COMMUNICATION in MARRIAGE

A Bible Study

AUDIENCE  This is a Bible Study that is designed specifically for use by engaged or married couples. It is divided into seven segments each of which could be used for a unique study period.

PURPOSE  To understand the scriptural directives and Biblical principles of effective communication that contribute significantly to a successful marriage.

MEMORY VERSE

“Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.”

- Colossians 4:6.
SECTION 1
COMMUNICATION AND ITS POWERFUL EFFECT ON THE MARITAL RELATIONSHIP

Your communication can determine the course of your marriage by strengthening or weakening it. Therefore, you must closely watch your words and the way you communicate with each other. Love your spouse and consistently make sure your words reflect that love.

QUESTIONS

1. Read Proverbs 25:11. How does it describe the positive spoken word.

2. What might “fitly spoken” in this Scripture refer to?

3. Colossians 4:6 says “Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.” Suppose one spouse wishes to ask the other to take out the garbage. What words or tone of speech could be used indicate that request is with grace and seasoned with salt (preserved from the corruption of hurt or sin)?
4. Write out what you feel would be an appropriate (positive) request for your spouse to take out the garbage.

5. Fill in the blanks: Matthew 12:35-37 says “35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth _______ things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth _______ things. 36 But I say unto you, That every ______ word that men shall speak, they shall give ___________ thereof in the day of judgment. 37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”

6. Give some examples of what you think Matthew means when he says “idle words”.

7. Marriages suffer from a lack of communication. What are some reasons you may not communicate as often as you should in your marriage? Do you think these reasons are justified before your Lord?

8. Do you think communication could be overdone in a marriage? If so, what might be an example. If not, why not?
Your words should build up and strengthen your spouse and those around you. To communicate in a Christ-like manner, the welfare of others must be more important than getting your own way.

QUESTIONS

1. Fill in the blank: We read in Ephesians 4:29 “Let no________ communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

2. What steps or actions could you take in an effort to avoid the kind of communication referred to in question 1 with your spouse?

3. We read in Romans 15:2 “Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.” What is the meaning of edification?

4. What would be the opposite of edification?
5. Romans 15:2 applies especially to spiritual edification. What do edifying words do for your relationship with your spouse and for your relationship with God?

6. Read Romans 14:19. To speak words of peace and edification takes a certain mindset. What does this verse encourage us to do to obtain that mindset?

7. What must be your attitude to speak words of blessing to your spouse?
Through active listening, you communicate respect, honor, and love to your spouse. Communication often goes awry when one or both spouses are trying to speak before they have taken the time to understand one another.

**QUESTIONS**

1. Read Proverbs 18:13. How does this verse describe one who does not listen?

2. Why do we want to sometimes answer before we take the time to listen?

3. What really hinders or reduces your ability to listen?

4. Fill in the blank: Romans 12:10 says “Be kindly _____________ one to another with brotherly love; in honour _____________ one another.”
5. What should we “prefer” above our love for Christ? 

6. Read Ephesians 5:25. Can husbands fulfill the directive in this verse if they cannot effectively listen?

7. How can we know if we are good listener to our spouse?

8. Read Proverbs 29:20. This verse gives a very uncomfortable conclusion for a poor listener. How does it describe such a person?
SECTION 4

BUILDING UP AND BLESSING OR TEARING DOWN AND HURTING ARE PRODUCTS OF YOUR WORDS.

QUESTIONS

1. Read James 3:5-10. How do these verses describe the tongue?

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__________________________________________

__________________________________________

2. Give an example of one critical or hurtful comment you could make or perhaps have made to your spouse.

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

3. Give an example of one critical or hurtful comment you could make about your spouse.

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

4. Give an example of one demeaning comment you could make to your spouse.

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

5. Give an example of one demeaning comment you could make about your spouse.

__________________________________________

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Communication in Marriage
6. Read Ephesians 5:28, 29, and 33. These are verses that address the reason husbands should love their wives. Summarize this in your own words.

7. What do these verses have to do with husbands being able to exhibit Christ-like communication with their wives?

8. What is the responsibility of the wife in the above verses?

9. Read 1 Peter 3:10. What is guile and how might we avoid it?
SECTION 5

GIVE PRIORITY TO HAVING ADEQUATE TIME FOR GOOD COMMUNICATION WITH YOUR SPOUSE.

You can easily get caught up with the responsibilities and demands of life and forget the importance of regular communication with your spouse. Communication will occur at different levels over time. However, be aware of the depth of communication you are having and make sure that there are opportunities to get beyond the surface-level communication.

QUESTIONS

1. Read Mark 6:31 which says that it is important to have______________________________.

2. List 8-10 topics that are important to communicate about in your relationship. Next to each topic note how often you would like to talk about that topic (daily, weekly, as needed). These topics could include: day-to-day events, emotions, future planning, family issues, health, job, finances, personal growth, spiritual matters, etc. Compare your lists and discuss any differences.
3. What do you feel are the biggest hindrances to spousal communication in your marriage?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

4. What could be changed to reduce the hindrances?

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________________________________________________________________________

5. Read Ephesians 5:16 where we are encouraged to redeem our time. What does redeeming our time mean?

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________________________________________________________________________

6. Where does communication with your spouse fit in your priorities for redeeming your time?

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________________________________________________________________________

7. List two activities in your life that contribute significantly to a “waste of time” reducing the time left for communication.

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8. What would you say is the cost (define what you mean by cost) of communicating with your spouse?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
This discipline both fosters spiritual intimacy and deepens your individual relationships with God. You need to find a quiet, peaceful place to talk, rest, and be “alone” together with God. Regular communication and prayer together can help you stay connected.

QUESTIONS

1. Ephesians 5:31 “For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.” How do you balance communication between your spouse and parents, in-laws, children/grandchildren, and friends?

2. While desiring time to think and pray before talking through an issue is reasonable, giving your spouse the “silent treatment” is hurtful. What might silence mean to him/her? Can you be sure your spouse knows what you are trying to convey if you are silent?

3. In what specific ways can the intentional “silent treatment” harm your relationship with spouse and with God?
4. Communication in marriage is not restricted to words. Give at least three examples of actions, body language, or other ways you can positively or negatively communicate with your spouse.

5. What activities do you, or could you, do, with your spouse on a regular (once a day, week, or month) basis that would foster communication with each other and with God.

6. Find a Bible reference that speaks of man’s communication with God. How might this apply to the communication between you and your spouse your communication as a couple with God?

7. Read Philemon 1:4-7 which describe Paul’s joy in hearing of the faith and love of his friend Philemon. What are some characteristics you could write about to describe your joy in knowing your spouse as a life-long friend in the Lord?
In healthy marriages, the spouses are open and honest with each other, but they do not use “honesty” as an excuse to “blast” their spouse or just “let them have it.”

**QUESTIONS**

1. Ephesians 4:15 “But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.” What does speaking the truth in love mean?

2. Read Proverbs 27:17 and fill in the blanks: “______ sharpeneth ________; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.” Material used to produce a sharp edge of a knife is very hard. Do you think this verse is consistent with Ephesians 4:15? If so, how do they complement each other?

3. Read Ephesians 4:25. This verses says we must “put away” lying. Why is that so important in communication in marriages? How is it just as important in our everyday conversation with others?
4. An expression states that “white” lies are sometimes excusable. Share what the Bible says about giving allowance for “minor lies”?

5. Read John 8:1-11. Christ’s love is the ultimate love. What was the principle involved in Christ’s communication with the woman in these verses?

6. Find other examples in the Bible where Christ told the truth in love.

7. If we are to speak the truth in love, it would follow that we should also be able to receive the truth in love. Which do you think is more difficult for you to do and why?

(Section continued on next page)
8. Write a sentence or two that would let a spouse know that he/she is consistently late in getting ready to go to church on Sunday and yet expressing this truth in love.

9. Write a sentence or two that would let a spouse know that he/she is consistently late in getting ready to go to church on Sunday that does NOT express this truth in love.
Conclusion

Communication is powerful and important. Words spoken judiciously and opportune are as much in its place, as golden apples in silver baskets. The blessing lies in knowing when and how to communicate to build our marriages and strengthen our commitment to God.

Memory Verse

“Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.”

- Colossians 4:6.