



Challenging Christians to Pray

Prayergram®

April 2010

Speech Reveals Character

PETER shivered before the fire not so much from cold as from fear. He had tried to socialize among the servants of the hall of the high priest's palace, but twice he had been tagged as a disciple of the prisoner on trial, Jesus of Nazareth. Both times he denied vehemently, "I do not know the man." But they insisted that he was a disciple of Christ against which he had no alibi: "Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech betrayeth thee" (Matthew 26:73). Peter cursed, but his Galilean accent had already revealed him to the Judeans. Peter's speech "betrayed him, that is, revealed his real nature.

What Peter said was more revealing than the accent with which he said it. The same is true of many Christians today. The testimony of a Christian can be negated by betrayal. Blaise Pascal, the French philosopher, was so profound when he said, "The serene beauty of a holy life is the most powerful influence in the world next to the power of God." Christians should be careful of the language they use, because the non-Christian society is always scrutinizing what we say and do and we should not give them a reason to dishonor our Savior's name. There is a tendency among some Christians to introduce popular phrases merely for their cultural value. Suggestive slang and second hand cursing and funny jokes about certain nationalities may seem harmless,

but they can certainly hinder our Christian witness.

I am sure Peter had said many things as he sat in the palace but his only memorable words as he waited by the fire in the high Priest's hall were words of fear and denial. But before we cast our indignation on Peter for his denial of our Lord, let's examine our own hearts and see how often we rail against the Lord for not being fair and sympathetic to our plight. Peter did not stick up for Jesus and showed no loyalty to his master like many of us. We betray our Lord for all kinds of reasons, such as a pay increase, a promotion on the job, a one-night stand and a cheap bottle of whisky. We lash out on God when there is a shift in our natural circumstances. Christians are demonstrators of God's glory wherever they go. Do we declare God's goodness and mercy while we are in the company of our unsaved friends and peers? Do we keep quiet when Christ's holy name is being traduced for fear of losing worldly friendship and business associations? The way we use words tell a great deal about us. Words can be used to encourage, uplift, or to insult, criticize, and belittle others.

ask a fellow Christian to pray for a difficult situation, but there is no need to catalogue the assorted details that highlight the matter in question. Our primary concern ought to be the

Do we declare God's goodness and mercy while we are in the company of our unsaved friends and peers? Do we keep quiet when Christ's holy name is being traduced for fear of losing worldly friendship and business associations? The way we use words tell a great deal about us. Words can be used to encourage, uplift, or to insult, criticize, and belittle others.

restoration of the persons involved, not spreading malicious rumors. God's Word gives us potent counsel on the subject of wholesome speech.

First, we should ask God to guard our speech. Pray with the Psalmist, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips" (Psalm 141:3). Meditate on what we attempt to say. If it is of questionable in nature, say nothing. With a little perceptive thinking, we can really avoid many widely practiced language blunders and pitfalls. The loving Lord shapes and refines our speech in the manner in which it glorifies His name. Let us develop the ability to clothe our ideas in language that grips the mind and touches the heart and invigorates the soul.

Second, remember that "...out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matthew 12:34b). Keep the heart pure and allow the Holy Spirit to control our speech. Use language carefully. Finally, keep the mouth busy praising the Lord for all His goodness and mercy. Make this prayer your own: "I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth" (Psalm 34:1). The way one uses language is an indication of his true character. "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain" (James 1:26).

Compounding America's language pollution, there is also a growing sense that the country is quickly slipping into a moral and spiritual abyss. In studies conducted by his firm social analyst Daniel Yankelovic has found that "almost nine out of 10 Americans (87 percent) believe the nation's social morality to be in a state of decline and decay." According to a poll conducted by U.S. News & World Report, "A vast majority of

Americans feel their country has reached an ill-mannered watershed. Nine out of 10 Americans think incivility is a serious problem, and nearly one-half think it is extremely serious." One

writer has pointed out in a 1995 edition of *Ethics Magazine*, "We rely on manners and civility for the upkeep of a decent society." One could also argue that we depend on 'wholesome speech' and 'good manners' to maintain a courteous society. Look at our television programs and how they glorify 'reality shows' that are not conducive to a wholesome lifestyle. Biblical morals are necessary for the preservation of God's people. Moule suggests that the church is a garden hedged to keep out the 'weeds' which would strangle it. May I remind you that those who hold pure biblical standards are not antiquated or archaic? He that has no control of his tongue is like a fire that is out of control, destroying everything in its path. If we are concerned about the current language pollution, then we should practice wholesome language that represents true Christian virtue. Every Christian should have a profound sense of another realm, and sad to say that I do not witness

that realm in our eyes or hearts. Together with prayer, and the use of wholesome language, we can make a profound difference in society. Let Christ be lucid in our conversation! The very practice of pure language honors God and gives glory to Him, for it reveals the purity of God. The undeniable quality of a man lies in his ability to use language and constantly to aspire to make a better man of himself. "For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile" (1 Peter 3:10). Let us be wise and careful as we reflect the life of our Savior! Our speech reveals our character. The world is listening.

Compounding America's language pollution, there is also a growing sense that the country is quickly slipping into a moral and spiritual abyss. In studies conducted by his firm social analyst Daniel Yankelovic has found that "almost nine out of 10 Americans (87 percent) believe the nation's social morality to be in a state of decline and decay."

The gentle and meek spirit of a Christian touches us all—it is so refreshing, so steadfast and so inviting. Purity of heart promotes purity in speech.

You Make the Call by Matthew Skariah

A familiar religious phrase we hear quite often is: “We believe the Lord would have us expand our radio, television and building program; we are depending on the Lord to meet the needs; send us your generous contribution before next week! If you don’t have the money, you can charge it on your credit cards.” There is a relentless effort on the part of some people to build shrines to honor their names. The tendency to build shrines, to freeze some hallowed moment, to perpetuate some sacred event, can be the demise of ‘pure faith.’ God does not want us to build shrines and burn incense to the dead past. Our business is to follow Jesus, and we are to move among men who are dying of spiritual hunger and tell them of a life changing Savior. “*For men to search their own glory is not glory*” (Proverbs 25:27).

We sometimes thoughtlessly quote, “*My God shall supply all (blessed promise) your needs;*” but in reality, do we believe it? Most everything we hear today in religion has a knee-jerk quality; everything comes out in uniform and predictable form. Originality has become a thing of the past. If you listen to one ‘prosperity preacher,’ you listen to them all, like an echo chamber. It seems that those who promote a ‘gospel of wealth’ are merely justifying their own scramble for riches and voracious appetite for luxury.

Real faith works most convincingly when there is no way out. Faith is trust without reservation. Pure faith honors God and God honors pure faith. Our Lord is not broke and His treasury is

full and overflowing. George Muller, my spiritual inspiration, whose life was a practical lesson on faith and through simple faith and prayer he did mighty works for the Lord by caring for ten thousand orphans in the city of Bristol, England. Just imagine, George Muller, God’s beloved servant urging believers of his day to use their credit card to support the work of the Lord! Evangelical Christianity has fallen on strange times. Let us not attempt to supplement God’s provision by our scheming and planning. The life

of Jesus is not a life of begging, shrewdness and psychological trickery but a life of faith, passion, devotion, power and purity. Real faith connects our insufficiency to God’s sufficiency. Many people are afraid that the unforeseen future events might sabotage their much relied budget. Remember, God is greater than our budget! Naturally, as mortals, we would think of material things first and then grow into the knowledge of spiritual. Not so in God’s kingdom. In fact, it is the very opposite. So to attain the natural we must first acquire the spiritual, which is seeking first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Do not limit God. He cares and provides for those who put their trust in Him. No door is too difficult for Him to open. Never doubt. Never fear. Never despair. Never lose faith. All is well. God is on His throne and wonders are unfolding. God supplies our needs, not grudgingly, but in full measure. Let us hand over everything to God, in deep and abiding trust!

Faith vs. Presumption

What is prayer?

Prayer is developing the hunger to clothe our passion for God in language that grips the mind and penetrates the heart and excites the soul. This passion is captured by heart consecration and discipline. Prayer is soul-invigorating, wouldn’t you say?

— Matthew Skariah

What is self-denial?

Self-denial is an undeniable Christian process in which we resist the demands of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Life’s spiritual lessons cannot be learned without self excavation, and it’s quintessential to our spiritual growth.

— Matthew Skariah

Man is entrenched in many fears and doubts—the economy, his job, family, health, national and international terrorism, financial instability; he has a job he hates; a life that never satisfies; a belief that is never steady; theories he cannot validate and hopes seem fuzzy and unclear. What's the point of it all, he asks. Man is at war with himself. *"All the labor of man is for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled."* (Ecclesiastes 6:7).

Culture Watch

Man and His Many Fears

"Naked he came and naked he goes." Most men are not destroyed by their enemies but by themselves. For example, Alexander the Great conquered the known world but he never conquered himself. Consequently, he died as a drunkard maniac. History is full of such examples. Many, many are man's fears. Have no fear. There is no room for fear in the heart in which the Savior rules and reigns. Never inspire fear. Inspire only 'faith and hope.'

Underneath that veneer of respectability and gaiety, there lays a side of man that no one knows except the Lord. It is astounding how ignorant man is about himself. The greatest blunder in human existence is conceit; man is the epitome of conceit. As Soren Kierkegaard, father of modern existentialism, once said, *"Man is a creature of duplicity and doubt, a dissipated being."* As the prophet Jeremiah said, *"The heart is deceitful and desperately wicked and who can know it."* The heart of man (without Jesus Christ) is darker than the darkest night.

There are two forces at work in the world. Sooner or later man has to yield himself to God or the devil. Our steely determination and 'self-sufficiency' will utterly fail us.

*"Man is a leak of gas, escaping into the thin air."
(Sartre)*

Man cannot redeem himself and he is in need of a redeemer whose grace and mercy are unsurpassed. As the French philosopher Pascal said, *"Believe in God, you have nothing to lose."* Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

Biography of an Intercessor

An intercessor lives a very lonely life. *"All men forsook me,"* said Paul. It is a price he has to pay; there is loneliness in the vital ministry of prayer. Yet he will not be alone because he will be ministered to by the Spirit of God, as Elijah was ministered to at the brook Cherith. If he is a chosen vessel, he carries in his heart a burden for souls none can share but those who know it firsthand.

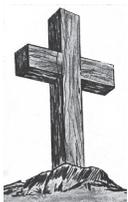
A true intercessor walks through life with an unsurpassed determination of a humble servant. He is unassuming, broken, non-combative, eternally optimistic and refreshingly simple. He does not long for the praise or applause of men. He never counts spiritual success by

**SPEAKING
PRAYERFULLY**
*Matthew
Skariah*

money raised. That is not how he measures Christian life and ministry. He knows true success is the measure of God's will that He has revealed to him through His Word and prayer. He is not the star but the extra. He is not the quarterback but the lineman. He is always taken for granted. *"What's your name again? Oh, you are the no-name lineman who protects the quarterback!"*

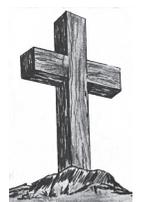
An intercessor is the one who stands in the gap and prays for his brothers and sisters. He depends less on words and more on the language of the heart—a voiceless cry. He knows his God is exquisitely and immortally magnificent. What an enduring legacy!

Intercessor, where are you? There are people waiting to be prayed for now.



The WPB Ministries

PRAYER IS THE MIGHTIEST FORCE — 2 Chronicles 7:14



◆ Intercession ◆ Prayer Conferences ◆ Revivals
◆ One to One Outreach ◆ Publications ◆ Overseas Crusades

Office: Petroleum Building • 200 W. 1st Street • Suite 531 • Roswell New Mexico 88203 • U.S.A.
(575) 623-6925 • E-mail: mwpbs@yahoo.com • Website: www.worldprayerband.com