"Building A House and Home"

“Communication In A Marriage”

Session Five

Review: Communication, Sharing Feelings, & Conflict Resolution/Problem-solving Surveys

“Communication involves the freedom and ability to express what you feel and think, with the confidence that you will be heard and responded to with some degree of consistency and maturity.” (Guernsey, Real Life Marriage, p. 43)

“You will have to live with the consequences of everything you say.21 What you say can preserve life or destroy it; so you must accept the consequences of your words.22 Find a wife and you find a good thing; it shows that the LORD is good to you.”

Proverbs 18:20-22 (TEV)

YOUR MARRIAGE WILL NEVER RISE ABOVE THE LEVEL OF YOUR MOUTHS.

Sowing and reaping … our words are seed bearing entities. Every word is consequential. Our speech is NOT evaporative.

“Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men.32 Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.33 “Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit.34 Brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.35 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth evil things.36 But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment.37 For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Matthew 12:31-37 (NKJV)

Jesus refers to our mouths as fruit-bearing trees. Our words reveal our hearts. Mean words mean you’re mean. Hurtful words mean you’re hurting. Painful words mean you’re in pain. Dirty and hateful words mean you’re dirty and hateful. Good words mean your heart’s good.

Our words reveal the real us … in the moment. We’ll give an account for every idle word. There is an eraser … repentance! Repentance is being genuinely sorrowful. Before the devil destroys you and your marriage, he wants to minimize the importance of your words. You can build a marriage or tear it apart … by your mouth!

1. We reap what and where we sow.

“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”

Galatians 6:7-8 (NKJV)

“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.”

2 Corinthians 9:6 (NIV)
Greek Word: μυκτέριζω; (nostril); to turn up the nose or sneer at

Deception … “I can get a good result through bad words.” (threat of divorce, threat of infidelity, cursing, verbal abuse, name-calling, sarcasm, etc.)

Deception … “I would say something positive but it won’t make any difference.”

2. We reap much more than what we’ve sown.

“For we all stumble in many things. If anyone does not stumble in word, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle the whole body. Indeed, we put bits in horses’ mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.”

James 3:2-6 (NKJV)

This principle isn’t fair, just, balanced, even or 1-to-1. It can be leveraged: it can work for you or against you! For some this is discouraging but for those who allow this principle time to work in your life it’s a tremendous blessing.

3. We reap after we sow. (We reap later and greater.)

“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.”

Galatians 6:7-10 (NKJV)

What words do you enjoy hearing the most from your future spouse? How does the connection between your speech and the condition of your heart cause you to think about what you say to your spouse? In what ways have you leveraged the principle of “sowing and reaping” in healthy ways in your relationship? In what ways have you reaped unhealthy patterns of speech?

Based on the definition of communication as “The freedom and ability to express what you feel and think, with the confidence that you will be heard and responded to with some degree of consistency and maturity” discuss the following questions:

1. In our relationship how free and able are you to express what you feel and think? In what ways do my actions inhibit your ability to share openly with me?

2. In what ways can I demonstrate that I am listening (and hearing) to what you are saying when we communicate? What can I do to be more consistent and mature in our interactions?
THE ROOTS OF OUR COMMUNICATION
(FIRE)

Ten Reasons Why We Talk The Way We Talk …

- Family Heritage (sexism, racism, bigotry, etc.)
- Unhealed Hurts
- Insecurity
- Bad Friends
- Ignorance & Frustration

- Most men are emotionally modest and physically immodest. Men need to hear honor.
- Most women are emotionally immodest and physically modest. Women need to hear security.

THE FRUITS OF OUR COMMUNICATION
(SMOKE)

Ten Characteristics Of Dysfunctional Communication …

- Harsh – too strong & insensitive
- Dishonest – Why do people lie? Is lying ever acceptable?
- Sarcastic
- Insensitive
- Final

- Silence
- Public
- Abusive
- Hopeless
- Reactive

Of the ten ROOTS/FRUITS … which ones most often surfaced in your parent’s marriage?

Which one or two shows up the most often in your relationship? Why do you think this happens? What can you do to minimize the continued growth of these roots/fruits in your home?

Do you identify with the ideas the men are emotionally modest and physically immodest? In what ways do men need to hear honor from their wife?

Do you identify with the ideas that women are emotionally immodest and physically modest? In what ways do women need to hear security from their husband?

How can I communicate honor in our marriage? What do you need to hear from me – verbally and nonverbally?

How can I communicate security in our marriage? What do you need to hear from me – verbally and nonverbally?

Skills for positive communication …
1. Learn to listen.

“It's stupid and embarrassing to give an answer before you listen.”
Proverbs 18:13 (CEV)

“Don't shoot off your mouth, or speak before you think. Don't be too quick to tell God what you think he wants to hear. God's in charge, not you—the less you speak, the better.”
Ecclesiastes 5:2 (MSG)

“Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.”
James 1:19 (NLT)

Never “assume” you understand or are understood. It’s a two way street. Active listening is more important than speaking.

2. Speak clearly.

Get clarification! Avoid mind reading! Most men feel like imposters in the relationship. They want to succeed but many times they don’t know how. And they don’t get the help from women about how to succeed. **Men need specificity!** Be specific about how your man can succeed in your relationship.

Guys … seek to understand!!

Do you want me to FIX it or FEEL it?
1. Listen
2. Ask – what can I do to lighten load?
3. Acknowledge – what’s going on
4. Act

You cannot hold your mate responsible for your hurts, thoughts, desires; don’t hold your mate emotionally hostage for what they can’t know!

3. Wait for the right time.

**Night vs. Morning Person**

“A man finds joy in giving an apt reply— and how good is a timely word!”
Proverbs 15:23 (NIV)

“A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.”
Proverbs 25:11 (NIV)

4. Use Caring Words

“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.”
Ephesians 4:29 (NIV)
a. Let no **unwholesome** talk … (tearing down, cutting, it’s about pulling away, there is less of them left)
b. Come out of your mouth … (control of the self, keep your mouth closed when you have bad thoughts)
c. But only words that **build** up … (it’s not enough to have the absence of negativity, intentional)
d. According to the need … (pay attention & if you don’t know … ask!)
e. and **benefit** your mate. (this is where grace really enters the marriage)

### 5. **Speak Words of Affirmation**

Negativity is the devil’s language. The number one predictor of divorce is **criticism**! Praise is a discipline. You can change this about yourself. You used to compliment each other. Do what you did before to get what you once had!!

> “So speak encouraging words to one another. Build up hope so you'll all be together in this, no one left out, no one left behind.”
> 1 Thessalonians 5:11 (MSG)

> “Don’t repay evil for evil. Don’t retaliate with insults when people insult you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God has called you to do, and he will bless you for it.”
> 1 Peter 3:9 (NLT)

**What are some ways you can affirm your spouse?**

Express gratitude … ask their opinion … spending time together … sincerely compliment them … expressing love tangibly (e.g. back rubs)

Nagging never accomplishes anything in the long run. Self-fulfilling rule … you will find what you are looking for in your mate.

Which of the five standards for successful communication do you feel is the strongest in this season of our relationship? Why?

Which of the five standards for successful communication do you feel needs to be improved in this season of our relationship? What is the first step I can take to help our relationship progress toward a healthy place?

**Let’s Pray!**

Ask the Lord to forgive you of the idle words you’ve spoken. Ask one another for forgiveness for the ways in which you’ve sown unhealthy words into your relationship. Commit to using your words to build each other up and encourage one another daily. Ask the Lord to help you want to honor your future spouse and commit yourself to following through in your honoring one another. Ask the Lord to help you to make your future spouse secure – emotionally, physically, financially and relationally. Affirm to the Lord your desire to be intentional and generous in your praise of one another. Invite the Lord to use your mouth for doing good.