

Life Coach: Marriage

Communication, Part 4

Introduction: Communication sets the tone of a marriage. Positive, constructive communications builds the relationship, while negative and destructive speech erodes the union. Whenever a marriage breaks down or breaks up, ungodly communication patterns comprise a core problem. In addition, when constructive speech wanes in a relationship, silence or negative speech patterns become its replacement.

III. Elements of Ungodly Communication, continued (Eph. 4:31)

D. Clamour

1. The word “clamour” in the Greek language literally denotes “loud crying, done with *pathos* (great *emotion*); clamorous screaming (shrieking) that is extremely boisterous, like a wounded person emitting ‘unearthly’ (non-human) types of sounds.” (Strongs)
2. Clamour is unbridled emotion on steroids, expression so distraught with uncontrolled passion as to be completely devoid of linguistic sense. It goes beyond a tantrum, expressing raw and unintelligible emotion.
3. Because it expresses an unreasonable depth of pain and complete loss of self-control, clamorous outbursts never serve a constructive end.
 - a. Immaturity—small children whose ability to communicate is limited use clamor to express hurt or dissatisfaction. Think about the brat screaming in the grocery store as an example.
 - b. Manipulation—clamor is all about attempting to force the other party into conformity to its desires by appearing self-destructive or dangerously volatile.
 - c. Irrationality—clamor fails to have a reasonable discussion, likely because it doesn’t have a reasonable argument.
4. Outbursts of raw emotion by shrieking and uncontrollable crying do not solve problems. At best they gain temporary acquiescence of the more rational partner who will simply agree and comply to abate the emotional display.

E. Evil Speaking

1. The words “evil speaking” translate from the Greek word from which we get our English word “blaspheme.”
2. Evil speaking literally means to “slander.” Slander carries several fundamental nuisances:
 - a. To speak falsely—outright lying; gross exaggeration; unfounded assumption
 - b. To damage reputation—slander may be falsehood or truth spoken with the purpose of damaging reputation. Just because

something is true, doesn't mean it's nice—or necessary to repeat.

- c. To speak recklessly—slander always aims to destroy. Slander is the “scorched-earth” policy of destructive speech. Note, slander may be overt (as in direct accusations) or covert (as in leading suggestions).
 3. In marriage, slander takes place when partners share embarrassing or reputation-harming information with other parties. Slander seeks to irreparably damage the reputation of its partner in the eyes of others.
- F. Malice
1. Malice is the underlying evil that fuels negative speech patterns. It is wickedness in the heart that comes out in the speech.
 2. Malice motivates destructive speech patterns and may be dormant (without outward expression) until sufficiently provoked.
 3. It is not enough to curb abusive speech. One must guard his heart against malice.
 - a. Malice takes bitterness to the next level. Bitterness reminds itself “I’m hurt.” Malice says, “I’m going to hurt you.”
 - b. Malice delights in destruction. It enjoys gloating over the pain of another.
 - c. Malice fosters revenge, often biding its time for an opportune moment.
 - d. Malice is subtle—it secretly hopes that another will “get what’s coming to him.” In Christian circles, malice secretly hopes for the “judgment of God” against its object. Malice glories in “justice” and forgets all about mercy.
 4. Once malicious feelings exist within a marriage relationship, restoration becomes far more difficult because maliciousness quickly consumes love. When hurt, rather than healing, becomes the goal, the relationship is “on the rocks;” and divorce usually follows.
 5. Malice usually requires radical counseling as part of its eradication. Signs that marriage counseling is in order:
 - a. Deep-seated negative emotions toward one’s partner that never truly dissipate
 - b. Intense dissatisfaction with the relationship evidenced by wishing the marriage had never taken place
 - c. Mental scheming as to the logistics of divorce
 - d. Secret hope for the death or departure of the offending spouse
 - e. Mere endurance, rather than enjoying the relationship
 - f. Secondary motivations for maintaining the relationship become primary—“for the sake of the kids” or financial considerations, etc.