

S T U D Y   G U I D E

AARON L. GARRIOTT

# A WORD

A THEOLOGY OF

# FITLY

COMMUNICATION

# SPOKEN



# A Word Fitly Spoken

STUDY GUIDE



LIGONIER MINISTRIES

*A Word Fitly Spoken Study Guide*

© 2025 by Ligonier Ministries

Published by Ligonier Ministries

421 Ligonier Court,

Sanford, FL 32771

Ligonier.org

ISBN 978-1-64289-694-7

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise—without the prior written permission of the publisher, Ligonier Ministries.

Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

# How to Use This Study Guide

This study guide includes a chapter synopsis, a lesson objective, key passages, key points, and discussion questions from each chapter in *A Word Fitly Spoken*, as well as questions that focus on a relevant passage of Scripture from each chapter. Participants should first read each corresponding chapter of the book in order to make the best use of this guide.

**Chapter Synopsis:** This section summarizes the material in the chapter and provides a reminder of what the chapter covered. It serves to help readers remember what they've already read in the book.

**Lesson Objective:** This section explains the purpose of the chapter and the intended outcome of the study guide lesson.

**Key Passages:** This section quotes several passages from the chapter so that readers can remember some of the more significant things the author said. It can also serve as a starting point for discussion if the group leader would like to ask questions or provide thoughts related to excerpts from the book.

**Key Points:** This section outlines many of the basic ideas that the author mentioned in the chapter. It helps readers recall not just the big idea of the chapter but also its supporting ideas and their flow.

**Scripture Reading:** This section highlights one of the chapter's key points in God's Word. It helps readers identify the scriptural basis of important Christian doctrines and develops their ability to understand Scripture through questions about the reading. These questions are also ideal for group study.

## A WORD FITLY SPOKEN STUDY GUIDE

**Reflection Questions:** This section provides readers with questions that could be asked of themselves or in a small-group setting. The questions are designed to help readers understand the chapter and apply that knowledge to their lives.

**Prayer:** This section closes the study with an opportunity to come before the Lord in prayer based on what readers have learned.

# Introduction: Who Made Man's Mouth?

## CHAPTER SYNOPSIS

During Moses' encounter with God in Exodus 4, He asks Moses, "Who has made man's mouth?" (v. 11). A theology of communication begins with the One who made us with the ability to communicate, showing that communications cannot properly be studied without reference to God. Communication fundamentally serves a divine purpose, and we must steward our ability to communicate, imitating God in our chief end, which is His glory.

## LESSON OBJECTIVE

This chapter will introduce the foundations, themes, and structure of *A Word Fitly Spoken* so that you will immediately see why embarking on a study of communications is worthwhile.

## KEY PASSAGES

*The Lord created man with the capacity to receive, interpret, and determine meaning and appropriately transmit this meaning through a system of symbols for a divine purpose—to dwell with the Lord and His people. (p. 2)*

*Moses' encounter with God illustrates the futility of studying communication, meaning, language, and words without considering God. God created man with the ability to communicate. What's more, He sustains communication. We would therefore do well to consider the beginning so that we can determine the end. That is, for what purpose did God create man's ability to determine and transmit meaning? (p. 3)*



## A WORD FITLY SPOKEN STUDY GUIDE

*Communication is fundamentally and profoundly theological. When the theology of the Bible informs how we understand communication, language, and speech, this understanding will be reflected in the way that we think about speaking and communicating as Christians (p. 5)*

*Knowledge and clear articulation must be wed for faithful and effective communication. (p. 5)*

### KEY POINTS

**Moses' Encounter with God** (pp. 1–3): Moses encountered God at Mount Horeb, where God called him to be the deliverer of Israel. Despite Moses' objections that he was “slow of speech and of tongue,” God reminded him, “Who has made man's mouth?” (Ex. 4:10–11). This rhetorical question established God as the Creator and Sustainer of communication and assured Moses that God's words would accomplish His purpose through him.

**The Structure of *A Word Fitly Spoken*** (pp. 3–4): *A Word Fitly Spoken* is divided into two main parts. Part 1 lays the theological and biblical foundation for understanding communication, focusing on God's own communication as our Creator and Redeemer, looking at God's speech in redemptive history and the mediums and purpose of His communication. Part 2 shifts to practical application, examining how Christians can communicate faithfully and effectively in different contexts and mediums.

**A Definition of Communication** (p. 4): Griffin, Ledbetter, and Sparks describe communication as “the relational process of creating and interpreting messages that elicit a response.” This definition highlights four key elements of communication: the message (what is communicated), the relational process (who is involved), the creation of meaning (how it is conveyed), and interpretation (why it is communicated).

**Communication as an Imitation of God** (pp. 5–6): Communication is rooted in God's design, reflecting His nature as the ultimate Communicator. God created us with the ability to receive, interpret, and transmit meaning for His divine purpose. As we steward words faithfully, articulating the truth, we imitate God, and we participate in His redemptive plan and fulfill our role as image bearers.

## INTRODUCTION: WHO MADE MAN'S MOUTH?

### SCRIPTURE READING

**1 Corinthians 2:1–5** And I, when I came to you, brothers, did not come proclaiming to you the testimony of God with lofty speech or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear and much trembling, and my speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

- How does Paul's reliance on the Spirit align with God's response to Moses' objections?
- What does this passage teach about the relationship between humility and faithful communication?

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What is the nature of Moses' two questions in response to God's call?
2. What redemptive-historical lesson does God teach Moses?
3. Why did God give us an ability to communicate? In what ways are you stewarding this ability well, and in what areas do you want to see improvements?
4. How is communication fundamentally theological?

### PRAYER

- Praise God as the Creator and Sustainer of our God-glorifying communication.
- Confess ways that you have failed to speak the truth out of fear or feelings of inadequacy.
- Thank God for His promise to empower and inform our communication for serving His purposes.
- Ask God for knowledge, boldness, and faithfulness to articulate what you believe to others.



# A Communicative Being and the *Imago Dei*

## CHAPTER SYNOPSIS

God is in His very nature a communicative being, for He exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Communication is rooted in the triune God, whose eternal fellowship is characterized by perfect communion. Our being made in the image of God, therefore, involves our ability to communicate with each other and, more profoundly, to communicate with Him. As image bearers, we have unique capacity for communion with God, and God's making us like Himself reflects His communicative goodness and desire to share His love and truth, and it ought to direct the way that we communicate.

## LESSON OBJECTIVE

This chapter will present the theological foundations of communication in God's triune nature to help us better understand and steward the gift of speech that God has given us as His image bearers.

## KEY PASSAGES

*The Trinity underscores the foundational principle that communication did not originate with humans. (p. 10)*

*To study communication is to humbly explore the eternal fellowship of our triune God, to ponder His ways, and to expand our understanding of God and of His images. (p. 10)*

*God's communication of Himself in creation and redemption reflects the intra-Trinitarian communication shared between the Father, Son, and Spirit before creation. (p. 13)*

*Being made in the image of God sets man apart; it makes him unique as the only creature who is made like God (Gen. 1:26–27). . . . Since man is like the speaking God, then man ought to reflect his Creator by speaking. (p. 15)*

#### KEY POINTS

**Communication in the Trinity** (pp. 9–11): Language is inherently theological because it originates in God's very own being. Communication and love existed eternally within the triune Godhead—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—before anything was created.

**God's Communicative Goodness** (pp. 11–13): God has no need for anything outside Himself. Scripture makes it clear that God lacks nothing, so why did He create anything? Creation is an overflow of God's goodness and communicative nature. God made creatures to communicate His goodness with them.

**The *Imago Dei*** (pp. 14–15): Human beings are created in the image of God, and just as God is a rational, communicative being, He gave us unique capabilities for rationality and relational communication. Fundamentally, our existence and abilities—thinking, working, resting, and speaking—reflect God's own nature and activities.

**Communion and Communication** (pp. 15–17): God's setting us apart as image bearers means that we are able to comprehend and respond to God; this is God's way of communicating His goodness, not just to creation, but to *us*. We can commune with God, and we can also commune with others, which is central to the purpose of communication.

#### SCRIPTURE READING

**John 1:1–4** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

- How does this passage show the communion between the Father and Son before the world existed?

## A WORD FITLY SPOKEN STUDY GUIDE

- What other features of this passage highlight God's communicative nature, and also man's?

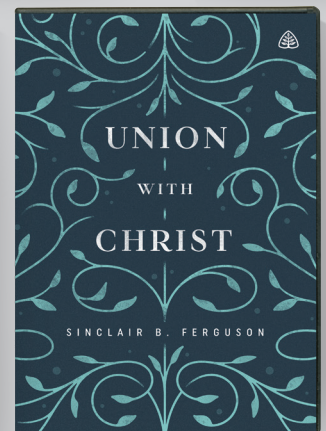
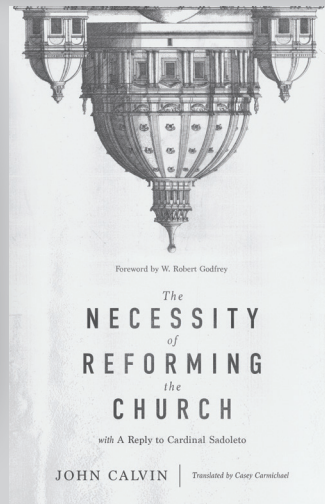
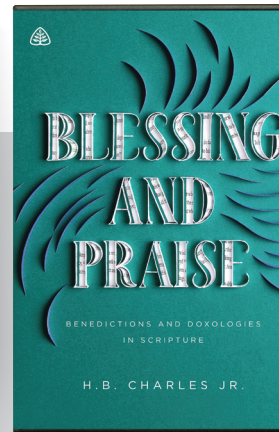
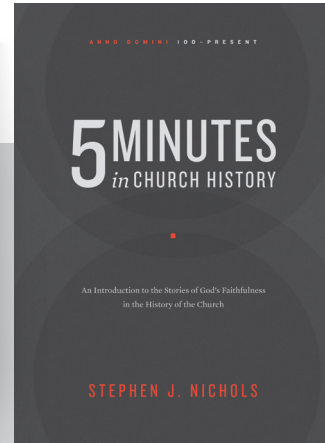
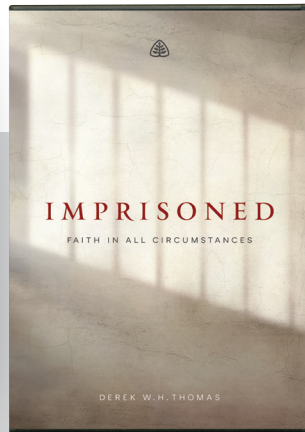
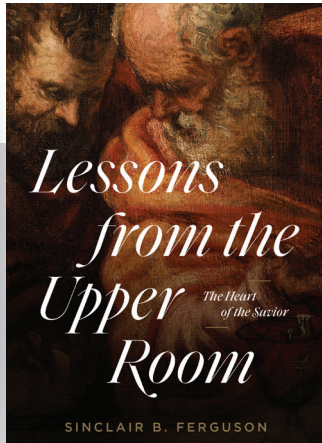
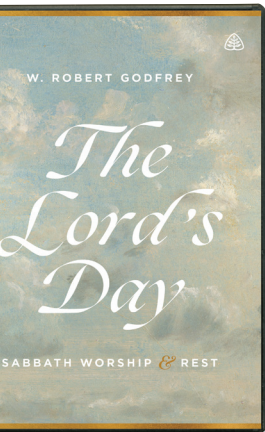
### REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Why is it important to acknowledge God as the ultimate source of language and human identity?
2. How does the Trinity's eternal fellowship inform the purpose of human communication?
3. Why did God create if He did not need to do so? What does this reveal about Him?
4. Does your speech more often take part in or work against God's purpose for communication? In what ways?

### PRAYER

- Praise God for His perfection, that He is lacking in nothing as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- Confess ways that your speech is not used to lovingly communicate and enjoy communion with others.
- Thank God for the loving harmony of the Trinity as the model of our communication.
- Ask God to grant you the wisdom and grace to steward well the gifts, abilities, and responsibilities that come from being an image bearer.

We want to see men and women around the world connect  
the deep truths of the Christian faith to everyday life.



Order your copy of this title, download the digital version,  
or browse thousands of resources at **Ligonier.org**.



LIGONIER MINISTRIES