

Speak the Truth...

By Shari Miller

[For Bible study leader notes and Bible passages, click on the Quarterly icon at www.lwml.org or contact the LWML Office.]

Introduction: Have you ever been caught in a lie (honestly!)? What were the consequences of that lie? Whom did it affect? Share your memories with a partner or in small groups.

If time permits, share with the group your definition of a “white lie” and a “bald-faced lie”.



Opening Prayer

O Lord, let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in Your sight! Be with us as we study Your Word. We give You thanks and praise for this opportunity as we remember that Your Word is truth. We boldly speak to You in Jesus' Name. Amen.

In a popular movie, a courtroom scene pictures a young, ambitious military attorney questioning an older, more experienced officer about the truth behind the death of a young military man. After much badgering, the older officer finally yells at the younger man, “You can't handle the truth!” When do you find it hard to handle the truth? Choose one or more from the following and explain why.

The truth would:

- hurt my reputation
- damage my relationship with someone I love
- cause punishment or pain or both for me or someone I love
- be devastating
- _____ (your own answer)

Speak the Truth

What does God command in **Exodus 20:16**?

What does God forbid in this command?

1. **Zechariah 8:16–17; Psalm 34:13; Proverbs 19:5; Ephesians 4:25**
2. **Proverbs 11:13; Matthew 26:21–24, 47–50**
3. **Matthew 18:15; Luke 6:37; James 4:11a**

Read **Proverbs 8:6–7**. What kind of speech does God instruct us to use?

Read the following passages and identify characteristics of worthy speech:

1 Corinthians 13:1 and **7; Ephesians 4:15; 1 Peter 4:8b** _____

Proverbs 12:18; Proverbs 31:8–9 _____

Hebrews 3:13a _____

Deuteronomy 32:1–3; Psalm 51:15; Ephesians 5:19 (See also **Psalm 71:8** and **Psalm 145:10–12, 21**) _____

Psalm 49:3; Proverbs 20:15; Proverbs 31:26 _____

Acts 4:29; Acts 28:31 _____

James 1:26; Hebrews 12:5–11 _____

Discuss: What makes it difficult to speak words of chastisement or reprimand?

If time permits, share with a partner or the group a “truth-ism” that is a favorite for you (this could include a Bible verse, hymn verse, pithy saying, or the like).

Speak the Truth ... about THE TRUTH

Jesus says in **John 14:6**: *I am the Way and the Truth and the Life*. What do the following verses encourage Spirit-filled believers to do?

Isaiah 52:7

Psalm 40:10

Psalm 71:15

Acts 4:20

Matthew 28:18–20

Words are the way we verbally express ourselves to one another. They can encourage or discourage; they can be eloquent or misunderstood. Read **1 Corinthians 2:13**. What words does the Spirit enable us to speak?

What “faith-words” does the Spirit help us to share with those around us? See **Ephesians 1:7–8; Psalm 30:10–12; Philippians 4:7; Exodus 15:2; Ephesians 2:8–10**, and **John 3:16** for six words of faith. What additional words could be added to the list?

If time permits, share with a partner a new word you have recently learned, and share an old word of faith with that partner at the same time. **Challenge:** Learn a new word this week and share it with a friend. Share an old word of faith with that friend at the same time.

Speak the Truth ... by living the truth

Words have little meaning if not accompanied by action. See **1 John 3:18**.

Read **Colossians 3:12–17**. Paul's word-picture in this passage beautifully illustrates the connection between words and actions. How should all our words and actions be done (v.17)?

What specific words and actions could accompany the following:

(v. 13) – “Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another.”

(v. 14) – “And over all these virtues put on love...” (What “little acts of kindness” show your love for others?)

(v. 15) – “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts...”

(v. 16) – “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly...”

If time permits, discuss what we can learn about our speech-actions from the following:

1 Corinthians 1:4–7

Colossians 4:6, Matthew 5:13

Philippians 1:14

1 Peter 3:8–9

James 1:19–20

James 2:12

If time permits, discuss:

Why is it important to speak words of forgiveness and not just say, “That’s okay”?

Challenge: Memorize a new verse from the Bible and rejoice with the **Psalmist in 119:11a**: *I have hidden Your Word in my heart...*

Prayer

Your Word, O Lord, is a lamp to our feet and a light for our paths. Father, we confess that our speech is often not worthy — or is even unwholesome — and does not give You glory. Forgive us because of the saving work of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Help us to keep our conversation and actions salty and spicy even when situations arise that make it uncomfortable for us to speak. Enable us by the power of Your Spirit, to share our faith-words with those who need to hear. In the Name of Jesus, the Word made flesh for us. Amen.

Sing

“Thy Word” (*LSB* Accompaniment Edition, #973) or “Lord Jesus Christ, with Us Abide” (*LSB* 585; also found in *TLH* 292 and *LW* 344)

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