

Communication Guidelines

by Pastor Timothy Keller

Proverbs 18:21; 25:11; Job 19:2; James 3:8-10; I Peter 3:10;
Ephesians 4:25-32

Think about these guidelines and study the supporting Scripture verses:

1. Be a ready listener and do not answer until the other person has finished talking (Prov. 18:13; James 1:19).
2. Be slow to speak. Think first. Don't be hasty in your words. Speak in such a way that the other person can understand and accept what you say (Prov. 15:23, 28; 29:20; James 1:19).
3. Don't go to bed angry! Each day clear the offenses of that day. Speak the truth but do it in love. Do not exaggerate. (Eph. 4:15, 25; Col. 3:8; Matt. 6:34).
4. Do not use silence to frustrate the other person. Explain why you are hesitant to talk at this time (Prov. 10:19; 15:28; 16:21, 23; 18:2; 20:15; Col. 4:6).
5. Do not become involved in quarrels. It is possible to disagree without quarreling (Prov. 17:14; 20:3; Rom. 13:13; Eph. 4:31).
6. Do not respond in uncontrolled anger. Use a soft and kind response and tone of voice (Prov. 14:29; 15:1; 25:15; 29:11; Eph. 4:26, 31).
7. When someone confesses to you, tell him you forgive him. Be sure it is forgiven and not brought up to the person, to others, or to yourself! (Prov. 17:9; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13; I Pet. 4:8).

8. When you are in the wrong, admit it and ask for forgiveness, and ask how you can change (Prov. 12:15; 16:2; 20:6; 21:2; Matt. 5:23-25; Luke 17:3; James 5:16).
9. Avoid nagging (Prov. 10:19; 16:21, 23; 17:9 18:6, 7; 21:19; 27:15).
10. Do not blame or criticize the other person. Instead, restore, encourage, and edify (Rom. 14:13; Gal. 6:1; I Thess. 5:11).
11. If someone verbally attacks, criticizes, or blames you, do not respond in the same manner (Rom. 12:17, 21; I Pet. 2:23; 3:9).
12. Try to understand the other person's opinion. Make allowances for differences.
13. Be concerned about the other person's interests (Eph. 4:2; Phil. 2:4; 3:15, 16).

What you have just studied are Biblical directives for promoting good communication and good relationships with other people. To really put some teeth into your effort to become more Biblical in your communicating, you may wish to sign the following agreement to implement these guidelines.

Name _____ Date _____

Name _____ Date _____

(If husband and wife, both sign)