

love and their love for themselves (5:25-32).

- 3) Communicating love to your wife is humbling because it requires **sacrifice** and **selflessness** to give her your time, listen attentively, be transparent, be faithful, cherish her, apologise when you are wrong and value her. **Men, these humbling actions are what communicate love to a wife.**

#### **b. God said, wives meet your husband's need for respect.**

- 1) **God** made husbands with a great need for respect. Your husband appreciates your love, but he craves your respect. Respect is his greatest need.
- 2) God made men to be **workers, leaders, analysers, protectors, providers, and partners**. Your husband needs to feel successful in these. He needs approval, admiration, appreciation and a wife who believes in him. Yes, he will fail, but he **needs** your respect. God gave him that need.
- 3) Respect his person even if you cannot respect his actions. Communicating respect can be a struggle and it is often humbling, but when you respect your husband, he will find it much easier to communicate love to you.

📖 *God did not say, husband love your wife when she earns love. Nor did he say wife respect your husband when he earns respect. Wives should be loveable and husbands should be respectable, but if your spouse fails to be so, it is still your God-given duty to communicate love or respect.*

**Conclusion:** How has your marital communication been this week? Have you been **merciful**, showing kindness, compassion and forgiveness? Has your communication been **spiritual**? Have you yielded to the Holy Spirit and allowed Him to guide and enable your communication? Have you **humbly** communicated love to your wife or respect to your husband? If your spouse fails, communicate these things anyway to glorify the Lord and He will reward you.

I have focussed on marital communication, but many of the same principles apply to communication with others as well. If you are not married, these communication principles are still for you.

**Song:** Teach Me Thy Way, O Lord - **337**

# Biblical Communication (2)

28 April 2019 AM - Ephesians 4:32; 5:2, 18-21, 33 - Scott Childs

**Introduction:** According to a recent article, **Healthy** couples have a 5:1 ratio of compliments compared to negative comments. For every complaint, there are five **positive** interactions between a couple—"Thank you," "Please," "I'm sorry," "You are welcome," "May I help you?" "You look beautiful," "I love you," "I forgive you," "Will you forgive me?" or "Help me understand what you think." <https://www.kevinathompson.com/two-stats-that-will-change-your-marriage/> If that does not describe your marriage, then ask God to help you through today's message.

Two weeks ago, we looked at the first half of this message on Biblical Communication. In that message we learned God's first four communication instructions: **Be Truthful**, 4:25 - Do not lie; **Be Careful**, 4:26-27 - Guard against anger; **Be Helpful**, 4:29-30 - No corrupt words only edifying words; **Be Unresentful**, 4:31 - No bitterness or resentment. If you missed the first message, please listen to in on our website.

**Transition:** This morning, I want us to look at three more of God's communication instructions that, if applied, will greatly help our marriages.

*God's fifth communication instruction is to ...*

## **5. Be Merciful (Eph 4:32)**

### **a. God says, "Be kind and tenderhearted"**

- 1) To be **kind** is the opposite of being harsh or bitter. It is to be gentle or good-hearted. It has the idea of being useful or fit. **We will never truly be kind if we do not first obey Ephesians 4:31.** We must first put away all resentment. **Resentment prevents true kindness.**
  - a) If you find it difficult to say kind words to your spouse (or someone else), if your tone of voice is unkind or if you respond in unkind ways, the **root** problem is often resentment in your heart toward that person.
  - b) God commands us to **be kind**. We are to be gentle, good-hearted and helpful. Kindness is not an option. It is a key to good communication.
  - c) We are to be kind **one to another**. Kindness is to go

both ways. **However**, if your spouse does not show you kindness, you still must obey God and be kind.

- 2) To be *tenderhearted* is to be compassionate, sympathetic or merciful. Selfishness often prevents tenderheartedness. When we think only of ourselves, we do not care about others. This is especially true when our spouse has done something that irritates you.

#### b. God says, be forgiving as God forgave you

- 1) **Have you forgiven** your spouse for the unkind and unloving things he or she has done to you? If not, it is probably for the same reason you struggle to be kind to your spouse. As with lack of kindness, unforgiveness goes back to **resentment**. With God's help, you must remove the bitter anger and resentment from your heart.
- 2) We are to forgive *as God for Christ's sake* forgave us. How does God forgive? He always forgives when we confess (1Jn 1:9). He forgives permanently (Ps 103:12).
- 3) Jesus told Peter to forgive 490 times (Mt 18:21-22).
- 4) Jesus also said that our unforgiveness blocks His forgiveness. (Matthew 6:15) "*But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*"
- 5) Treat your spouse (and others) as you want them to treat you when you irritate, do wrong or make a mistake.
- 6) We must also **seek forgiveness** when we do wrong. Six of the hardest words for people to say are **"I was wrong, please forgive me."**

*So, be merciful! God's sixth communication instruction is to ...*

### 6. Be Spiritual (Eph 5:18-21)

We need God's help to communicate properly.

#### a. Allow the Holy Spirit to fill you

- 1) We must allow the Holy Spirit to fill us, v.18. We do this by keeping sin confessed, walking in fellowship with God, and yielding to the Holy Spirit's leading through the Bible.
- 2) Only a true Christian is able to do this. If you are not yet a Christian, God's Holy Spirit does not live in you. God is not helping your communication. You need to trust Christ.

#### b. Spirit-filled communication honours God

- 1) When the Holy Spirit controls your life, your *music* will glorify God, v.19. He will give you a desire to sing and listen to songs that honour Him. If you listen to ungodly secular songs, they pollute your mind and your heart and dishonour the Lord. *The music in your heart will greatly influence your communication with others.*
- 2) When the Holy Spirit controls your life, you will be *thankful to God*, v.20. Regularly thanking God for the blessings He gives you will make it easier for you to express thanks toward your spouse and others.
- 3) When the Holy Spirit controls your life, we will *submit to one another in the fear of God*. This has nothing to do with personal worth. It has to do with God's plan. This means that you will willingly yield to one another in areas God has ordained. Wives will respectfully submit to their husbands (5:22-24). Husbands will lovingly lead their wives (5:25-32). Children will fully obey their parents (6:1-3). Employees will obey their employers (6:5-8). Employers will treat properly their employees (6:9).
- 4) When you allow the Holy Spirit to control your life, He will guide your communication. He will enable you to do and say what is right, even if your spouse is uncooperative.

*So, be merciful & be spiritual! God's seventh communication instruction is to ...*

### 7. Be Humble (Eph 5:33)

This verse is the sum of verses 22-32. Notice carefully what God says. Communicating love and respect are the two greatest needs in your marriage, but communicating them to your spouse as God instructs is humbling. Our sinful natures withhold our duty if our spouse does not treat us as we want to be treated.

#### a. God said, husbands meet your wife's need for love.

- 1) **God** made wives with a great need for *love*. Because love is not a man's greatest need, husbands often struggle to know HOW to communicate love their wives in the practical ways they desire.
- 2) God knows this is hard for men that is why He commanded husbands to pattern their love after God's