

Proverbs 18:21 - Death and life are in the power of the tongue.

Poor verbal interaction lies at the root of almost every marital rift.

The basic skill needed to establish and maintain sound relationships is GOOD COMMUNICATION (Jay Adams).

AND THE ULTIMATE EXAMPLE OF THIS IS GOD!

The goal of communication: love, upbuilding -- Romans 15.1-2

What are some communication killers?

Sadly, these are all-too-common in many marriages:

1. **Lies** (Matt 5.33-36) - manipulation, threats, denial.

Always remember: Denial equals dishonesty.

2. **Busyness** and distractions (ignoring topics)

3. **Self-centeredness** (interruptions, hastiness, boasting) (Prov 18:13; 10:18; 20:20; James 1.19)

4. **Destructive speech** (angry words, James 3.5-8; bullying, threatening, manipulating; nagging, grumbling, criticism, 1 Pet 3.1-2; Prov 25.24; Prov 16:30)

5. **Refusal to communicate** -- clamming up/changing topics

6. **Anger**, slamming the door, blowup, yelling, lashing out

- Eccl 7:9 - anger resides in the bosom of FOOLS

- James 4.1-2 - anger stems from murderous pride & selfishness

- Prov 29.22 - A hot tempered man abounds in transgression...

- Prov 12:18 -- There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword.

- Prov 15.18 - a hot-tempered man stirs up strife [conflict]

7. **Bitterness and dwelling on the past** (1 Cor 13.5; Prov 17.9)

THESIS — In this study together, I want to provide for you 10 Guidelines to help you communicate well in your marriage.

A note on the relationship between communication & sexual intimacy.

➔ 10 GUIDELINES TO HELP YOU COMMUNICATE WELL IN YOUR MARRIAGE.

I. SPEAK TRUTH TO ONE ANOTHER — DON'T FORSAKE COMMUNICATION!

Eph 4:25

II. KEEP CURRENT WITH EVENTS, CIRCUMSTANCES, FEELINGS & LIFE!

Eph 4:26-27

Some helpful advice on dealing with matters appropriately & in a timely way...

- **Do I have the facts right?** Sometimes we can really get irritated and blast the fire out of people before we even have the facts. Why did our boss give us that assignment – doesn't he know how busy I am already? Why does my wife place these demands on me – is she trying to crush me?
- **Is my timing right?** We are all sinful and quite frankly sometimes we are not ready to hear it. Trying to force it will only make matters worse. We don't want to go to the other extreme and say the "timing" is never right, but sometimes we need a day to think and pray.
- **Is my attitude right?** Am I trying to help or harm the other person?
- **Have I thought through what I am going to say?** Are those words loving? ---- One tip when you are angry ----- always start the conversation with something good.
- **Have I asked for the Lord's help to please Him in this situation?**

III. ATTACK ALL THE PROBLEMS — NOT ONE ANOTHER!Eph 4:29-30 - don't have **rotten** speech toward each other.

This is hard: **We often DO attack the people & NOT the problems.** We do this by (1) name calling; (2) bringing up faults that have nothing to do with our conversation; (3) being aggressive and confrontational; (4) putting words in the other person's mouth

We want to speak good, grace-filled, edifying words!

IV. BE SURE TO ACT GODLY — DON'T REACT EMOTIONALLY/IMPULSIVELY!

Eph 4:31-32

REMEMBER: in good communication, our judgmental, critical, demanding, officious, demeaning, bitter spirit must be REPLACED with a charitable, encouraging, patient, accepting, kind, edifying spirit (Wayne Mack).

V. DETERMINE TO BE QUICK TO HEAR, SLOW TO SPEAK, & SLOW TO ANGER!

James 1:19-20

NOTE: communicating requires humility -- NOT PRIDE

- Pride loves to talk -- *a lot*
- Pride is content w/ what it already knows
- Pride thinks it knows all it needs to know
- Pride says: "i don't need help"
- Pride judges others by assuming they'll respond negatively
- Pride doesn't want a spouse, just an audience

Selected Scriptures: "A Mark of Biblical Manhood: A MAN WHO COMMUNICATES WITH GRACE-FILLED SPEECH"

BUT -- contrast that with...

- Humility asks questions & engages in dialogue
- Humility doesn't find someone they can't learn from
- Humility assumes I need others
- Humility is open and vulnerable rather than closed, hidden, secret, and independent
- Humility uses conversation with a spouse to explore new ideas
- Humility puts forth the energy and effort to LISTEN

Prov 10:19

Prov 14:29

Prov 15:23

VI. SPEAK GENTLY, LOVINGLY, AND PATIENTLY WITH ONE ANOTHER!

Prov 15:1, 18, 28

Prov 17:27

Prov 18:13

VII. WORK TO DRAW OUT EACH OTHER'S HEARTS — MOTIVES!

Prov 20:5

Mark 7:20-22

Matt 12:34

I. GOOD COMMUNICATION involves THE HEART

a) good communication expresses our desire to glorify God in our speech

b) bad communication reveals what is ruling our hearts in that moment

2. So guard your own heart -- and work at drawing out the heart-motives of the other person.

VIII. REFUSE TO DWELL ON AND BRING UP OLD MATTERS!

I Cor 13:5

Love keeps no record of wrongs.

Prov 17:9

Prov 10:12

I Pet 4:8

IX. ALWAYS SPEAK THE TRUTH IN LOVE & EDIFY THE OTHER!

Eph 4:15 - *speak truth in love*

Eph 4:29 - *give grace to those who hear*

Rom 15:1-3 - *for edification*

I Cor 8:1b - *love builds up*

X. LET YOUR EVERY WORD BE SEASONED WITH GOSPEL-GRACE!

Colossians 4:6 (cf. Mark 9:49-50)

I Pet 3:15 (Ps 37:30-31)

Prov 15:4, 7

Ecc 10:12 - words from the mouth of a wise man are 'gracious'

LEARN TO SPEAK WELL:**Exercise self-control**

1. Think (and listen!) before you speak - James 1.19
2. Don't talk too much - Prov 10:19
3. Don't lose your temper - Prov 29.11
4. Avoid disputes/quarrels/fights - Prov 17.14
5. Don't repeat gossip or slander - Prov 11.13
6. Some things may be true but best left unsaid - Eph 4.29

Develop excellence in your MANNER OF SPEECH:

1. Gentle and calm - Prov 15.1
2. Timely - Prov 15.23; 25.11 (cf. 27:14)
3. Kind and seasoned speech - Prov 16.21
4. Draw others out & listen (get to their hearts) - Prov 20.5

With the Word of God

And the indwelling Spirit of Holiness

With prayer and diligence

And with humility & bible-saturation,

It IS possible to have GODLY communication!

Be encouraged! Deep oneness can be achieved where good communication exists (Wayne Mack).

Make David's prayer your own:

Psalm 19:14 — "Let the words of my mouth & the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer."

Additional Notes:

"May we excel at encouraging one another in our marriages -- confirming verbally to each other evidence of growth in Christ -- and may we celebrate that growth by uniting together in thanksgiving to God for his gracious provision" (Tim Savage, *No Ordinary Marriage*).

"Christian fellowship is an expression of both love and humility. It springs from a desire to bring benefit to others, coupled with a sense of personal weakness and need. It has a double motive -- the wish to help, and to be helped; to edify, and to be edified. It has a double aim -- to do, and to receive, good. It is a corporate seeking by Christian people to know God better through sharing with each other what, individually, they have learned of him already" (J.I. Packer).

"There is no secret to spiritual, marital, healthy communication/conversation. It will flow from hearts set upon God's Word. Like all good fruit, edifying conversation comes from seed sown and cultivated over time. We must let the Word of God dwell richly in us" (Gary Ricucci).