

THE TAKE AWAY

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Sunday, September 3, 2023

Message Summary:

In part 2 of his message in our series, *Summer of Love*, Pastor Lee Wilson taught us about how communication impacts relationships. Poor communication makes a relationship go from GOOD to BAD to WORSE. Healthy communication can make a relationship go from GOOD to GREAT to GODLY. Good communication is the foundation of any strong relationship. God says communication has more to do with what you are hearing than what you're saying. It can't always be the argument: "It's not me; it's you." Communication is an art and it is a skill we can only learn from God.

But if we are not careful, we will lean into the historical ways we have learned to communicate – what we have been taught by others and what we have taught ourselves by habit. If your communication is not being driven from your heart, your communication will be reckless and unfruitful and driven by your emotions, especially if your emotions are under the influence of the flesh. If your emotions are under the influence of your FLESH, you will produce ungodly feelings, ungodly thoughts, and ultimately, ungodly words. The reason why some people's communication is unhealthy is because their heart is unhealthy.

To train yourself to have godly and healthy communication, you have to add the right ingredients into your heart, which will ultimately add to your words: respect, trust, honor, honesty, forgiveness, kind words, patience, selflessness, empathy, compassion, humility, extra grace, active listening, allowance for constructive discussions, conflict resolution, gratitude, and truth. True communication can only occur when the needs and differences of each person are understood and respected. As we learn to get our hearts right and walk in love with others, we will bring to experience the fruit of releasing godly communication into our relationships.

Scriptures:

- **[Amos 3:3 NLT]** *Can two people walk together without agreeing on the direction?*
- **[1 Peter 1:14 NLT]** *So you must live as God's obedient children. Don't slip back into your old ways of living to satisfy your own desires. You didn't know any better then.*
- **[James 1:19-22 NLT]** *19 Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. 20 Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires. 21 So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls. 22 But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.*
- **[Colossians 3:14-15 NLT]** *14 Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace that comes from Christ rule in your hearts. For as members of one body you are called to live in peace. And always be thankful.*

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think the condition of our heart matters when it comes to communication?
2. Why do we need to pay attention to the words coming out of our mouths?
3. What is the impact of learning to listen well to others when they are talking?
4. What are some of the good ingredients that need to be added to our communication?
5. What is the power of seeking to understand one another?

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Life Application:

Over the next week, as you study the key scriptures, ask yourself the following question: When you examine the words that regularly come out of your mouth, would you call yourself a healthy, godly communicator? Or are you struggling with negative and unhealthy communication? Remember, communication is an art and it is a skill we can only learn from God. This week, ask the Holy Spirit to draw your attention to the words you speak. Listen to what you are saying, and ask God to show you how to communicate in a healthy way.