

TTT 410. "Your Voice Matters" Tips for new and inexperienced speakers. Part 15 - Be Yourself! 15 April 2025

Teaching Tip 410 | "Your Voice Matters". Part 15 - Be Yourself! Tips for new and inexperienced speakers | Malcolm Cox

Today's Tip

Today, we explore a second tip from Trevor Mendez. He writes:

Be yourself. There's a place for imitating helpful qualities in other speakers, but "Christ in me" will likely look different than "Christ in you" and authenticity is important to hearers.

Can we find our own authentic speaking style, and does it matter?

Why finding your speaking style matters

Trevor puts it well. Listeners are fine-tuned to detect a lack of authenticity. They will forgive many things (thank goodness!), but a lack of authenticity will turn people off us very quickly. Authenticity is more important than presentability in public speaking. Perhaps it doesn't matter if it turns them away from us, but unfortunately, listeners find it hard to distinguish between the person speaking and the message they are delivering. Woe to us if a lack of authenticity prevents people from engaging with God's word.

Jesus taught as one "with authority" ([Luke 4.32](#)). Several factors are in play, but at least one of them is that he was himself - he was authentic.

How to find your speaking style

- **Learn and imitate. Do not copy.** Watch speakers you admire, take notes on what they do well and look to imitate their good practices in your lessons. Do that in the flesh if possible. Something is lost online. However, do not copy other people. Instead, look for ways to

incorporate their best attributes in your own context. Be especially careful if your role models speak into a different culture to your own.

- **Seek feedback.** Ask trusted friends whether you come across as authentic. I remember my wife telling me she didn't like it when I shouted. I wasn't aware I was shouting. I thought I was being passionate. However, when I listened back to myself I realised I was doing something that just wasn't me. I am not habitually a shouter. Why would I do it in lessons?
 - **Review your lessons.** Do some feedback with yourself. Is that speaker the *real* you? Are you the same in private and public? Yes, there is something different when speaking to large groups of people, but it should be an exaggeration of who you really are, not a weakening of your true self.
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Summary

Be yourself in your lessons, and your personality will shine through. In doing so, you will reveal aspects of God and his Word differently to other people. As someone once said, "Preaching is truth through personality." God designed us to hear his Word through other people. Let one of those people be you—the real you.

Brene Brown puts it well:

"Authenticity is the daily practice of letting go of who we think we're supposed to be and embracing who we are." Brene Brown, **The Gifts of Imperfection**

Questions

What barriers do you sense from revealing the real you when you speak? How can you overcome those obstacles?

Please add your comments on this week's topic. We learn best when we learn in community.

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<https://aim.moodlecloud.com/>.

Do you have a question about teaching the Bible? Is it theological, technical, or practical?

Please send me your questions or suggestions. Here's the email: malcolm@malcolmcox.org.

If you'd like a copy of my free eBook on spiritual disciplines, "How God grows His people", sign up at my website: <http://www.malcolmcox.org>.

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Keep calm and carry on teaching.

God bless, Malcolm
