

# Biblical Communication

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Barry G. Johnson, Sr.

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**EPHESIANS 4:25**

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## Sermon Thesis:

Biblical communication builds whole relationships.

## Objectives:

- I. Be Honest and Open
- II. Keep Current
- III. Attack the Problem, Not the Person
- IV. Act, Don't React

## Introduction:

The Bible has plenty to say about how we ought to communicate one with the other.

What is effective communication?

- It is the process of sharing information with another in such a way that the sender's message is understood as it was intended.
- Unless the sender and receiver have come to a common meaning, they have not communicated effectively.
- When you talk, there are actually six messages that can be involved.
  - What you mean to say
  - What you actually say
  - What the other person hears
  - What the other person thinks he hears

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- What the other person says about what you said
- What you think the other person said about what you said
- When people communicate effectively
  - They are mutually strengthened
  - They are mutually encouraged
  - They are mutually enriched
- This is the standard by which we must evaluate our relationship communication.
- In many relationships, people live together physically but are miles apart emotionally.
- Why don't people communicate effectively?
  - They lack training
  - They are afraid to expose thoughts for fear of rejection or conflict
  - They see it making no difference
  - They feel they have nothing to contribute of any significance
  - They feel frustration over mixed messages
- There are three types of communication:
  - Verbal
  - Non-Verbal
  - Written
- Without good communication you cannot have the kind of marriage, family or relationship God wants you to have.
- Some common forms of nonverbal communication
  - Eyes – avoid eye contact or roll eyes
  - Facial expressions
  - Way we dress
  - Way we sit or stand

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- Use of time
- Use of money
- Way we laugh
- Willingness to listen
- Arms
- Hands

*Let's look at what has been called the Four Laws of Biblical communication.*

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## Sermon Outline:

### I. Be Honest and Open - Eph. 4:25

#### A. Speak

1 Corinthians 2:11 (NIV)

<sup>11</sup> For who knows a person’s thoughts except their own spirit within them? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

#### B. People tend to fall into 2 categories

##### 1. Blow up

Proverbs 25:28 (NIV)

<sup>28</sup> Like a city whose walls are broken through is a person who lacks self-control.

##### 2. Clam up

Ephesians 4:26–27 (NIV)

<sup>26</sup> “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, <sup>27</sup> and do not give the devil a foothold.

##### 3. Neither way is Biblical

#### C. The truth

##### 1. This is more than not lying

##### 2. A full discussion is necessary

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Ephesians 4:15 (NIV)

<sup>15</sup> Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

James 1:22 (NIV)

<sup>22</sup> Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

1 John 1:6–7 (NIV)

<sup>6</sup> If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. <sup>7</sup> But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

D. Truthfulness begins with being truthful to yourself about yourself

E. The Motivation

1. What happens when we do not listen and talk honestly

Proverbs 18:13 (NIV)

<sup>13</sup> To answer before listening— that is folly and shame.

Amos 3:3 (NIV)

<sup>3</sup> Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?

Matthew 5:23–26 (NIV)

<sup>23</sup> “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, <sup>24</sup> leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.

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<sup>25</sup> “Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. <sup>26</sup> Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

1 Corinthians 14:8–9 (NIV)

<sup>8</sup> Again, if the trumpet does not sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle? <sup>9</sup> So it is with you. Unless you speak intelligible words with your tongue, how will anyone know what you are saying? You will just be speaking into the air.

1 Corinthians 14:40 (NIV)

<sup>40</sup> But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.

## II. Keep Current – Eph. 4:26-27

- A. Do not allow yourself to hold onto anger overnight. When allowed to linger, produces: bitterness; resentment; hatred. Each days problems must be dealt with that day!

Matthew 6:34 (NIV)

<sup>34</sup> Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

- B. There are times to hold your tongue
  - 1. When love can cover it

1 Peter 4:8 (NIV)

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<sup>8</sup> Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

2. When it is not part of God’s plan

Proverbs 14:12 (NIV)

<sup>12</sup> There is a way that appears to be right, but in the end it leads to death.

3. When you need time to consider the situation

James 1:19 (NIV)

<sup>19</sup> My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry,

4. NOTE: It is never right to expect others to live according to your preferences.
5. When we are not making righteous judgments

John 7:24 (NIV)

<sup>24</sup> Stop judging by mere appearances, but instead judge correctly.”

Matthew 7:1–6 (NIV)

“Do not judge, or you too will be judged. <sup>2</sup> For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

<sup>3</sup> “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? <sup>4</sup> How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? <sup>5</sup> You hypocrite, first take the



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plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

<sup>6</sup> “Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

6. When we do not have forgiving spirits

Ephesians 4:31–32 (NIV)

<sup>31</sup> Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

7. When we are refusing to receive our weaker brother

Romans 14:13 (NIV)

<sup>13</sup> Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.

C. There are times when it is wrong to hold your tongue

1. If sin is hindering growth or causing harm to the body of Christ, ...
2. or the offender or situation is deteriorating rapidly, ...
3. it is extremely unloving not to seek to resolve the problem.
4. If someone's health is at issue
5. If someone's spiritual growth is at issue

D. Conditions to be met before speaking

1. Do I have the facts right?

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2. Should love cover it?

1 Peter 4:8 (NIV)

<sup>8</sup> Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.

3. Is my attitude right?

Ephesians 4:15 (NIV)

<sup>15</sup> Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

4. Is the timing right?

Proverbs 15:23 (NIV)

<sup>23</sup> A person finds joy in giving an apt reply— and how good is a timely word!

5. Are my words loving?

Ephesians 4:15 (NIV)

<sup>15</sup> Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

6. Have I prayed for God’s help?

Proverbs 3:5 (NIV)

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<sup>5</sup> Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;

7. Am I willing to stick around and pick up the pieces?

## III. Attack the Problem Not the Person – Eph. 4:29

- A. People represent the problem. People are not the problem.
- B. People are not to be attacked.

James 3:5–8 (NIV)

<sup>5</sup> Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. <sup>6</sup> The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one’s life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

<sup>7</sup> All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, <sup>8</sup> but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

Matthew 5:22 (NIV)

<sup>22</sup> **But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.**

James 2:4–5 (NIV)

<sup>4</sup> have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

<sup>5</sup> Listen, my dear brothers and sisters: Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith and to inherit the kingdom he promised those who love him?

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- C. Absolute statements are an indication of attacking the person.
  - 1. You never, statements and...
  - 2. You always, statements are indicative of absolutes.
- D. Choose words that help to solve the problem. Choose words that...
  - 1. Solution-oriented
  - 2. Edifying
  - 3. Minister grace to the hearers
- E. The goal is reaching a solution to a problem

## IV. Act, Don't React – Eph. 4:31-32

- A. Act in the following:
  - 1. Love
  - 2. Kindness
  - 3. Forgiveness
- B. Through Christ Spirit we must learn to be loving; kind; tenderhearted; and forgiving.

Galatians 5:22–23 (NIV)

<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

James 3:17–18 (NIV)

<sup>17</sup> But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. <sup>18</sup> Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

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## C. React is to respond with..

1. Anger
2. Bitterness
3. Resentment
4. Arguments occur when we react
5. Reacting is emotional and selfish

## D. We still have a Genesis 3 nature which tends...

1. To be cavalier about dealing with our own sin
2. To deal with our own needs
3. To defend rather than respond
4. To blame shift on others and run

## E. Reacting results

1. Selfish desire – sin

Galatians 5:16–21 (NIV)

<sup>16</sup> So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. <sup>17</sup> For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. <sup>18</sup> But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

<sup>19</sup> The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; <sup>20</sup> idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions <sup>21</sup> and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

2. Lack of wisdom

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James 3:13–16 (NIV)

<sup>13</sup> Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. <sup>14</sup> But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. <sup>15</sup> Such “wisdom” does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. <sup>16</sup> For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

F. No matter how irresponsible the other person is, you must act Biblically.

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## Conclusion:

The Bible gives us great teaching for living righteous and Godly lives. To the people who receive this Word and live by it a harvest of blessings and righteousness will be theirs.

3 John 3 (NIV)

<sup>3</sup> It gave me great joy when some believers came and testified about your faithfulness to the truth, telling how you continue to walk in it.

Let us use this truth to build the Church for the glory of God.

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## Invitation:

Romans 10:17 (NIV)

<sup>17</sup> Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.

Hebrews 11:6 (NIV)

<sup>6</sup> And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Luke 13:3 (NIV)

<sup>3</sup> **I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.**

Romans 10:9–10 (NIV)

<sup>9</sup> If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.

Acts 2:38 (NIV)

<sup>38</sup> Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Revelation 2:10 (NIV)

<sup>10</sup> **Do not be afraid of what you are about to suffer. I tell you, the devil will put some of you in prison to test you, and you will suffer persecution for ten days. Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you life as your victor’s crown.**