

# TWO GOOD SPEAKERS

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It is interesting to compare God's chief spokesmen in each of the two Testaments. In the Old Testament, God inspired the first five books through Moses, which includes His law for the nation of Israel. In fact, 22 times in the Bible (15 in the Old Testament and 7 in the New Testament) the term "law of Moses" is used for God's law to Israel. The Apostle Paul is identified as God's inspired writer for 13 of the 27 books in the New Testament. No individual was inspired by God to write more of the Old Testament than Moses, and no individual was inspired by God to write more of the New Testament than Paul. Obviously, both of these men are among the most faithful servants of God and greatest of examples that we have in God's word. But Moses and Paul had something else in common: *by man's standard*, they were not good speakers. By God's standards, the only standard that matters, they *were* good speakers.

## Moses

Moses was reluctant to take on the role that God had chosen him for, as His chosen spokesman for the nation of Israel. "And Moses said unto the Lord, *O my Lord, I am not eloquent*, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: *but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue*. And the Lord said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the Lord? Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say" (Exod 4:10-12). Moses was not an eloquent speaker, but that meant nothing to God. God is the one who has made man's mouth, and He was well able to use Moses to accomplish His purpose. The Lord testified of Moses in Numbers 12:6-8, "Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. *With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold.*" The Lord dealt with Moses in a different way than with his other prophets because of the kind of heart Moses had, not by his speaking skills.

## Paul

Paul was the man that God used to convert many souls to Christ throughout the world. He was the one who started the church at Corinth (Acts 18), yet some of the Christians there despised him because of his physical appearance and the way he spoke. "For his letters, say they, are weighty

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(continued)

and powerful; but his bodily presence is weak, *and his speech contemptible*" (2 Cor 10:10). In 2 Corinthians 11:5-6, Paul said, "For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles. But *though I be rude in speech*, yet not in knowledge; but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things." But Paul labored more abundantly than all the other apostles (1 Cor 15:10). In 1 Timothy 1:12-16, Paul said, "And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."

### **What makes a good speaker to God**

Proverbs 20:6 points out the rarity of a faithful man: "Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness: but a faithful man who can find?" But God's prophets had to be faithful to only speak His word. "A wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but a faithful ambassador is health" (Prov 13:17). "As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters" (Prov 25:13). Jerermiah 23:28 says, "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." God's word is the wheat, and man's word is the chaff. Haggai the prophet is another one who was "the Lord's messenger," and spoke "in the Lord's message," which was strictly what "saith the Lord" (Hag 1:13). Faithfulness was one of the major characteristics of both Moses and Paul. Moses was faithful in all God's house (Num 12:7; Heb 3:2,5). And Paul was entrusted with the gospel of Christ because of his faithfulness (1 Cor 4:1-2; 7:25; 1 Tim 1:11-12). Moses and Paul only gave the wheat! Christians should be faithful in all things (1 Tim 3:11), which includes speaking only God's word. "*If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God*" (1 Pet 4:11). That is the true meaning of being a good speaker as God defines it.