

LECTURE # 7

COMMUNICATION Giving Grace, Building Lives, Ephesians 4:25-32

INTRODUCTION

- A. One of the most common complaints you will hear in counseling is, “We just don’t _____!”
1. Poor _____ certainly makes a mess of things.
 2. Unbiblical communication produces _____, _____, _____ and _____ in the body of Christ and in marriages and families.
 3. Poor communication gives Satan a _____, destroying the unity of the Body of Christ and disrupting the one-flesh relationships husbands and wives should be developing.¹
 4. For the sake of Christ’s honor, Christians must learn to communicate in a _____ fashion.
- B. Foundational to godly communication are _____.
1. If you teach your counselees how to communicate biblically and yet ignore the heart, you will give them _____ that they will use for _____.
 - a. Teaching counselees how to communicate is essential, however, ignoring the heart produces Pharisees who seek to use God to achieve their own _____ and _____ others.
 1. There must be a concern to _____ and to _____ (Matthew 22:37-40).
 2. There must be concern for the _____ (Ephesians 4:1-6).

¹ Jeffrey S. Forrey, “Christian Communication,” *The Journal of Biblical Counseling* (16.2, Winter, 1998), p. 37.

C. Why should you give yourself to _____?

1. God has chosen us before the foundation of the world to be “holy and blameless in his sight” and that must find expression in our _____ (Eph. 1:4).
2. God saved us to do good works, and those include _____ (Ephesians 2:10).
3. Jesus died in order to break down barriers and produce a unified body, and that unity finds expression in _____ (Ephesians 2:11-22).
4. These “Rules of Communication” are found in a chapter whose concern is _____ (Ephesians 4:1ff).²

D. Counselees must understand that godly communication is more than “techniques for a better life,” but a **way of life** for _____.

I. **BE** _____ (Ephesians 4:25).

A. Being honest means that you must _____.

1. It is dishonest to _____ when there is a problem that must be solved.
2. No one can read another’s mind - do not expect someone to “_____” there is a problem.

B. Being honest means you must _____
- whenever you do address a problem, you must be accurate.

1. Never _____ - outright deceit is forbidden.
2. Be careful not to use _____ where the real message is hidden through innuendo.

² See the outline of this chapter in John F. Bettler, “Make Every Effort: Ephesians 4.1-5.2,” *The Journal of Biblical Counseling* (17.2, Winter, 1999), pp. 38-42).

3. _____ - where what one says does not match what accompanies it.

a. Sleepers who say, “Good message, Pastor.”

b. “How’s it going?” “FINE!!!”

C. Being honest means you must speak the truth _____
(see 4:15).

1. It is very easy to _____ someone to shreds with the truth.

2. Speaking the truth in love means that you speak with the other person’s benefit in mind, so you must be careful about the _____ you use, your _____, _____, _____, etc.

3. A Christian never has the right to say, “I just have to get this off my chest,” or “Let me give you a piece of my mind.” Those communicate, “I don’t care about you or what these words will do to you, I only care about saying this so I feel better.”

II. KEEP _____ (Ephesians 4:26-27).

A. God expects you to resolve each day’s problems _____.

B. What happens when you do not resolve each day’s problems that day?

1. You are _____ because God clearly commands you to do this.

2. You are opening the door to _____ and _____.

a. _____ is “clamming up when you are offended but still stewing over the offense in your mind.”³

3. You will ensure that future problems will be _____ by the unresolved communication problems.

³ Forrey, *Ibid.*, p. 40.

4. You will give Satan a _____ - all Satan needs to split a church or destroy a marriage and destroy its testimony is **for two members to go to bed angry with each other!!!**
 - a. Remember Jay's illustration of unresolved problems being luggage in bed and thus no satisfying sexual relations, providing for greater temptation.

C. Sometimes it is difficult to discern which issues to confront and which issues to _____ (see 1 Peter 4:8).

1. Confront if the offense is a _____.
2. Confront if the offense(s) _____.

III. ATTACK _____, NOT _____ (EPHESIANS 4:29-30).

A. "Unwholesome words" means "corrupt" words or "words _____".

1. These are more than just dirty words or off-color jokes, but words that _____ and _____ the person apart: "You're a bum," "Why can't you do anything right?," "You NEVER . . .," "You ALWAYS . . ." "You're a lousy leader."
2. These kind of words _____ - _____ the real issue (the problem) and zeroes in on the person (see Jesus' warning in Matthew 5:21-22).
3. These kinds of words _____ the Holy Spirit (v.30).

B. _____ - "what is helpful for building others up."

1. This does not mean "building others' _____ - _____" but in this context it means "building them into the image of Christ."
2. It zeroes in on the real issue - the _____.
3. It gives "grace", that is, the _____ and _____ to do God's will, to those who hear.
4. Instead of "You're a bum," it is, "The work isn't getting done. God says that work is _____ and _____."

- C. When we have to deal with a problem, our language must be used to attack problems and not people; we must be careful to _____
 _____ for the other person and yet call sin, sin without calling the other person _____ or pinning _____ on him.

IV. _____, **DON'T** _____ (Ephesians 4:31-32).

A. Don't _____! (v.31)

1. Reacting is what a robot does when the command is given; it is _____. Like blinking your eye when something comes at your face; it is a **natural** _____.
2. The “reactions” of v.31 are what come naturally when there is a _____ between us or when someone treats us unfairly.
3. God expects you to “_____” those reactions:
 - a. _____ - the inability to treat someone as if they never hurt you.
 - b. _____ - the explosion of anger.
 - c. _____ - abiding indignation or animosity that frequently seeks revenge; the “slow burn.”
 - d. _____ - harsh contention and strife; public quarreling.
 - e. _____ - talking critically about another person without the goal of helping or edifying him (what is said may or may not be true).
 - f. _____ - the desire to harm others or to see others suffer.

B. _____! (v.32)

1. You will be unable to put away those “reactions” unless you adopt these proper _____.
2. _____ - benevolent, helpful, courteous.
3. _____ - literally “of good heartedness”; tenderhearted, sympathetic.
4. _____.

- a. To not _____ the offense again to the one who has asked forgiveness.
 - b. To not bring up the offense with _____ (gossip).
 - c. To not bring up the offense with _____ (brooding over it).
 - d. To work at _____ the relationship so that it can withstand the same offense again.
- C. An argument can only take place when two people are “_____”; an argument can be stopped when one chooses to “_____” in a biblical manner.

V. CONCLUSION

- A. God commands his people to be _____; to present a _____ to an unbelieving world.
- B. We must, by the Spirit at work in us, obey his command to love one another and to _____.

RECOMMENDED READING

- Adams, Jay E. *Christian Living in the Home* (New Jersey, P&R Publishing: 1972).
- Bettler, John F. “Make Every Effort: Ephesians 4.1-5.2.” In *The Journal of Biblical Counseling* (17.2; Winter, 1999).
- Forrey, Jeffrey S. “Christian Communication.” In *The Journal of Biblical Counseling* (16.2; Winter, 1998).
- Mack, Wayne. *Strengthening Your Marriage*. (New Jersey, P&R Publishing: 1977)
- Your Family, God’s Way*. (New Jersey, P&R Publishing: 1991).