

Christian Communication

Introduction

God is the original communicator. It is through God speaking to us through prophets and finally through His Son (Heb.1:1-2) that we came to know God's character and will. All of life involves constant communication between people. In this age of high speed telephone and internet communication, the area of communication has become an important part of our lives. But communication is not just transmitting knowledge. Christian communication is much more than sharing knowledge.

Purpose of Christian Communication

1. To _____ each other more fully as _____.
2. To _____ up each other in _____. Eph. 4:29. (Memory Verse)
3. To communicate the _____ of Christ

Good, Bad, Poor Communication

Good - _____ communication that fulfills the above purposes

Bad - _____

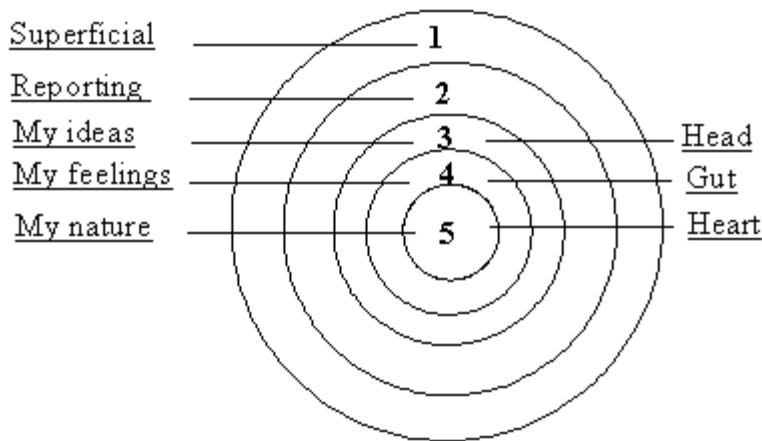
Poor - _____ or _____

Who I am as a PERSON: Revealed by:

What I think, judge, feel, value, honor, esteem, love, hate, fear, desire, hope for, believe in, and am committed to.

The Five Levels of Deep Communication

1. _____ Clichés. e.g. "How are you?" "Beautiful weather, isn't it?"
2. _____ Events and about others. e.g. Did you hear about ____
3. My _____ and intellectual _____. e.g. "I think you are very smart" "I think that..."
4. My _____ (____ level). Emotional response to people, events, issues. e.g. "I am glad..."
5. My true _____ (____ level). My commitments, character, strengths, weaknesses, aspirations, fears etc.



COMMENTS:

- Level 1 is a comfortable starting place with _____.
- Level 2 can be constructive or destructive (when it is _____, _____).
- Level 3 can also be constructive, but when misused, this is the most destructive of all since it involves passing judgments on others in a _____ way. Also, we can state our positive judgments (level 3) without revealing our _____ about it (level 4).
- Level 4 and 5 indicate _____ level communication. Note that we can express our _____ (level 4) without passing negative judgments (level 3).
- With God we should have _____ communication (total _____ and _____). Even though God knows everything, He wants us to be fully open to Him for two-way communication with God. (This is like knowing through confidential sources some thing wrong about another, but I don't feel free to talk about it until that person brings it up).

Achieving Deep Communication with People

Lines open to God invariably open to one another in the following sequence:

1. _____ love and acceptance of us unconditionally.
2. _____ acceptance of God's love and acceptance
3. I love and accept _____ as God loves me and accepts me.
4. I accept _____ as they are and love them.
5. I communicate at _____ levels with others.
 - Going to deeper levels should be _____, beginning with level 1.
 - I take the _____ to go to the next level, and watch for _____ response
 - When _____ with the new level, try _____ level.

Lesson 3

- Only with _____ developed and _____ response to what is share will deeper level be possible. If one person responds _____ and _____ what is shared, deeper communication _____. It might lead to destructive responses too.

EXERCISE:

Write down an imaginary conversation you would have with a stranger to get to know that person. Try to go at least to level 3. Write down the first 10 question you would ask them. Include your responses too.

Meet in groups of 3. Using the sharing questions given, go around the group and share, going through the items in the listed order. (Go around with one question before the next)

Example of a Positive spoken Judgment and associated (unshared) Feelings

My Spoken Judgment *My associated (unshared) feelings in response*

I think you are very intelligent.	... and I am jealous ... and I feel threatened ... and I feel inferior ... and I feel frustrated ... and I feel proud to be your friend ... and it makes me ill at ease with you ... and I feel suspicious of you ... and I feel like imitating you or competing with you ... and I feel like running away from you ... and I feel the desire for humiliating you
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EXERCISE:

Write down the various feelings that could be associated with the following spoken judgments:

"I think you are very talented"

"You have a beautiful dress on"

"You have a very successful business"

Barriers to Deeper Communication

1. **Fear of others knowing our weakness and 'badness'**

Reason: a) _____ sin
b) _____ (I will appear less than perfect)

Solution:

2. **Fear of others responding negatively or destructively**

Background: _____ experiences.

Solution:

3. **Fear of others misusing confidential information**

Background: _____ experiences (including those of others)

Solution:

4. **Fear of others getting hurt by what is revealed** (e.g those who trust us, and look up to us)

Reason: Thinking that we are the models of _____ and source of their _____.

Solution:

5. **No interest/Considers it not important or relevant**

Reason: a) _____-centeredness.
b) Self-_____ (materialism: Enough *things* for happiness)
c) Relationship feared as _____ only
d) "Why _____ her with details of *my* work? What's the use?"

Solution:

6. **Incommunicable**

Background: _____ bad response patterns.

Solution: (See later: How to be communicable)

7. **Lacking in Good Communication skills** (e.g how to talk about hurts). See next.

Solution: Learn and practice some of the _____.

CONSTRUCTIVE COMMUNICATION : ***DO'S & DON'TS***

1. JUDGING

Meaning: Determining something as right or wrong, good or bad; to evaluate qualifications, credentials, suitability etc.

Why essential: To make _____ decisions, to _____ and improve.

When is it right:

- a. Accurate, based on _____ and on _____ standards. John 7:24; 1 Cor 5:3; 1 Cor. 4:4
- b. When the judging person has the _____ to it. Matt. 7:1-4; Gal. 6:1
(_____, not _____ the necessary spiritual qualification)
- c. Motive is _____, evaluation, and restoration out of love. Eph. 4:15; Gal. 6:1.

When is Judging Wrong? Prov. 18:21

- a. When based on _____ and _____ account; and not based on _____ Word
- b. When the motive is not in _____ not to build up, and not to restore
- c. When judging _____ (e.g. "He is doing it for ego-boosting")
 - Others cannot know the _____ motives by looking at actions. Leave it to God!
- d. When _____ (describing *character* in a negative way).
e.g. "You are ...(a liar, stupid, idiot, rotten...)" based on some action.
 - A few actions don't warrant a _____ label
 - A negative character label can be _____ esp. to a child who will believe it). Matt. 5:21-22

Lesson 3

- A negative labeling seeks to _____ some one's character and reputation.
Judging can be viewed as _____ the person.
- e. _____ ("You never..", "You always..."). Col. 3:9; Eph. 4:25
 - A few _____ do not warrant generalizing. It is often an exaggeration or lie.
 - It is _____: No credit for what was done right all other times! So why try?
 - It is often out of a desire to characterize another as very _____, deserving contempt.

Why Wrong Judging is harmful to Ourselves:

- a. It could be out of a desire to make us look _____ in comparison, esp. when we are aware of something bad about us. But this way we are not built up!
- b. It could be out of a desire to _____ our wrong behavior ("balancing guilt") or revenge that exceeds their offense.
- c. It creates a negative _____ on others' bad qualities. Having labeled them, we look for more evidence of their bad qualities.
 - We end up _____ their qualities! (People often marry the same kind of persons they hate). We build up _____ towards them.
- d. We become _____ people, and become _____.
- e. It could be reflecting our _____, _____ attitude. (e.g. "Women not wearing long skirts in public is bad") _____

Judging People vs. Actions

As far as possible, limit judgment to _____.

e.g. "What you said was not true" instead of saying, "You are a liar!" Or, "You did not make your bed today" instead of "You never make your bed."

Judging vs. Condemning

Can judge an _____ as wrong. But don't condemn _____.

Condemning people is pronouncing a sentence of _____ e.g. John 3:17; Jesus did not _____ the sinful woman. John 8:11.

Reporting Feelings without Negative Judging

We can and should report our hurt _____ (Level 4) without _____ the other.

eg. "Because you did not tell me that you would be late (*his actions*), I was upset (*MY feelings*)" instead of judging: "You don't love me, that is why you did not tell me."

"Rock music is not something I enjoy" (Instead of judging: "Rock music is bad")

More Examples:

2. Don't ever say, "I _____ you!". It is the ultimate rejection and serious sin (1 John 3:15)
3. Don't _____. It is forcing your will by repetition. Prov. 10:19.
3. Don't _____ when _____ with emotions like anger.
Prov. 15:1; 14:29; 29:11
 - The danger is a distorted view of the problem and of the other person.
 - Verbal abuse can do much damage which is hard to undo later. 'Letting it out on each other' is not the Christian way.
 - The right way is to deal with the reason for the anger in the first place. Is it because your ego is hurt? Is there a legitimate cause that needs correction?
 - Maybe it is necessary to discuss the problem with each other to understand the reason. Do it when cool.
 - Don't repress the anger but resolve it. Eph. 4:26. (*See later for more*).
5. **Emphasize constructive communication.**
 - a. Talk _____, affirming and reinforcing the _____ qualities when exhibited. Praise of a quality is a motivation for _____ in it. Rev. 2:2-4.

e.g. "I like the way you sang joyfully" "I appreciate your encouraging me"
 - b. _____ each other. Heb. 3:13; 1 Thes. 5:11,14.

e.g. "You can do it!" "I am glad about your progress"
 - c. Say, "I _____ you!"
6. Make communication a _____. That involves listening back and forth.
7. Ask _____ questions. That encourages thinking. Avoid leading questions.

e.g. "What do you think about ..." in stead of "Isn't it...?"

Lesson 3

8. **Be Communicable** (How to make others _____ to you)
- _____ with interest and respect, with eye contact. Prov. 18:13; Js 1:19; Phil. 2:4
 - Don't _____ off or humiliate or answer before hearing all. Prov. 15:28; 29:20
 - Be willing to accept _____ of you (Humility) Prov. 19:25
 - Don't _____ the other person for what is said. 1 Pet. 2:23; 3:9
 - Accept _____ on views. You can disagree agreeably!
 - Don't _____ the information for blackmail. Keep confidences. Prov. 11:13
 - Don't respond by emotional _____ and _____
 - When not clear, ask, "What do you _____?"
 - _____ for any hurting. James 5:16; Eph. 4:32
 - Instead of saying _____ to requests, be willing to suggest _____. Frequent No's will cause the requests to end. e.g., "I am not feeling well now. How about tomorrow?"
 - Express your _____ for the communication time.

LODGING A GRIEVANCE

- Do it as _____ as possible
- In _____. Matt. 18:15
- State your _____ with the person before the grievance. Rev. 2:4
- Avoid _____ such as "You are..." Use "I don't like that ..." or "I felt upset that ..."
- Focus on _____, not the other person's motive
- Do not _____ with others
- Do not dredge up the _____.
- Focus on _____ complaint at a time.
- Suggest in non-demanding way how the problem could be _____.
- Work out mutually _____ solution

Sample Cases**RECEIVING A GRIEVANCE**

- _____ looking directly at the person
- _____ any "You are..." statements to "I don't like ..." form
- Look at the complaint as the other person's way of _____ things, but be willing to consider its validity.
- Don't _____ the other person's statements (e.g. "You are vicious")
- Do not _____ the other person as having some sinister motive
- Do not accuse the other person being irrational, defensive etc.

Lesson 3

7. Do not _____ the other person or treat statements as joke
8. Ask for opportunity to respond when the other person has _____.
Paraphrase the complaint and ask if your understanding is correct.
9. If you believe the other person's complaint was not valid, _____ your actions. If not, _____ your fault and work out corrective steps.
10. Renew _____ prayer when appropriate, thanking God for each other.

Sample Cases:**DEALING WITH ANGER***What Anger Is:*

It is responding emotionally in a way that communicates one's strong _____ at some situation or another's action.

Examples from Scripture

Cain's anger against Abel. Gen. 4:5-8
 David's anger when Nathan told the story of the lamb
 Jesus' anger against the money changers in the temple
 The Wrath of the Lamb. Rev. 6:16
 Eph. 4:26 (Anger has its place, but should not lead to sin)
 Num. 20:11
 Jonah 4:7-11

When Is Anger Righteous?

When _____ rights and honor are violated. Heb. 1:9
 When _____ is practiced.
 (Including unrighteous acts against _____)
 When a person defies the _____ agreed to (e.g. not going through the proper channel)
 Such anger is _____ Indignation

When Is Anger Wrong?

When in response to the feeling that one's _____ interest or importance is threatened.

e.g.,
 When some one criticizes me and I feel insecure
 When I feel I am not respected or appreciated
 When I did not get what I wanted or expected (like promotion)
 When I am frustrated by failure (in my efforts)
 When others refuse to change according to the way I want (in my time)

Lesson 3

When some one takes the parking space I was waiting for
 When I lose an argument
 When I notice that others are prospering
 When I feel that God was not fair in ...

Handling Anger Wrongly (Eph. 4:26; Matt. 5: 21-22)

_____ it (by denying its reality). Will go to subconscious and affect attitudes.

_____ it violently ("Let it all out"). Destructive. James 1:20; Gen. 4:5-8.

(Leads to sinning by destructive action, hatred, and abusive communication)

_____ it _____ - pretending not to be angry.
 (Anger bottled up - can explode later)

The High Cost of Anger

Can lead to hatred, destructive acts and words, with hurtful _____.

It can _____ anger in others. Prov. 20:2; Col. 3:21; Prov. 15:18.

Unresolved anger can affect one's _____ and _____ health.

It can destroy good _____ and feelings of _____ (See: *Love Busters* by Harley)

It hinders friendships and good _____ with others.

Prov. 22:24-25; 21:9

Right Way of Handling Anger

If anger is _____ indignation

- Do not let it lead to hatred of the _____ or to _____ action.
- But can speak out strongly against the offending _____

If the anger is overwhelming

- _____ the fact of being angry, but avoid any angry words or actions in response immediately. Prov. 14:29; 16:32; 29:11
- Take time to _____ down. (Keeping away from each other for a while may be advisable. In this case, say: "I am too upset now. Why don't we talk about it later?")
- Examine _____. Was it righteous? Or was it based on self-focus (including an over-emphasis of my _____)?
- If based on self-focus, ask _____ forgiveness, and apologize to the _____ person.

If the offense is perceived as the other person's wrong action, talk about it to the other when cool, following the guidelines in LODGING A GRIEVANCE.

Lesson 3

May be your perception of the other's action is wrong. Let the other person clarify or defend it. In this case, apologize for your anger.

If, on the other hand, the other person admits wrong and apologizes for it, consider the matter _____. Thank the person and reaffirm your love and forgiveness. Don't bring up the matter again.

If the other person refuses to admit wrong but you feel you have been wronged, you may proceed as in Matt. 18:15-17. If the matter is _____ nor resolved, you should _____ them and leave the matter in _____ hands. Matt. 5:44; Heb. 12:13.

Resolve your anger as _____ as possible - "before the sun goes down." Eph. 4:26.

When some one is angry with you:

- Try to answer _____. Don't raise voice or argue. Heated argument in answer produces more heat, not light! Prov. 29:11
- Don't allow yourself to be provoked to _____ Rom. 12:21; James 1:19.
- Pray for enabling you to respond in a godly way.
- Listen to the other's complaint when cool. See above: RECEIVING A GRIEVANCE.

VICTORY OVER SINFUL ANGER

We are responsible for our _____ anger! It is a work of the flesh (Gal. 5:18-21).

Only as we grow in the Fruit of the _____ will we have control over it since self-control is one of the fruit. Being Spirit-filled is the key to victory.

When some one mistreats you in an unrighteous way, understand that it is because he or she is not acting in a _____ way. So pray for their turning to God. Rom. 12:20. Forgive them as Christ forgave His enemies. At the same time, examine yourself and correct any fault on your side.

Sinful anger is based on self-focus and the belief that _____ and _____ can take away my happiness, security, and significance. Only as we are secure in _____ love and sovereign control of our life will we be free from such sinful anger.

Be willing to give up _____ gladly, rather than demanding it and reacting wrongly. Phil. 2:5

Apply the helpful principles in this lesson, especially the section *Handling Anger Rightly*.

Special Study Verses Eph. 4:31-32; Col. 3:8; James 1:19; Eph. 4:29

ANGER MOTIVATES A PERSON TO

Hate, wound, damage,
annihilate, despise,
scorn, disdain,
loathe, vilify,
curse, despoil,
ruin, demolish,
abhor, abominate,
desolate, ridicule,
tease, kid,
get even with,
laugh at, humiliate,
goad, shame, criticize, scold,
bawl out, irritate, beat up,
fight, compete with,
crush, offend, or
bully
ANOTHER PERSON!

The Chain of Suppressed Anger

Employer angrily confronts employee
Employee responds angrily to wife on reaching home
Wife vents her anger on teenage boy who walks in
Teenager takes it out on his younger brother
Younger brother kicks the dog who came and licked him
The dog bites the cat
The cat scratches the 3-year old
The 3-year old pulls off the head of her Barbie doll