

Sunday 10th May, 2026

Sermon by: Chizitere Azogama

Title: A Faith That Speaks: In a World That Listens Poorly.

Texts: Acts 17: 22-31; 1Peter 3:13-22 and John 14:15-21

Introduction: A World with Many Voices but Little Listening.

We live in a world overflowing with noise – opinions, arguments, debates, and endless streams of information. Yet for all the noise, people are listening less than ever.

Attention spans shrink. Hearts harden. Minds close. And into this world, God still calls His people to speak.

Not to shout.

Not to argue.

Not to win debates.

But to bear witness – with clarity, courage, gentleness, and love. This is the heartbeat of our three passages today.

- Acts 17 shows Paul speaking to a culture that doesn't know how to listen to God.
- 1Peter 3 calls believers to give an answer for their hope – even when the world misunderstands them.
- John 14 reminds us that we cannot speak faithfully unless the Spirit empowers us.

Together they teach us this truth: A faith that speaks must be rooted in truth, shaped by hope, and empowered by the Spirit (The Holy Spirit of God) - even when the world listens poorly.

- (1) A faith that speaks with clarity (Acts 17:22-31). Paul stands in the Areopagus – a marketplace of ideas, philosophies and idols. A place where everyone talks, but few truly listen.

In a marketplace there is always noise as we have it in our world today, and in that marketplace, everyone is talking at the same time, and you will agree with me as we were taught growing up that when everyone is talking no one is listening, and this is what is plaguing our world today, we are in a marketplace of ideas with diverse philosophies and idols making it difficult to listen to that quiet(still) voice, the one God, "The Almighty God".

Yet Paul does not shrink back.

He does not compromise.

He does not insult their ignorance.

He speaks with clarity about the God they do not know.

Paul models three things for us:

- He starts where they are - “ I see that you are very religious”” He acknowledges their searching.
- He names the truth plainly – God is Creator, Sustainer, Lord, and Judge.
- He calls for a response - “ God commands all people everywhere to repent.

Paul shows us that clarity is not arrogance.

Clarity is love.

Because people cannot respond to a God they do not understand.

In a world that listens poorly, the Church must speak clearly – not with slogans but with truth.

(2) A Faith That Speaks with Gentleness and Hope (1 Peter 3: 3-22).

Peter writes to believers who are misunderstood, mistreated, and marginalized.

Their world listens poorly –not because of noise, but because of hostility.

Yet Peter does not tell them to fight back.

He does not tell them to shout louder.

He tells them to sanctify Christ as Lord in their hearts and then:

“Always be ready to give an answer for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.”

Peter teaches us that our tone matters as much as our truth.

- We speak with courage, not fear.
- We speak with hope, not despair.
- We speak with gentleness, not aggression.
- We speak with integrity, so our lives match our words.

A world that listens poorly will not be won by clever arguments. But it may be softened by gentle, hopeful, consistent witness.

(3) A Faith That Speaks Because the Spirit Lives Within Us (John 14:15-21).

Jesus knows His disciples will face a world that misunderstands them. So He promises another Helper – the Spirit of truth (The Holy Spirit).
The world cannot receive Him.

The world cannot understand Him.

The world does not listen to Him.

But you know Him, Jesus says, "for He lives with you and will be in you."

This is the foundation of a speaking faith:

- We speak because the spirit teaches us the truth.
- We speak because the spirit gives us courage.
- We speak because the spirit forms Christ in us.
- We speak because the Spirit turns our obedience into love.

Without the Spirit, our words are noise. With the Spirit, our words become witness.

(4) What Does a Speaking Faith Look Like Today?

- (1) It speaks with understanding like Paul. We learn the culture, not to imitate it but to reach it.
- (2) It speaks with gentleness like Peter. We answer questions with humility, not hostility.
- (3) It speaks with love and obedience like Jesus commands. Our lives become the sermon people actually hear.
- (4) It speaks with the Spirit's power. We rely not on our eloquence but on God's presence.

Conclusion: When the world listens poorly, God still speaks clearly. The world may not listen well. But God is not silent.

He speaks through His Word.

He speaks through His Spirit.

And He speaks through His People.

So, the question is not: "Is the world listening?"

The question is: "Is the Church speaking faithfully?"

May we be a people whose faith speaks -

- With clarity in confusion.
- With hope in suffering.
- With gentleness in hostility.
- And with Spirit – filled courage in every moment.

Because even when the world listens poorly, the gospel still has power, our duty is captured in Ezekiel 2vs 7.

May we be doers of God's Word in Jesus Name. Amen.