



Daily Devotions from Lutheran Hour Ministries

"We Can't Stop Talking"

April 26, 2024

Acts 4:19 - Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge, for we cannot but speak of what we have seen and heard."



This devotion pairs with this weekend's Lutheran Hour sermon, which can be found at LHM.org.

If you attend church, there's probably someone in your congregation you don't know very well—what he's done for work, where he grew up, the trials she's faced, the plans she's making. Maybe you attend the same worship service with her or him, but you don't know how he or she would answer questions like, "What did you love doing as a child that you don't do anymore?" Or, "Is there a new passion in your life that you rarely get to talk about?" Or, "What unresolved situation is taking up space in your mind?" Or, "What's your name, again?"

If you don't regularly attend church, you've got your reasons: you work on the weekends, or travel for activities. You're angry at God, or not sure anymore if there is a God, or if the question even matters. Or, maybe you don't attend church because of the people there. You know too much about them. You know that if you go, they'll want to talk to you. Or maybe they'll go out of their way to avoid you, and it will just be weird. And who needs that?

The title of this devotion—"We Can't Stop Talking"—is based on the words Peter and John said back to the religious leaders, a few weeks after their teacher, Jesus, had been crucified, raised from the dead, and raised into heaven with God, to rule earth and heaven at His Father's side. The religious leaders wanted them to keep quiet about this Jesus and His claims to be the Messiah, the rightful King of all creation, the Savior of the world, the Son of God. But Peter and John said they couldn't stop talking.

Now in that context they were referring to their external witness—words like horizontal arrows pointing out into the world. But if you read the rest of Acts 4, you'll notice that there are other ways in which they can't stop talking. Along with the outward arrow, there's an upward, vertical arrow, to God. When they're released from custody, they go to God in prayer, speaking God's words back to Him, talking to God about what they've been through, asking God for courage to keep talking. And there's a third sense in which they can't stop talking, another horizontal arrow. But instead of pointing outward, into the world, this one is pointing inward, to the gathered community of believers. Acts 4:23 says that the first thing they did when they were released was to go "to their friends" and tell them about what had happened. They engaged in what Martin Luther called, "the mutual conversation and consolation" of the brothers and the sisters.

All three arrows are part of the blessing God's Word gives to His people. God's Word is the source of the other three. The downward arrow from the Father's heart to mine and yours—God's Word made flesh in Jesus to call you from your sinful isolation, back to God—God, who tells you that you are loved, forgiven, and chosen. Through this downward arrow, the Holy Spirit works the other three—*outward* in witness to the world, *upward* in prayer to God, and *inward* in conversation with other Christians. It's true. We can't stop talking. So, where will you go, in person, this week, to hear from Jesus? And with whom will you talk on the way and while you're there? And what will you say in response to God in prayer, together?

WE PRAY: Holy Spirit, Lord and Giver of Life, keep us talking. In the Name of Jesus. Amen.

This Daily Devotion was written by Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler, Speaker of **The Lutheran Hour**.

Reflection Questions:

1. Who is someone at your local church you'd like to get to know better?
2. When would be a good time to ask them some "get to know you" questions?
3. What might keep you from praying with this person after your conversation?

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