

Speaking As the Oracles of God

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Peter penned, “*If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...*” (1 Peter 4:11). If we speak at all on religious matters we ought to speak as holy men of God spoke. Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:21). If we speak on the themes they discussed and say the things they said, then we are speaking as the oracles of God. How did these holy men of God speak? What does it mean to speak as the oracles of God?

Speak Much of Love. We will speak of the love God has for man (John 3:16; 1 John 4:8-10) and of the sacrifices made by our Lord that we might live (Romans 5:8). We will speak of the need for God’s children to love one another genuinely (1 Peter 2:22). We will speak against the love of the world and worldliness (1 John 2:15-17).

Speak of the Severity of God. Romans 11:22 says, “Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God...” Is God severe? Ask Nadab and Abihu who were struck dead (Leviticus 10:1-2). Ask Korah who rebelled against Moses (Numbers 16:31-33). Ask Uzzah who mishandled the ark (2 Samuel 6:7). Ask 23,000 who fell in one day (1 Corinthians 10:8). We will speak of that place which one should seek to escape, Hell. There is a lake that burns with fire and brimstone. There is a place of eternal destruction and damnation (Matthew 7:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:9). One of

the general tendencies of our day is not to be severe against sin. The God of the Bible is severe, and there is no other God in whom we may believe!

Speak of Jesus Christ and Him Crucified. Paul said, “For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified” (1 Corinthians 2:2). This is the central theme of gospel preaching (Acts 2:22-36; Acts 8:5, 35). What needs to be said about Christ? He died for us (Romans 5:8). He was raised for our justification (Romans 4:25). He is our King with all authority (Matthew 28:18). God, in Christ, is reconciling the world unto Himself (2 Corinthians 5:19). We need to have the mind of Christ (Philippians 2:5). The church and the world today need to hear the authority of the Lord magnified.

Speak of the Church. Holy men of God spoke often about this great institution. It may be called the kingdom of God, the body of Christ, or the house of God. The message of John was, “Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matthew 3:2). The church is important. It is here by the eternal purpose of God (Ephesians 3:11). It has a great mission (1 Timothy 3:15). It cost the blood of Christ (Acts 20:28). He loved it and gave Himself for it (Ephesians 5:25). The church began at Jerusalem on Pentecost. Some “churches” started in America in the last 100 years. Others began

a few hundred years ago. The Lord's church began about AD 33 (Isaiah 2:2-3; Acts 2:47). We will speak of the terms of entrance into the church. Baptism is essential as seen in the cases of conversion in the book of Acts (2:38; 8:12-13, 36-38; 9:18; 10:47; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:4-5). "We are buried with him by baptism" (Romans 6:3-4). We will speak concerning worship. Worship can be true or vain and must be on God's terms (Matthew 15:9; John 4:24). Early Christians continued steadfastly in worship (Acts 2:42). We will speak concerning the Lord's supper, singing, laying by in store, prayer, and teaching. We will speak concerning the need to not forsake the assembling of ourselves together (Hebrews 10:25). We will denounce anything that goes beyond His authority (2 John 9). We will speak concerning how the church is to be governed. Christ is the Head of the church (Ephesians 1:22). Elders were ordained in every church (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5-9). Elders tend the flock among them (1 Peter 5:2). We will speak concerning the mission or work of the church. The church is the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Timothy 3:15). We must not shun from declaring the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27). The mission is not to entertain but to preach the gospel (Mark 16:15-16; 1 Thessalonians 1:8). We will speak concerning the field of benevolence (Romans 15:25-26; 1 Timothy 5:16).

Speak of the Perfect Law of Liberty. This perfect law of liberty does not need to be revised (James 1:25). We must not omit a precept or add one single doctrine or practice to this complete law (Revelation 22:18-19). We must be acquainted with it (2 Timothy 2:15). We must understand that the Bible is a sufficient guide; it is complete (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Jude 3). The Bible is a perfect law and we should find book, chapter, and verse for a doctrine or practice or give it up.

Speak Boldly Against Worldliness and Sin in the Camp. We must reprove and rebuke as well as exhort (2 Timothy 4:2). If out of a whole congregation there is one who has married a woman to whom he has no right, the church is to say, as did John, "It is not lawful for thee to have her" (Matthew 14:4). We will contend for modest apparel rather than the attire of a harlot (1 Timothy 2:9; Proverbs 7:10). Vulgarity and all other sins of the tongue must be condemned (James 1:26). Sin is serious and must be fought. Error is able to damn one's soul (Romans 6:23). If plain teaching is not done, the day will come when the church will not endure sound doctrine (2 Timothy 4:2-4).

Speaking as the oracles of God is an important task and should be done "publicly and from house to house" (Acts 20:20).

The Terre Haute Speaker is published weekly by the church of Christ at Terre Haute, Indiana.

Assembling At:

Holiday Inn Express & Suites
2645 S Joe Fox St.
Terre Haute, IN 47803
(Exit 11, I-70 & SR 46)

www.churchofchristatterrehaute.com



Assembling Times:

Sunday @ 10:00 a.m. & 3:00 p.m.
Wednesday @ 7:00 p.m.



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Is Our
Only Guide!***