

A MAN NAMED TALKATIVE



Moreover I saw in my dream, that as they went on, *Faithful*, as he chanced to look on one side, saw a man whose name was *Talkative*, walking at a distance besides them; for in this place there was room enough for them all to walk.¹ He was a tall man, and something more comely at a distance than at hand. To this man *Faithful* addressed himself in this manner.

Talkative described.

2. ***Faith.*** Friend, whither away? Are you going to the heavenly country?²

¹ In a time of outward peace, there is room for all sorts of professors to show themselves; then hypocrites abound; for the form of godliness exposes them to no danger.

² We live in an age of great profession, and one may add also, of great declension from the purity of the gospel, and the power of vital religion. In *Talkative* you see an exact picture of many in our days. They can talk of the truths of the gospel with great clearness and propriety, whilst they are destitute of the saving efficacy of them in renewing their hearts, and transforming them into the image of Christ. Persons of this stamp can suit any conversation; be serious with the godly, light with the vain, and impious with the profane. Such as these bring the reproach upon religion, cause the good ways of the Lord to be evil spoken of, and perplex the righteous.

3. ***Talk.*** I am going to that same place.

4. ***Faith.*** That is well; then I hope we may have your good company?

5. ***Talk.*** With a very good will will I be your companion.

6. ***Faith.*** Come on then, and let us go together, and let us spend our time in discoursing of things that are profitable.

Faithful and Talkative enter into discourse.

7. ***Talk.*** To talk of things that are good, to me is very acceptable, with you, or with any other; and I am glad that I have met with those that incline to so good a work;³ for to speak the truth, there are but few that care thus to spend their time as they are in their travels, but choose much rather to be speaking of things to no profit; and this hath been a trouble to me.

Talkative's dislike of his discourse.

8. ***Faith.*** That is indeed a thing to be lamented; for what thing so worthy of the use of the tongue and

³ No part of a Christian's language is more easily imitated, than his lamentation for the degeneracy of the times. A spirit of censoriousness and self-exaltation may be greatly indulged in this way.

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mouth of men on earth, as are the things of the God of heaven?

9. **Talk.** I like you wonderful well, for your sayings are full of conviction; and I will add, What thing is so pleasant, and what so profitable, as to talk of the things of God? What things so pleasant? that is, if a man hath any delight in things that are wonderful. For instance: if a man doth delight to talk of the history, or the mystery of things; or if a man doth love to talk of miracles, wonders, or signs, where shall he find things recorded so delightful, and so sweetly penned, as in the Holy Scripture?

10. **Faith.** That's true; but to be profited by such things in our talk, should be that which we design.

11. **Talk.** That is it that I said; for to talk of such things is most profitable; for by so doing, a man may get knowledge of many things; as of the vanity of earthly things, and the benefit of things above. Thus in general; but more particularly, by this a man may learn the necessity of the new birth, the insufficiency of our works; the need of Christ's righteousness, &c. Besides, by this a man may learn what it is to repent, to believe, to pray, to suffer, or the like: by this also, a man may learn what are the great promises and consolations of the gospel, to his own comfort. Further, by this a man may learn to refute false opinions, to vindicate the truth, and also to instruct the ignorant.

12. **Faith.** All this is true, and glad am I to hear these things from you.

13. **Talk.** Alas! the want of this is the cause that so few understand the need of faith, and the necessity of a work of grace in their soul, in order to eternal life; but ignorantly live in the works of the law, by which a man can by no means obtain the kingdom of heaven.

14. **Faith.** But, by your leave, heavenly knowledge of these is the gift of God; no man attaineth to them by human industry, or only by the talk of them.

15. **Talk.** All this I know very well. For a man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven; all is of grace, not of works. I could give you a hundred scriptures for the confirmation of this.

16. **Faith.** Well then, said *Faithful*, what is that one thing that we shall at this time found our discourse upon?

17. **Talk.** What you will. I will talk of things heavenly, or things earthly; things moral, or things evangelical; things sacred, or things profane; things past, or things to come; things foreign, or things at home; things more essential, or things circumstantial; provided that all be done to our profit.

18. **Faith.** Now did *Faithful* begin to wonder; and stepping to

O brave Talkative.

O brave Talkative.

Faithful beguiled by Talkative.

Talkative's
fine discourse.

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Christian, (for he walked all this while by himself) he said to him, but softly. What a brave companion have we got! Surely this man will make a very excellent pilgrim.

Christian makes a discovery of Talkative, telling Faithful who he was.

19. **Chr.** At this *Christian* modestly smiled, and said, This man, with whom you are so taken, will beguile with this tongue of his twenty of them that know him not.

20. **Faith.** Do you know him then?

21. **Chr.** Know him? Yes, better than he knows himself.

22. **Faith.** Pray what is he?

23. **Chr.** His name is *Talkative*; he dwelleth in our town. I wonder that you should be a stranger to him, only I consider that our town is large.

24. **Faith.** Whose son is he? And whereabouts doth he dwell?

25. **Chr.** He is the son of one *Say-well*. He dwelt in *Prating Row*, and he is known of all that are acquainted with him, by the name of *Talkative* in *Prating Row*; and notwithstanding his fine tongue, he is but a sorry fellow.

26. **Faith.** Well, he seems to be a very pretty man.

27. **Chr.** That is, to them that have not a thorough acquaintance with him, for he is best abroad; near

home he is ugly enough. Your saying that he is a *pretty man*, brings to my mind what I have observed in the work of the painter, whose pictures shew best at a distance; but very near, more displeasing.

28. **Faith.** But I am ready to think you do but jest, because you smiled.

29. **Chr.** God forbid that I should jest, (though I smiled) in this matter, or that I should accuse any falsely. I will give you a further discovery of him. This man is for any company, and for any *talk*; as he *talketh now* with you, so will he *talk* when he is on the *ale-bench*; and the more drink he hath in his crown, the more of these things he hath in his mouth. Religion hath no place in his heart, or house, or conversation; all he hath lieth in his *tongue*, and his religion is to make a noise therewith.

30. **Faith.** Say you so? Then am I in this man greatly deceived.

31. **Chr.** Deceived! you may be sure of it. Remember the proverb, *They say, and do not; but the Kingdom of God is not in word but in power*. He talketh of prayer, of repentance, of faith, and of the new birth; but he knows but only to *talk* of them. I have been in his family, and have observed him both at home and abroad; and I know what I say of him is the truth. His house is as empty of religion, as the white of an egg is of savour. There is there nei-

Mat. 23.
I Cor. 4. 20.

Talkative talks, but does not.

His house is empty of religion.

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ther prayer, nor sign of repentance for sin; yea, the brute in his kind, serves God far better than he. He is the very stain, reproach, and shame of religion to all that know him, it can hardly have a good word in all that end of the town where he dwells, through him. Thus, say the common people that know him, *A saint abroad, and a devil at home.* His poor family finds it so; he is such a churl, such a railer at, and so unreasonable with his servants, that they neither know how to do for, or speak to him. Men that have any dealings with him say, 'Tis better to deal with a *Turk* than with him, for fairer dealing they shall have at their hands. This *Talkative* (if it be possible) will go beyond them, defraud, beguile, and overreach them. Besides, he brings up his sons to follow his steps; and if he findeth in any of them *a foolish timorousness*, (for so he calls the first appearance of a tender conscience), he calls them fools and blockheads, and by no means will employ them in much, or speak to their commendations before others. For my part, I am of opinion, that he has, by his wicked life, caused many to stumble and fall; and will be, if God prevent not, the ruin of many more.

32. **Faith.** Well, my brother, I am bound to believe you, not only because you say you know him, but also because, like a *Christian*, you make your reports of men. For I cannot think that you speak these things of ill-will, but because it is even so as you say.

33. **Chr.** Had I known him no more than you, I might perhaps have thought of him as at the first you did; yea, had he received this report at their hands only that are enemies to religion, I should have thought it had been a slander,--a lot that often falls from bad men's mouths, upon good men's names and professions. But all these things, yea, and a great many more as bad, of my own knowledge, I can prove him guilty of. Besides, good men are ashamed of him; they can neither call him *brother* nor *friend*; the very naming of him among them, makes them blush, if they know him.

34. **Faith.** Well, I see that *saying* and *doing* are two things, and hereafter I shall better observe this distinction.

35. **Chr.** They are two things indeed, and are as diverse as are the soul and the body; for as the body without the soul is but a dead carcass, so *saying*, if it be alone, is but a dead carcass also. The soul of religion is the practical part: *pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.*⁴ This *Talkative* is

The carcass of religion

Jam. 1. 27.
See ver. 23,
24, 25, 26.

⁴ Mr. Bunyan lays down practical godliness as the most undoubted evidence of a real Christian. "By their fruits ye shall know them." says the Lord. We cannot judge of the goodness of a tree by its luxuriant growth of leaves, or by its being covered with a fair and beauteous bloom: But by the fruit, which it afterwards produces.

The proverb that goes of him.

Men shun to deal with him.

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not aware of; he thinks that *hearing* and *saying* will make a good Christian; and thus he deceiveth his own soul. Hearing is but as the sowing of the seed; talking is not sufficient to prove that fruit is indeed in the heart and life. And let us assure ourselves, that at the day of doom, men shall be judged according to their fruit. It will not be said then, *Did you believe?* but were you *doers*, or *talkers* only? and accordingly shall they be judged. The end of the world is compared to our harvest, and you know men at harvest regard nothing but fruit. Not that any thing can be accepted that is not of faith; but I speak this to shew you how insignificant the profession of *Talkative* will be at that day.

See Matt. 13.
and ch. 25.

36. **Faith.** This brings to my mind that of *Moses*, by which he described the beast that is clean. He is such an one that parteth the hoof, and cheweth the cud; not that parteth the hoof only, or that cheweth the cud only. The hare cheweth the cud, but yet is unclean, because he parteth not the hoof. And this truly resembleth *Talkative*: he cheweth the cud, he seeketh Knowledge; he cheweth upon the word, but he divideth not the hoof, he parteth not with the way of sinners; but as the

Lev. 11.
Deut. 14.
Faithful
convinced of
the badness
of Talkative.

Thus it is no proof that we are Christ's disciples by our making an outward profession, or by telling a fine story of our experiences, but by doing the things which he has commanded us. "Ye are my friends," ye give evidence that ye are so, "if ye do whatsoever I command you."

hare, he retaineth the foot of a dog or bear, and therefore is unclean.

37. **Chr.** You have spoken, for ought I know, the true gospel sense of those texts. And I will add another thing: *Paul* calleth some men, yea, and those great *Talkers* too, *sounding brass, and tinkling cymbals*, that is, as he expounds them in another place, things without life, giving sound. Things without life, that is, without the true faith and grace of the gospel; and consequently, things that shall never be placed in the kingdom of heaven among those that are the children of life, though their sound by their *talk*, be as it were the tongue or voice of an angel.

I Cor. 13. 1,
2, 3.
Ch. 14. 7.

Talkative's I
like of things
that sound
without life.

38. **Faith.** Well, I was not so fond of his company at first, but I am as sick of it now. What shall we do to be rid of him?

39. **Chr.** Take my advice, and do as I bid you, and you shall find that he will soon be sick of your company too, except God shall touch his heart and turn it.

40. **Faith.** .What would you have me to do?

41. **Chr.** Why, go to him, and enter into some serious discourse about the *power of religion*; and ask him plainly, (when he has approved of it, for that he will) whether this thing be set up in his heart, house, or conversation.

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42. **Faith.** Then *Faithful* stepped forward again, and said to *Talkative*, *Come, what cheer? How is it now?*

43. **Talk.** Thank you, well: I thought we should have had a great deal of talk by this time.

44. **Faith.** Well, if you will, we will fall to it now; and since you left it with me to state the question, let it be this: How doth the saving grace of God discover itself, when it is in the heart of man?

45. **Talk.** I perceive then that our talk must be about the *power of things*. Well, 'tis a very good question, and I shall be willing to answer you. And take my answer in brief, thus: *First*, Where the grace of God is in the heart, it causeth there a great outcry against sin. *Secondly*—

46. **Faith.** Nay, hold, let us consider of one at once. I think you should rather say, It shews itself by inclining the soul to abhor its sin.

47. **Talk.** Why, what difference is there between crying out against, and abhorring of sin?

48. **Faith.** Oh! a great deal. A man may cry out against sin, of policy, but he cannot abhor it but by virtue of a godly antipathy against it. I have heard many cry out against sin in the pulpit, who yet can abide it well enough in the heart, house, and conversation. *Joseph's* mistress cried out with a loud voice, as if she had

been very holy; but she would willingly, notwithstanding that, have committed uncleanness with him. Some cry out against sin, even as the mother cries out against her child in her lap, when she calleth it slut and naughty girl, and then falls to hugging and kissing it.

49. **Talk.** You lie at the catch, I perceive.

50. **Faith.** No, not I, I am only for setting things right. But what is the second thing whereby you would prove a discovery of a work of grace in the heart?

51. **Talk.** Great knowledge of *gospel mysteries*.

52. **Faith.** This sign should have been first; but first or last, it is also false; for knowledge, great knowledge may be obtained in the mysteries of the gospel,⁵ and yet no work of grace in the soul. Yea, if a man have all knowledge, he may yet be nothing, and so consequently be no child of God. When Christ said, *Do you know all these things?* And the

⁵ Strictly speaking, a hypocrite, however he may abound in notional knowledge, is destitute of the vital power of godliness, and incapable of the least true knowledge of gospel mysteries. He may learn indeed to talk of them, and may have his head stored with notions about them, but he has no ideas answerable to his words. So a man born blind may learn to talk of the sun, or the rainbow, by repeating what he has heard others say; but having never seen them he knows nothing of the brightness of the one, or the colors of the other.

Talkative's false discovery of a work of grace.

The crying out against sin, no sign of grace.

Gen. 39. 15.

Great knowledge no sign of grace. 1 Cor. 13.

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disciples had answered, Yes: He added, *Blessed are ye, if ye do them.* He doth not lay the blessing in the *knowing* of them, but in the *doing* of them. For there is a knowledge that is not attended with doing: *He that knoweth his Master's will, and doth it not.* A man may know like an angel, and yet be no Christian; therefore your sign is not true. Indeed, to *know*, is a thing that pleaseth talkers and boasters; but to *do*, is that which pleaseth God. Not that the heart can be good without knowledge; for without that, the heart is naught. There is therefore knowledge and knowledge;—knowledge that resteth in the bare speculation of things, and knowledge that is accompanied with the grace of faith and love, which puts a man upon doing even the will of God from the heart: the first of these will serve the *talker*; but without the other, the true Christian is not content. *Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.*

Knowledge and knowledge.

True knowledge attended with endeavours.

53. **Talk.** You lie at the catch again; this is not for edification.

54. **Faith.** Well, if you please, propound another sign how this work of grace discovereth itself where it is.

55. **Talk.** Not I, for I see we shall not agree.

56. **Faith.** Well, if you will not, will you give me leave to do it?

57. **Talk.** You may use your liberty.

58. **Faith.** A work of grace in the soul discovereth itself, either to him that hath it, or to standers by.

59. To him that hath it, thus; It gives him conviction of sin, especially the defilement of his nature, and the sin of unbelief, (for the sake of which he is sure to be damned, if he findeth not mercy at God's hand, by faith in Jesus Christ.) This sight and sense of things worketh in him sorrow and shame for sin:⁶ He findeth, more-over, revealed in him the Savior of the world, and the absolute necessity of closing with him for life, at the which he findeth hungerings and thirstings after him; to which hungerings, &c. the promise is made. Now according to the strength or weakness of his faith in his Savior, so is his joy and peace, so is his love to holiness, so are his desires to know him more, and also to serve him in this world. But though, I say, it discovereth itself thus unto him, yet it is but seldom that he is able to conclude, that this is a work of grace, because his corruptions now, and his abused reason, make his mind to misjudge in this matter; therefore in him that hath this work, there is required a very sound judgment, before he can with steadiness

One good sign of grace.
John 16. 8.
Rom. 7. 24.
John 16. 9.
Ps. 38. 18.
Jer. 31. 19.
Gal. 2. 16.
Acts 4. 12.
Matt. 5. 6.
Rev. 21. 6.

⁶ The grace of God in the heart leads a person to a true conviction of sin in its odiousness and defilement, and especially to a discovery of that which is the root of all evils, the sin of unbelief.

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conclude that this is a work of grace.
To others it is thus discovered:

60. 1. By an *experimental confession* of his *faith in Christ*.

61. 2. By a life answerable to that confession, to wit, a *life of holiness*: heart-holiness, family-holiness, (if he hath a family,) and by conversation-holiness in the world; which in the general teacheth him inwardly to abhor his sin, and himself for that, in secret; to suppress it in his family, and to promote holiness in the world; not by *talk* only, as an hypocrite or talkative person may do, but by a practical subjection in faith and love to the power of the word. And now, Sir, as to this brief description of the work of grace, and also the discovery of it, if you have ought to object, object; if not, then give me leave to propound to you a second question.

62. **Talk.** Nay, my part is not now to object, but to hear; let me therefore have your second question.

63. **Faith.** It is this: Do you experience the first part of the description of it? And doth your life and conversation testify the same? Or standeth your religion in *word* or *tongue*, and not in *deed* and truth? Pray, if you incline to answer me in this, say no more than you know the God above will say *Amen* to, and also nothing but what your conscience can justify you in; *For not he that commendeth him self, is approved, but whom the Lord com-*

mendeth. Besides, to say, I am thus, and thus, when my conversation, and all my neighbors, tell me I lie, is great wickedness.

64. **Talk.** Then *Talkative* at first began to blush; but recovering himself, thus he replied: You come now to experience, to conscience, and God; and to appeal to him for justification of what is spoken. This kind of discourse I did not expect; nor am I disposed to give an answer to such questions, because I count not myself bound thereto, unless you take upon you to be a *Catechiser*; and though you should so do, yet I may refuse to make you my judge. But I pray will you tell me why you ask me such questions?

65. **Faith.** Because I saw you forward to talk, and because I knew not that you had ought else but notion. Besides, to tell you all the truth, I have heard of you, that you are a man whose religion lies in talk, and that your conversation gives this your mouth-profession the lie. They say you are a spot among Christians; and that religion fareth the worse for your ungodly conversation; that some already have stumbled at your wicked ways, and that more are in danger of being destroyed thereby; your religion, and an ale-house, and covetousness, and uncleanness, and swearing, and lying, and vain company-keeping, &c. will stand together. The proverb is true of you, which is said of a whore, to wit, *That she is a shame to all women*, so you are a shame to all professors.

Rom 10. 10.
Phil. 1. 27.
Matt. 5. 9
John 14. 15.
Ps. 50. 23.
Job 42. 5, 6.
Ezek. 20. 43.

Another
good sign of
grace.

Talkative not
pleased with
Faithful's
question.

The reason
why Faithful
put him to
that ques-
tion.

Faithful's
plain deal-
ing to Talka-
tive.

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Talkative
flings away
from Faithful.

66. **Talk.** Since you are ready to take up reports, and to judge so rashly as you do, I cannot but conclude you are some peevish or melancholy man, not fit to be discoursed with, and so, adieu.

A good
riddance.

67. **Chr.** Then came up *Christian*, and said to his brother, I told you how it would happen; your words and his lusts could not agree. He had rather leave your company, than reform his life. But he is gone, as I said, let him go, the loss is no man's but his own; he has saved us the trouble of going from him; for he continuing (as I suppose he will do) as he is, he would have been but a blot in our company. Besides, the Apostle says, *From such withdraw thyself.*

68. **Faith.** But I am glad we had this little discourse with him; it may happen that he will think of it again: however, I have dealt plainly with him, and so am clear of his blood, if he perisheth.

69. **Chr.** You did well to talk so plainly to him as you did. There is but little of this faithful dealing with men now-a-days, and that makes religion to stink so in the nostrils of many as it doth: for they are these talkative fools, whose religion is only in word, and are debauched and vain in their conversation, that (being so much admitted into the fellowship of the godly) do puzzle the world, blemish Christianity, and grieve the sincere. I wish that all men would deal with such, as you

have done; then should they either be made more conformable to religion, or the company of saints would be too hot for them.

70. Then did *Faithful* say,

*How Talkative at first
lifts up his plumes!
How bravely doth he speak!
How he presumes
To drive down all before him!
But so soon
As Faithful talks of heart-work,
like the moon
That's past the full,
into the wane he goes;
And so will all, but he that
heart-work knows. †*

NOTES:
