Leader’s Discussion Guide -- Communications

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Church of the Nazarene

**Communications**

**Session Goal:** To encourage participants to communicate with God and to be Christlike in all their communications.

**Are You Ready?**

* Pray for God’s direction as you prepare for the session. Pray that participants will be open to

God’s truth and be ready to apply it to their lives.

* Read the entire leader’s guide for this session to get an overview of the material.
* View the Mor2Lif video, *Communication.*
* Be prepared to show the Mor2Lif video, *Communication.*
* Choose one or two questions from the “So What?” section as a follow-up to the video and an intro to the study.
* Determine which *Option* you will use from the “Now What?” section of the session.
* Be prepared or enlist several people to read: Ephesians 4:25-32 and James 3:1-12.
* Prepare copies of the participant outline, *Communication*.

**Introduction**

You have probably heard the phrases: “Don’t look at me like that” or “Don’t roll your eyes at me, young lady.” Those phrases underscore the fact that communication is shaped by both verbal and non-verbal clues. In fact communication experts say that only a small percentage (less than 10 percent) of what is communicated is verbal and so the overwhelming portion of communication is non-verbal (i.e. tone of voice, body language, facial expressions). So the old saying is true that actions speak louder than words. Are your actions supporting your words?

**So What?**

View the video, *Communication.* Choose one or more of the following questions that best fits the needs/dynamics of your group.

* What do you think about Melissa’s concern that her group is not really listening to her? From your perspective is she right or wrong in her statement?
* What are some ways that technology may compromise good communication?
* Describe a time when you felt technology got in the way of communication.
* What are some ways in which technology can be used to increase communication effectiveness?
* What do you think about the way Melissa communicated her frustration? Do you think she was effective in voicing her concerns?
* What other ways might she have communicated her frustration without making everyone defensive?

**What Does the Bible Say?**

**Say,** We all know that the communication process is complex. It is far more than just saying words. Have you heard the phrases: “Don’t look at me like that” or “Don’t roll you eyes at me, young lady.” The truth is that you can say one thing with your lips and another thing with your actions, eyes, or posture. When words are not supported by appropriate actions the communication process is confused; trust and understanding are compromised. The Bible records many instances in which communication broke down because the words and the actions were not complementary. In this session we are going to focus on what God’s Word has to say concerning our words and patterns of communication.

*Talk Is More than Words*

Read or have someone read Ephesians 4:25-32.

* In verses 15 and 25, “speaking the truth (in love)” is commanded. What do you think is meant by

that phrase?

* Can a person speak truth without love? Discuss a time when the truth was spoken to you “in love”

and a time when “love” was not communicated clearly.

* What do you think is meant by the phrases “unwholesome talk” and “helpful for building others up” (v. 29)? What kind of adjustments may need to be made in your “talk”? What are some ways you can “build others up”?
* Remember communication is both verbal and non-verbal. How do you think one can “get rid of”

the ungodly characteristics listed in verse 31?

*Taming the Tongue*

Read or have someone read James 3:1-12.

**Say,** Although James is mainly addressing false teachers, the principles he sets forth in this passage are applicable to any believer’s speech. James stresses the need for the heart and the tongue to be in alignment.

* What conclusion do you think James is drawing by using the analogies of “bits” and “rudder” and

“small spark” when speaking of the tongue?

* What are the consequences of an untamed forest fire? What forest fires have you witnessed that were caused by the tongue?

**How Does This Affect My Life?**

*Walk Your Talk*

**Say,** Jesus taught that the content of your heart will ultimately be expressed through your words (Matthew 12:33-37). It may seem an impossibility to control the tongue. However, be assured—God gives restraint through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

* In the video, Jennifer wants the group to remain honest and real while being encouraging and edifying. What are some issues your study group may need to address in order to “speak the truth in love” to each other?
* Consider the discussions and conversations within your group. How might you make them more

encouraging and edifying?

* Consider your conversations with friends, family, and co-workers. Are they lovingly truthful? Are they uplifting and supportive? What changes might you need to make to align them with God’s Word?
* Are your words mostly “praise” or mostly “cursing”? How might your partners in Christ help you be

accountable for your words?

**Now What?**

**Say,** Communication is so much more than just words. Actions, attitudes, voice inflection, facial expression, and audible noises (such as a sigh or a giggle) are all clues to our attempts to communicate.

* How has this study helped you to recognize the various factors that contribute to effective communication?
* How has the study of these two passages of Scripture challenged you to examine your communication skills, especially your words?

*Option One*

Ask participants to identify a relationship in their life that could be improved by better communication. Provide some time for them to think how they might improve their communication with that person(s). Ask how the group can support them. Give a promise to pray for each other.

*Option Two*

Read Psalm 19:14: “May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.” Challenge the group to pray the words of this Psalm each day during the coming week. Suggest they write this verse down where they can see it daily.

Close the session with the words of Psalm 19:14 as a prayer, praying for each other to be better communicators this week.