

## **Telling My Tale**

*By Laura Shaw*

***"Don't shoot off your mouth, or speak before you think. Don't be too quick to tell God what you think he wants to hear. God's in charge, not you—the less you speak, the better."***

**Ecclesiastes 5:2, The Message**

Ever since I was a little girl, I've been a chatter-box! I have memories of yacking off the ears of perfect strangers in stores and other places as far back as I can remember. My sister loves to chuckle when she recalls the conversations of me with my dolls or playing pretend as an adolescent in my room as she would snoop outside. While most people who know me would say this is one of the qualities they love most about me, I can assure you that God doesn't always see it the same way. He's leading me today to share a personal struggle of my own—I know He will use it for His own purposes.

When my husband I were early in our marriage, I would often spill out angry and defensive words when I was frustrated with him. I can't tell you how many times he repeated the phrase, "Words once spoken cannot be retrieved." He was lovingly trying to teach me that while our remarks can be forgiven, they still have the possibility of leaving a mark on the hearer. A few years back at a leadership conference, the speaker put it in a different light for me: He said, "You can tell a lot about a person by the stories they tell." That is so true, isn't it?

Our mouths were made for praise! Mine often complains. Our tongues were made to brag on Him. Mine often defends myself. Our tonsils were made to shout out His goodness! How frequently mine barks out angry words. The list goes on...sharing, being real, telling the truth and making others laugh can easily become gossiping, using reckless words, harping or putting others' down...that is, if our words are not Spirit-led.

**Be real? Absolutely. He desires our authenticity. (Philippians 4:8)**

*May it be in His timing, though. (Romans 8:6)*

*May it be led by His Spirit, lest we cause another to stumble. (Romans 14:13)*

**Share our stories with others? He loves a good story and shared LOTS of them Himself. (Matthew 13:34)**

*May it be His stories and our stories we love to tell---not others.'*  
(Acts 26:1)

*May it result in bringing others closer to Him. (1 Corinthians 14:37)*

**Give others a good laugh? I should say so! Laughter is great medicine. (Proverbs 17:22)**

*May it be an everyday part of my life. (Psalm 126:2)*

*May it bring tears of joy instead of hurt. (Job 30:9)*

**Tell the truth? Well, He certainly doesn't want us to lie. (Psalm 119:29)**

*May it as easy to receive the truth ourselves (so long as it is the truth) as it is to give it to others. (Ephesians 4:13-15)*

*May it flow naturally from us to share HIS truth—THE truth! (Psalm 78:4)*

I'm asking the Lord to use the Scripture and the wise advice from above to help me today. I find myself gravitating to the pattern of my youth again and again...and while the Lord doesn't want me to swim in guilt, He does want me to grow up and stay out of the puddle I once waded knee deep in. The older I get spiritually, the more I long to use my lungs to breathe in His truth and my tonsils to praise out of the overflow. Unfortunately, "the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" sometimes. Does any of this tale tell some of your story, too? If so, the only way for you and I to have victory in our conversations is to ask the Lord to give us His words...His beautiful words of life! Let's pray and ask together this moment.

**Jeremiah 1:9**

**"□Then the LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, 'Now, I have put my words in your mouth.'"**