

## WHAT A CONVERSATION REVEALED

Apparently, I snore. I do not think I have a snoring problem because it never wakes me up. If you ask my wife and my daughter however, they both claim I have a snoring problem. Apparently, I can keep them both awake at times. They will even send texts back and forth some nights saying, "The bear is snoring again!" I find it interesting that the other female in our house, our dog Daisy, does not complain about my snoring. She snuggles right into me at the beginning of most nights and has no complaints or howls.

I decided to do something about my supposed snoring and had my doctor make a referral to a sleep clinic. Last week was my first clinic appointment. If you have ever been to one of these clinics, you will know there is quite a process to have all the straps and probes connected to you. I began chatting with the technician as she began to attach all of the necessary probes. I asked questions about how many nights she works a week, how COVID has affected the clinic, and various other questions. The more I chatted with her, the more she began to open up about some of the challenges she has been enduring recently.

She shared how early on in 2020 her husband passed away at the age of 50. She then revealed some of the challenges she has been encountering raising her teenage daughter. We talked the entire time she was attaching all of the probes to me. I offered words of sympathy and compassion along the way and listened as she opened up about these and other things going on in her life. As she attached the last probe, she looked at me and asked, "What do you do for a living?"

I smiled at her and replied, "I am a church minister."

With that she said, "I knew it. I could tell by the way you talked."

Not once during the conversation did I mention I was a Christian, or quote scripture to her. I just started up a conversation and talked as I would with anybody. It was interesting that the words I was speaking revealed to her that I must be a Christian minister.

This story is a reminder how the words that we use can be very revealing about ourselves. Usually, a person's accent might reveal something to us as to where that person may be from. I always find it interesting when I have travelled, whether in Europe or the United States, that people think we Canadians have a certain accent. I do not think I have said the word "eh" to them, yet they still say they can tell I am from Canada based on my accent.

A person's words can also reveal to us things that might interest them, their hopes or struggles, their background, their values, and so much more. We can speak so many words to others through the course of a day. It might be interesting for us to consider what other people are sensing or seeing in us based on the words we are using:

- Do our words reveal to them we have a good sense of humour?
- Do they show that we are kind and compassionate?
- Do they reveal we take an interest in other people and not just what is going on in our life?
- Do they reveal anger or hurt that is still unresolved in our lives?
- Do they reveal the hope and faith we have in our life because of our belief in Jesus?

Jesus reminds us how our words can be revealing to others about ourselves in one of His teachings during His Sermon on the Mount. In Luke 6, Jesus began a lesson about the fruit that people produce in their lives based on their words and actions. Here is what Jesus taught in Luke 6:45:

**A good person produces good things from the treasury of a good heart, and an evil person produces evil things from the treasury of an evil heart. What you say flows from what is in your heart.**

Jesus is reminding us here that our words reveal our true underlying beliefs, attitudes, and motivations, because what is in our heart will come out in our speech.

This is why I think it is so important to examine what others are saying to us after they listen to our words. What these people have seen and heard during our conversations with them might reveal to us if there is anything in our hearts we need to change. I am glad that this technician saw care and compassion in my heart as a result of my love for Jesus. Just as I shared last week how showing grace should come naturally to us, I pray our hearts are filled with a love for Jesus in a way that care and compassion are conveyed just as naturally. Let's start paying close attention to the words we are speaking and people's responses afterward. They will be very telling whether we need to fix our hearts in any way so that people naturally see our love for Jesus come out in the words we speak.

I was told by this technician that it would be four months before I get the results. My wife and daughter were not happy when they heard this. As they await the results, I am beginning to wonder if it would be better if I talked in my sleep rather than snored. I have seen how I put a few people to sleep in the words that I preach on a Sunday.

God Bless and Keep Safe  
Pastor Dean