

Relational Intelligence 2.0: Developing Healthy Biblical Relationships

Communication Axioms: Part 4

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SERMON DESCRIPTION

God is very serious about the manner in which we communicate to one another. In fact, there are serious consequences and implications if we get this wrong as followers of Christ.

SERMON QUESTIONS

1. What do they need to know?
 - God takes our communication with each other very seriously.
2. Why do they need to know it?
 - The Bible says that if anyone does not sin with their mouth, they are perfect and mature.
3. How should we apply it?
 - We should ask God to put a watchman at our lips every single day.

OPENING LINE

You think you actually know someone, and then they begin to speak.

INTRODUCTION

Axiom – A statement which is accepted as being true.

Illustration – Broken telephone.

“Big doors swing on small hinges.” ~Bishop Tony Miller

CENTRAL TRUTH

It is impossible to have any level of relationship without communication. Communication is not just reserved for words alone but can also include actions, kindness, body language, etc. The Bible, in particular the New Testament, is very clear on how believers need to communicate amongst themselves.

MAIN PASSAGE

James 3:5-12

⁵ Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! ⁶ 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. ⁷ For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. ⁸ But no man can tame the tongue. *It is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹ With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. ¹⁰ Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. ¹¹ Does a spring send forth fresh *water* and bitter from the same opening? ¹² Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring yields both salt water and fresh.

STATEMENT

When you consider relational intelligence and emotional intelligence, it really comes down to issues of the heart. Therefore, the Bible tells us that we need to guard our heart for out of it flows the issues of life.

There are many things from the Bible that we think we believe, until we get tested in that area and then we really find out what we believe.

MAIN POINTS

Relational Principles to Live By

1. Treat others as you would have them treat you. It could also be said, “speak to others as you would have them speak to you”
2. Looking not at your own interests but at the interests of others
3. From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks
4. Communication is more than just words
 - I think we all understand that as human beings we can communicate with more than just our words. In various methods and ways, we can express our thoughts and feelings whether they be positive or negative. Consider communication that takes place through facial expressions, body language and actions. Through these various methods we can demonstrate both our pleasure or displeasure with circumstances, situations, and people. As human beings, we are quite versed in demonstrating our emotions in various ways.
5. Determine the level of relationship you desire to have with an individual before you establish the communication level
 - a. Know your audience and their love language
 - b. Decide in advance what the relationship means to you.

Communication Axioms

1. **Outcomes:** Death and life are in the power of the tongue
 2. **Truth:** The truth will set you free and keep you free
 3. **Prayer:** For a guard to be put over your mouth and lips
 4. **Direction:** Be clear, be specific, be timely and let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no
 5. **Listen:** Listen to understand and not to argue
 6. **Grace:** Speech that is seasoned and flavourful
 7. **Power:** Holy Spirit empowered speech vs. flattery and persuasion
 8. **Judgement:** In the end, you will be judged by your very own words
 9. **Heart:** From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.
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1. **Outcomes: Death and life are in the power of the tongue**
 - a. God has placed an incredible ability within human beings to either create life or release death within their own circumstances and surroundings. Eventually, we will partake of the harvest of our own words.
 - b. **Proverbs 18:21:** Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.
 - Speak to others as you would have them speak to you—this is the golden rule.
 2. **Truth: The truth will set you free and keep you free**
 - a. Communication without truth is like clouds without rain—it is empty, inaccurate, insincere, and lacking in the fundamental laws of relationship. There can be no lasting or meaningful interaction without truth.
 - **Ephesians 4:15:** ...but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ...
 - **Psalms 34:13:** Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit.
 - **Psalms 37:30:** The mouth of the righteous speaks wisdom, and his tongue talks of justice.
 - Truth builds trust
 - Tell the truth always and you will never have to remember what you have said in the past
 - Eliminate and remove:
 - Lies and exaggeration
 - Rumours, suggestions, and innuendos
 - Half-truths and ambiguity
 - Political talk, speaking without saying anything.
 3. **Prayer: For a guard to be put over your mouth and lips**

The Psalmist gives us an incredible example on how to pray for God to put a guard over our mouth that you might not sin against Him or others. Literally, this is not a figure of speech but a grace from the spirit of God to assist a believer and not allowing their speech to run away from them.

Psalms 141:3: Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth; Keep watch over the door of my lips.

It is interesting that the Psalmist prays that God would send a guard over his mouth and lips rather than him doing it himself. This suggests that it is something that God takes responsibility over and that it is supernatural.

4. Direction: Be clear, be specific, be timely and let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no

- a. The less words you use the better and the more direct into the point you are creates clarity and eliminates the possibility offending others.
- **Matthew 5:37:** But let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.
 - Just because you have spoken does not mean you have been received or understood
 - Clarify and confirm
 - Know your audience and who you are speaking to - understand their communication language
- b. If you are going to read between the lines make sure that you have a magnifying glass
- Specifically, if you are going to rely on this type of communication style you need to ensure that you have understood every small detail since this can cause a great deal of problems because it operates in assumption
 - Determine what is really being said.

5. Listen: Listen to understand and not to argue

- a. The truth of the matter is that the majority of people lack excellent listening skills. When they hear things, rather than seeking to understand they are already formulating an argument, or they have a bias in their mind in the first place. In other words, they are not truly listening, but they are ready to fight any battles that interfere with their position.
- James 1:19: So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; ...
 - Practice active listening
 - Develop your listening skills daily
 - Listen for the purpose of understanding
 - Listen for emotion
 - Determine what is really being said not just the words that are being spoken.

6. Grace: Speech that is seasoned and flavourful

- a. Grace within communication is like sugar within medicine, it helps the difficult things go down easier and helps them to be received. It allows the hearer to accept what is being said even when it is difficult. Add grace, communication can be gentle, loving, and full of mercy. This is not to suggest that we should not correct or even be direct and firm at times. **Be firm but be fair.**

Colossians 4:6: Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.

b. Relationship Killers

- Vulgarity and profanity
 - Words of hatred and rage
 - Gossip and backbiting
 - Insults and threats
 - Accusations and allegations
 - Sexual talk, gestures, innuendos
 - Slang and coded language
 - Humour and sarcasm may need to be altered and censored depending on the individual involved
 - Jealousy and envy
 - All these things as well as others cause division and disunity.
- c. Do you kiss your mother with that mouth?

7. Power: Holy Spirit empowered speech vs. flattery and persuasion vocabulary

a. Perhaps this point is closely tied with putting a watchman at your lips. Who better than Holy Spirit to guard, control, and influence your vocabulary and interaction with others? For example, we know that Satan was able to speak through Peter and Peter thought he was doing a good thing by rebuking the Lord.

- **1Corinthians 2:4:** And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,
- **Romans 16:17-18:** Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. ¹⁸ For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.
 - Whenever you hear words such as “all”, “always”, “everybody”, “all the time” and so forth – people are overstating their position
 - Note: In giving advise there is more potential for offense – it is always HIGH – people will quote or miss-quote you.

8. Judgement: In the end, you will be judged by your very own words

a. Many people believe that their words have no implications or long-lasting impact; however, nothing could be farther from the truth. When words are released, they produce death or life, they have an assignment, and ultimately it will be fulfilled. The Bible communicates that we will be judged by every idle word we speak.

b. The future is dependent upon the words you use

c. **Matthew 12:36:** But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment.

9. Heart: What you say is directly related to what is in your core being

a. Jesus clearly taught His followers that the heart and the mouth are connected. In fact, the mouth speaks from the abundance of the heart. In other words, what is most prevalent and dominating in the heart will eventually make its way out.

b. People love to make excuses for their vocabulary and even suggest that they did not mean what they said but the truth is it is in their heart. Their heart exposes them, their heart reveals exactly what they believe and how they feel about you, a circumstance or a situation.

- From the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks
- **Luke 6:45:** A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS OF RELATIONSHIPS

- Thou shalt not be a fake or a phony
- Thou shalt not turn a blind eye to the needs and interests of others
- Thou shalt not lie or exaggerate
- Thou shalt not shoot the bearer of bad news
- Thou shalt not refuse correction
- Thou shalt not ignore constructive criticism
- Thou shalt not isolate yourself
- Thou shalt not gossip
- Thou shalt not refuse to forgive others
- Thou shalt speak to others as you would have them speak to you.

QUOTES

“Lord, make my words tender and sweet because tomorrow I may have to eat them.”

“Whenever you're in conflict with someone, there is one factor that can make the difference between damaging your relationship and deepening it. That factor is attitude”. ~William James

“Peace is not absence of conflict; it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means”. ~Ronald Reagan

“Conflict cannot survive without your participation”. ~Wayne Dyer

“If you don't think you should be criticized, you're clearly not reading your Bible.” ~Dr. Tony Soldano

“Do you want to be right, or do you want relationship?”

“You think you know someone and then they start talking.”

“The way we communicate should be the same way we want to be communicated to.”

“Communication is more than words.”

“You are creating life when you speak the Word of God.”

“Speaking the truth in love doesn't just mean you use nice words, it means you speak from a heart of love.”

“Controlling the tongue is hard. Pray for God to put a guard over your lips.”

“If you're going to read between the lines, use a magnifying glass.”

“Truth requires timing.”

“Listen to listen, not to argue back.”

“When your words are powered by the Holy Spirit you will see results.”

“You speak what is in your heart.”

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

1. How can we ensure that the abundance of our heart is good rather than evil?
2. Provide three practical examples of how you can develop your listening skills daily.
3. What does Jesus mean when He teaches that we will be judged by every idle word that comes out of our mouth? What does this look like in real life?
4. Can you provide examples of when God put a watchman at your mouth? What happened? What were you stopped from saying?
5. Provide 10 examples of how you have implemented the principle of death and life being in the power of the tongue. Provide both positive and negative.
6. Is it really possible to simply let your yes be yes and your no be no?
7. Discuss, in detail, the relationship killers that are found under grace in this sermon. Would you add any others?
8. What other forms of communication have you experienced, both negative and positive. List and describe them.