acts 4:4 (NLT) - But many of the people who heard their message believed it, so the number of men who believed now totaled about 5,000 (not counting women and children).

❖ Clearly...there is no other means of salvation apart from Christ.

Acts 4:12 (NLT) - There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.”

- Even though they were threatened and told to be quiet, they responded: **Acts 4:20 (NLT)** – We cannot stop telling about everything we have seen and heard.
- **Acts 5:14 (NLT)** - ...more and more people believed and were brought to the Lord – crowds of both men and women.
- In frustration, the religious leaders accused them:

Acts 5:28-32 (NLT) - ²⁸“We gave you strict orders never again to teach in this man’s name!” he said. “Instead, you have filled all Jerusalem with your teaching about Him, and you want to make us responsible for His death!”²⁹ But Peter and the apostles replied, “We must obey God rather than any human authority.³⁰ The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead after you killed Him by hanging Him on a cross.³¹ Then God put Him in the place of honor at His right hand as Prince and Savior. He did this so the people of Israel would repent of their sins and be forgiven.³² We are witnesses of these things and so is the Holy Spirit, who is given by God to those who obey Him.”

❖ A wave of persecution swept over the church and the believers scattered. (Stephen was the first martyr – **Acts 7**).

Acts 8:4-5 (NLT) - ⁴ But the believers who were scattered preached the Good News about Jesus wherever they went. ⁵ Philip, for example, went to the city of Samaria and told the people there about the Messiah.

Result: **Acts 8:12 (NLT)** - ...the people believed Philip's message of Good News concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. As a result, many men and women were baptized.

- Hearing that many in Samaria accepted the Good News about Jesus...Peter and John go back to check things out (**Acts 8:14**).

Acts 8:25 (NLT) – After testifying and preaching the Word of the Lord in Samaria, Peter and John returned to Jerusalem. And they stopped in many Samaritan villages along the way to preach the Good News.

❖ In **Acts 9** Saul (who would become Paul) has an encounter with Jesus and comes to grips with...He is Lord.

- He is transformed from persecutor to preacher.

Acts 9:20 (NLT) – And immediately he began preaching about Jesus in the synagogues saying, “He is indeed the Son of God!”

❖ Peter, a Jew, goes to Cornelius, a Gentile, house to share the same Good News:

Acts 10:34-36 (NLT) - ³⁴ Then Peter replied, “I see very clearly that God shows no favoritism. ³⁵ In every nation He accepts those who fear Him and do what is right. ³⁶ This is the message of Good News for the people of Israel—that there is peace with God through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.

- What was Peter's message?

Acts 10:37-43 (NLT) - ³⁷ You know what happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee, after John began preaching his message of baptism. ³⁸ And you know that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. Then Jesus went around doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. ³⁹ “And we apostles are witnesses of all He did throughout Judea and in Jerusalem. They put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross, ⁴⁰ but God raised Him to life on the third day. Then God allowed Him to appear, ⁴¹ not to the general public, but to us whom God had chosen in advance to be His witnesses. We were

those who ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead. ⁴² And He ordered us to preach everywhere and to testify that Jesus is the one appointed by God to be the judge of all—the living and the dead. ⁴³ He is the one all the prophets testified about, saying that everyone who believes in Him will have their sins forgiven through His name.”

❖ Do you hear the theme of their message? It’s Jesus!

- We need to be telling people about Jesus.
 - God loves you. He sent Jesus to this earth for you.
 - Our sins (of which we are all guilty) have come between us and God.
 - The holiness of God demands that sin be punished. We are in a “pickle”, we are in a predicament...we are facing punishment.
 - Jesus paid sin’s penalty on the cross and He can make us right with God if we trust Him as Savior (make Him the leader of your life).
 - Do you believe? Will you believe?
- When is the last time you had a conversation about Jesus with someone?
 - ✓ Share your story (testimony).
 - ✓ Leave a Gospel tract.
 - ✓ Help others connect the dots.

❖ Since we are the body, we need to share Jesus with a broken, needy world.

1) Let’s talk about Jesus.

2) LET’S BUILD ONE ANOTHER UP. (PRO PRESENTER SLIDE BULLETIN OUTLINE)

- Not only are we to communicate God’s love to those outside the body of Christ...notice how we are to help one another within the Body.

Ephesians 4:11-16 (NLT) - ¹¹ Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. ¹² Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do His work and build up the church, the body of Christ. ¹³ This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. ¹⁵ Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. ¹⁶ He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

- Earlier in this chapter, Paul tells us to be humble, gentle and patient with one another...be willing to confront, and in some cases, overlook personality quirks because you love them.
- ✓ If we are to grow in the unity of faith and knowledge of God's Son, we will need to know why we believe what we believe.
- ✓ We cannot remain spiritual infants, easily deceived or confused by those who twist the Scripture.
- ✓ We are to love one another enough to confront when we see error encroaching or a believer wandering away from the path of godliness.
- ✓ We are to be honest with one another, we are not to defraud or cause harm to a fellow believer.
- ✓ Our words are to be beneficial to the hearer even if they are hard to swallow.

Ephesians 4:29 (NLT) – Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.

CLOSE:

- Our conversation should be much about Jesus.

- ✓ While we want our ministries and programs at church to shine...our goal is that each one will put the spotlight on Jesus.
 - When is the last time you spoke to someone about the Lord?

 - Will you ask the Lord to give you an opportunity to share the Good New this week?

- ✓ How are you building others up in the faith?
 - Do you need to lovingly confront someone?

 - How might you help redirect someone back to the right path again?

 - Who can you encourage and build up this week?

We are the Body...Speak!

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