

Tyndale Thought for the Day

29th May 2020



Being a politician must be a thankless task – for all sorts of reasons. Added to which the stresses and strains of trying to navigate a route through this pandemic for politicians in the government must be huge.

One of the things that makes it worse in my view is *words* – the way politicians of all sorts use them. It's a cliché that politicians never answer a straight question, but true nonetheless. It's quite a skill, to be able to talk after being asked a question so as carefully to avoid answering it directly and instead to say what you want to say – to make it sound as if you're answering it, without... answering at all. It's also quite a skill to be an interviewer of such a politician, but that's another story.

It all adds colour, though, to the way language is used. The truth is, everyone of us is careful with the words we use to convey what we want to convey. It is too easy to accuse a politician of dishonesty; we are all, not dishonest, but *creative* when we speak. Every song, poem, prayer, talk, conversation, discussion, joke, involves a creative use of language – it's what makes us human. As long as, when we do speak, we are honest with ourselves. Or, as Jesus said, “let your yes be yes and your no be no” – a challenge to us all, not just politicians.

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