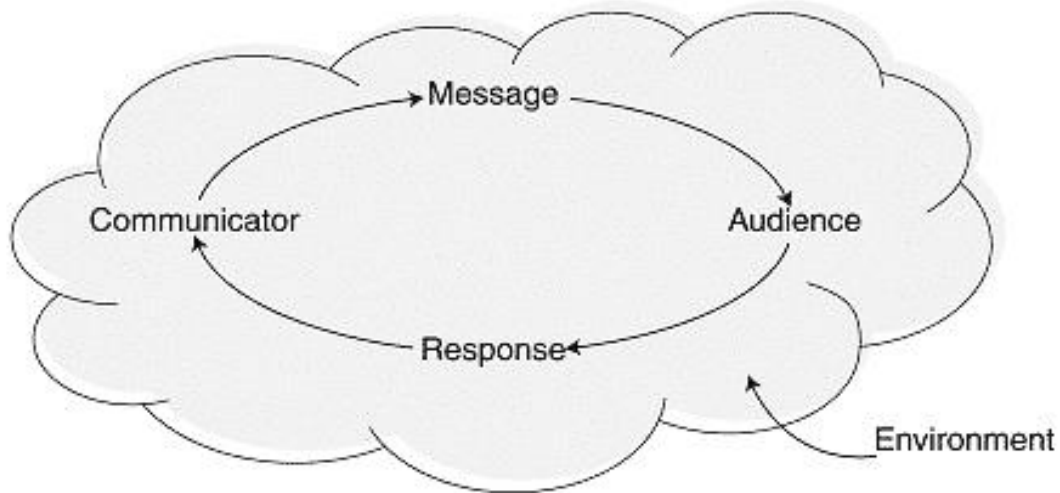


Flint Hills Bible Church – Marriage Workshop: Session 4 Communication Tools

Welcome & Introductions:

- Pray

How Do We Communicate?



Example #1:

One or both of you are so focused on listening to _____

and not listening to _____, that you are only listening for

what you are looking to _____ to.

- What happens is that the audience (your spouse) is not actually receiving the message, because they are not actually listening to hear their spouse out.

Example #2:

The communicator sends a hurtful message. They say exactly what is on their mind, and is not edifying (*edifying means "to build up"*) but unnecessary (mean or manipulative).

- The communicator sends a _____ message.

The audience has a **response** to the sinful message that was communicated, and it is typically hurtful, angry, and potentially sinful in that response.

- Thus – there is _____.

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Example #3:

The communicator and the audience (husband and wife) are at a place where they **can** dialogue. The message is clear and respectful, and the response is loving and gracious. There is genuine, healthy dialogue and communication taking place.

But kids are running all over, or your family is trying to sit down for a meal, maybe it's a family drive in the car, etc – the **environment** is not correct for the communication to be occurring. While your communication and responses may be great, the setting makes it impossible to have the weight and depth to the discussion that may be needed.

- Therefore – the communication must _____.

Let's consider some Scripture before we move on:

Proverbs 15:1 – “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”

Proverbs 15:2 – “The tongue of the wise commends knowledge, but the mouths of fools pour out folly.”

Proverbs 16:23 – “The heart of the wise makes his speech judicious and adds persuasiveness to his lips.”

Proverbs 18:2 – “A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinion.”

Proverbs 18:13 – “If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame.”

Ephesians 4:29 – “Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

James 1:19: “let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger...”

If you and your spouse have struggled through this – you need to take a hard look at this diagram now and identify where the breakdown is. Let's spend some time doing that now.

Exercise #1

INSTRUCTOR: Spend a few minutes of dialogue with your spouse over this model of communication. Each spouse should answer the following questions.

- **How do you believe we communicate on a scale of 1 – 10 (1 being badly and 10 being amazing)?**
- **When we have breakdown in communication, at what point does it**

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occur?

- What is one action item I need to do, to prevent this from occurring?

NOTE: If this is a cause for contention between you and your spouse, seek out a church leadership for assistance, guidance, and feedback during this exercise, for help and accountability.

Do I Ever Compromise?

Compromise:

- an agreement or a settlement of a dispute that is reached by _____

_____.

- settle a dispute by _____.

- accept standards that are _____.

- to meet in the _____.

Philosopher and Journalist Henry David Thoreau once wrote:

“Sacrificing **your** happiness for the happiness of the one you love, is by far, the truest type of love.”

- This quote, like all good and logical human thought, finds its origin in Gospel-Truth (Romans 1:18-32).

What does the Bible say?

Mark 12:30-31

³⁰ And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ ³¹ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

- Henry David Thoreau’s truest type of love is sacrificial love.
- And the truest type of love Jesus Christ calls Christ-following people to – is sacrificial love. Love of others, as we actively love ourselves.

John 13:34 – “A new commandment I give to you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so also you must love one another.”

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Compromise exists because of _____.

Compromise exists because of the _____ of _____.

_____ takes place when we are not actively loving our spouse as we love _____.

All things considered, is _____ really ideal? _____.

Compromises are best used in _____.

How does the Bible address sacrifice?

Husbands should, generally speaking, always be the first to compromise.

Why should the husband sacrifice first?

Ephesians 5:25, 28-29: Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her... In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church..."

God holds husbands accountable for the overall direction of their family.

- Husband – be the _____.

_____ / _____ are not ideal.

- They do not reflect a genuine heart of love.

Think Biblically.

Romans 12:10 (NIV) - Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.

Romans 12:10 (HCS) - Show family affection to one another with brotherly love. Outdo one another in showing honor.

Philippians 2:3 - Do nothing out of selfish ambition or empty pride, but in humility consider others more important than yourselves.

While compromise is permissible, it is **not ideal**. What is ideal is both husband and wife loving one another enough to **sacrifice**. And the spouse who is being **sacrificed for**, then being **gracious and thankful** for the sacrifice being made, and spurred on to **willing, desirous sacrifice** the next time themselves.

_____ is _____.

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Exercise #2

INSTRUCTOR: Spend a few minutes of dialogue with your spouse over the areas of compromise in your marriage. Each spouse should answer the following questions.

- How often do we engage in compromise?
 - Is it helpful or beneficial to the health of our relationship?
- Do you think our attempts to compromise end in more agreement or disagreement?
- For when it is that we compromise, what is one action item I need to do, to improve in the area of compromise?
- How would our relationship be improved if I sacrificed more instead of compromised?
 - How can I sacrifice more / better for you to prevent compromise and increase genuine love in our marriage?

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Forgive and Forget?

The idea of “forgive and forget” is not in the Bible.

The act of forgetting is _____. Forgiveness is _____.

- Forgetfulness is a part of being human.

Does God forget when we sin?

God does not forget. He is all-knowing and does not struggle with memory problems as we do.

Revelation 1:8: “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord. I am the One who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty One.”

How do we reconcile this with other passages of Scripture then?

What do a verses like Jeremiah 31:34 or Isaiah 43:25 mean?

Jeremiah 31:34 “I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

Isaiah 43:25: “I am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake, and I will not remember your sins.”

C.H. Spurgeon:

“God’s pardon of sin is so complete that He Himself describes it as not remembering our iniquity and transgression [sin]. I [Spurgeon] have said that there is impossibility in it, and so there is, because the Lord cannot in strict *accuracy of speech* forget anything, *forgetfulness is an infirmity*, and **God has no infirmities**. The Lord does not exercise memory as you and I do. We recall the past, but *He has no past*, all things are present with Him. God sees everything at once by an intuitive perception, the past, the present, the future are before Him at a glance. We may not speak, except after the manner of men, of the Lord God as having memory, and yet how blessed it is that He should Himself use the speech which is current among ourselves, and represent Himself after the manner of a man, and then say, “Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more forever.” He wishes us to know that His pardon is so true and deep that it amounts to an absolute oblivion, a total forgetting of all the wrong-doing of the pardoned ones.”

- Spurgeon is saying that God speaks to us with language we understand.

- God does not *forget* our sins in the same way we forget to buy milk at the store.

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God, in His mind, actively removes our sin “as far as the east is from the west.” This is a choice God makes for us.

Psalm 103:12: “as far as the east is from the west, so far does He remove our transgressions from us.”

Should we simply _____? _____

Past sin should motivate us to _____

and _____.

Past sin should motivate us to be _____.

1 John 1:9 – “If you confess your sin, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sin, and cleanse us of all unrighteousness.”

God’s example: sin should be _____.

You are not using language like “you always do this” or “you never do this.”

You are forgiving. You are treating the sin as God does, and putting it as far as the east is from the west in your mind and your relationship.

The forgiven spouse is not to take advantage of forgiveness, but instead, strive to earn the lost trust back.

Past sin, then is used as motivating factor toward love. Through forgiveness, should be a motivation and desire to earn back to trust.

Through forgiveness – we should be _____ toward growth. Because forgiving and holding on to sin is not forgiving at all.

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Exercise #3

INSTRUCTOR: *(this should take 10 minutes)*

Spend a few minutes of dialogue with your spouse over the areas of forgiveness needed in your marriage. Each spouse should do the following:

- **Examine your own heart, life, and conduct to determine if there is something you need to apologize for. If there is, engage in the following method of apology (the biblical model for apology):**
 - I'm sorry for _____.
 - I was wrong for _____.
 - Will you please forgive me for_____.
- **Commit to one another that you will not hold that sin against them any longer.**
- **Begin a discussion about how each of you can begin the process of earning trust back.**
 - Think: “what can I tangibly do to earn trust back?”
 - Think: “what can my spouse tangibly do to earn trust back?”

NOTE: If this is a cause for contention between you and your spouse, seek out a church leadership for assistance, guidance, and feedback during this exercise, for help and accountability.

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Am I Doing Enough Question-Asking?

The best type of communication involves the giving and receiving of information in a loving, respectful, and even humble fashion.

Communication Breakdown:



The longer this type of communication goes on, the more painful this becomes.

Our communication-knuckles get bruised. They become red and tender. If we keep this up, our relationships start to ache. If we continue *punching* together like this, eventually your relationship will begin to *bleed*. We do damage that must heal.

Marriage needs open, honest, humble, and respectful communication.

- We must be forgiving and strive to reconnect.

Ideal Communication:



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This model implies risk.

- It requires trust and skills in order to be willing to take this risk.

The goal of communication, as the hands demonstrate, is to come together.

Too often, couples talk _____ one another, and not _____ another.

How do we have healthy communication?

Question asking.

Counselor and author Julie Ganschow wrote: “Statements _____,
but _____.”

What is the purpose of question asking?

- To _____
- To _____ of your spouse
- To discern or expose the _____ of yourself and / or your spouse
- To reveal the _____ of myself or my spouse
 - o We generally _____ on what we believe
- To discern the _____ of my spouse
- To reveal and expose _____, such as...

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- an _____ heart
- _____ thinking
- _____

When we ask questions, they should be _____,
_____, and _____.

There are two types of questions:

- _____ Questions
 - _____

- Example: _____

- _____ Questions
 - _____

- Example: _____

Question asking is one of the most effective means of husbands and wives staying on the same page. It allows both parties to speak their mind, ask their spouse for their response, and then both offer and ask for clarification.

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Question asking necessarily _____.

Question asking should be done with the intent of _____.

Sentences that are questions must not _____.

That may sound like common sense, but sometimes we are prone to making a statement in the *form* of a question. We must be cautious not to do this.

- Ask questions to gain insight and build into your spouse, not make a point.

Do not _____.

- Example: WHAT DID YOU THINK I WAS SAYING?!
- Example: HOW DID YOU THINK I WOULD RESPOND TO THAT?!

The use of questions should be life-giving for your relationship, and enhance your daily times of communication both as a part of this workshop and beyond.

Exercise #4

INSTRUCTOR: Spend a few minutes of dialogue with your spouse over the current state of question-asking based communication in your marriage. Each spouse should answer the following for each other:

- **Do you believe I am a good question asker?**
- **What can I do for you, to improve in this area?**
- **Both husband and wife should share the following with their spouse...**
 - **One area in which we both can improve in the area of being approachable for a question-asking discussion.**

NOTE: If this is a cause for contention between you and your spouse, seek out a church leadership for assistance, guidance, and feedback during this exercise, for help and accountability.