

The Frankness of Jesus

by Samuel Logan Brengle

Jesus' message of frankness and openness is a call to follow His example and welcome the light, without concealment or secrets.

Scripture: Proverbs 16:28, Matthew 10:27, John 18:20, Romans 1:29-30, 1 Peter 2:22

Topics: "Truthfulness", "Openness in Communication"

Description

Samuel Logan Brengle emphasizes the frankness of Jesus, who spoke openly and boldly, never engaging in secretive or whispering conversations. He highlights that Jesus' life was an open book, embodying truth and transparency, and that He encouraged His followers to share the truth without fear. Brengle warns against the dangers of whispering and gossip, which can harm relationships and weaken faith, urging believers to emulate Jesus' example of honesty and openness. He concludes that a spirit of frankness fosters brotherly love and strengthens faith in God and one another.

Transcript

Jesus was not a whisperer. No one ever saw Him close to His neighbor's ear, looking stealthily around lest some one should overhear what He was going to say. He stood upright, looked men squarely and kindly in the eye, and spoke what He had to say right out, boldly, frankly, that the whole world might hear; and when He did speak privately to His disciples, He told them to shout it from the housetops. 'Truth fears nothing but concealment,' said an old Church Father, and Jesus spake only the truth. 'To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I might bear witness unto the truth.' 'What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops,' said He. It was against the Jewish law to spread dangerous doctrines secretly and the punishment was death (Deuteronomy xiii. 6). This the High Priest and leaders of the Jews had a right to inquire into, indeed it was their duty to do so, according to their law, though they had no right to make Jesus convict Himself. However, that was not possible, for He had boldly preached His doctrine before priest and scribes as well as His disciples and the common people, and He answered the High Priest: 'I spake openly to the world: I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.' This refers to His doctrine, but can it not be given a far wider meaning? Was not His whole life an open book? Was not all His conversation such as could be proclaimed openly to the whole world?

There was nothing dark and hidden about Jesus. He was and is the Light of the world, and He welcomed the light. He entered into no secret cabals and councils. He belonged to no clique or party faction. I really

do not believe He would have joined a secret society, for two reasons. First, because if there was anything wrong and dark about it His pure spirit, His guileless soul would have revolted and denounced and withdrawn from it, and second, because if there was anything good in it, His generous spirit, His loving soul, overflowing with pity and goodwill, would never have been content till the whole world knew about it and had the privilege of sharing in its benefits. A good thing that He could not offer to share with all men would have ceased to be a good thing to Jesus.

An astute Frenchman once said to our Founder: 'General Booth, you are not an Englishman, you're a citizen of the world. You belong to Humanity.' And in this the General was like his Master. Jesus belonged to the world. He was the 'Son of Man,' the Son of Mankind, of humanity. No party could claim Him. Thomas Jefferson wrote: 'If I could not go to Heaven but with a party, I would not go there at all.'

It was this generous, open, world-wide, selfless spirit of Jesus that made Him so frank in all His speech, so that at the end of His life and His brief, but complicated, ministry, in which His enemies had sought in every way to provoke and entrap Him, He could say, 'In secret have I said nothing.'

And now He wants us to 'follow His steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth who, when He was reviled, reviled not again: when He suffered, he threatened not.'

If we do this we shall not be talebearers, we shall not listen to, nor pass on gossip, nor be whisperers. 'A whisperer separateth chief friends,' said Solomon; and again he said: 'Where there is no talebearer (Whisperer, margin) the strife ceaseth.' And Paul linked up 'Whisperers ' -- people who go about saying things in secret that they are afraid to say out boldly to everybody -- I say Paul linked them up with fornicators, murderers, backbiters, and haters of God. (See Romans i. 29, 30.) And when he feared lest he should have trouble with his corps in Corinth, 'whispering' was one of the accursed things he particularly feared.

People who speak in secret what they are afraid to speak openly, wrong their own souls, weaken their own character, and corrupt themselves, while those who listen are filled with suspicions and dislikes, destroying the beautiful spirit of brotherly love, which is open-faced, frank and generous and saving in its power. It quenches the spirit of prayer, and faith in God and man languishes and possibly dies; for faith can live and flourish only in an atmosphere of frankness, of kindness and good will.

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