

BIBLICAL COMMUNICATION/PROBLEM SOLVING

The Four Rules of Communication (Ephesians 4)

1. Be Honest (v. 15, 25)

“Speaking the truth in love” requires three specific actions:

- a. You must speak.
 - You cannot avoid problems, clam-up, etc.
- b. You must speak the truth.
 - What is truth?
 - What we truly believe to be true as much to our ability...
 - Direct and honest
 - Generalizations are not true:
 - You NEVER...
 - You ALWAYS...
 - Etc.
- c. You must speak truth lovingly.

Six questions to ask before starting:

1. Do I have the facts right? Prov. 18:13
2. Is this significant enough to talk about, or can I just let it go? 1 Peter 4:8
3. Is my attitude right? Matt. 7:1-5
4. Is my timing right? Prov. 15:23
5. Are the words I am about to use loving? Prov. 15:1
6. Have I prayed for God's help? James 1:5

2. Keep Current (v. 26-27)

- a. How do you express your anger without sinning?
 - By following the four rules we are outlining here.
- b. You must solve today's problems today.
 - Matt. 6:34
 - Refusal to solve today's problems will:
 - Give Satan a grip on you.
 - Make future problems seem larger than they really are.
- c. This does not mean that every detail will be resolved and everyone will always agree. But it will mean that there is no bitterness between the two of you (whoever the other person is), and that if there is still some clarification that needs to be made, at the first opportunity you will begin the communication again.
 - For married couples there is no sleeping on the couch!

3. Attack the Problem, not the Person (v. 29-30)

- a. You must avoid words which attack character, tear down and discourage.
 - You're a liar.
 - You're a slob.
 - You always...
 - You never...
 - Etc.
- b. You must use speech that builds up, encourages, edifies.
 - What can you say that will help the person want to do the will of God right now?

4. Act, Don't React (v. 31 – 32)

- a. You must avoid the sinful expressions of anger listed in vs. 31.
 - Each one is a reaction against the sin of someone else.
- b. You must instead act in the control of the Holy Spirit and:
 1. Desire their spiritual good (“kind, tender-hearted”)
 2. Be ready to forgive, because you are a forgiven person.