

LEARNING TO TALK TO EACH OTHER

VARIOUS SCRIPTURES // PASTOR TODD DUGARD
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It is God's plan (and very possible) for you and your family to learn how to talk to each other in a loving, God-honouring way. Acknowledge the problem (Proverbs 18:21; James 3:5-8; 4:1). Check your attitude before you speak (Matthew 12:34-37; Galatians 5:22-23). Listen more; talk less (Proverbs 10:19; 18:2,13; 21:23; James 1:19). Choose your words carefully and watch your non-verbals (Proverbs 15:1-2; 25:11-12). Keep it pure and life-affirming (Proverbs 12:18; Ephesians 4:15, 29).

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Given what we read about the tongue in James 3:5-8, why will our effort, independent of the Holy Spirit, fail to produce the kind of communication God desires us to have with each other?
- Was there any conversation in recent memory where you noticed your words didn't get through or produced an unintended destructive result? Who was it with? What were you trying to talk about? What could have been contributing to the miscommunication?
- The attitude of our heart can either help or hinder communication efforts. Review the clear principal about communication that Jesus teaches in Matthew 12:34-35? Given Jesus' teaching, do you need to confess any of these attitudes?

A Condemning Heart: you're instantly judging others' behaviour while punishing them verbally with critical and/or insulting words

A Shameful Heart: your words shift responsibility or reflect criticism back on to the person talking to you or to another, preventing the other person's words from exposing your sin or mistakes

A Proudful Heart: you use tone, volume, posture, interruption, and assumption to dominate and direct the conversation to suit yourself

A Bitter Heart: your words undermine hope or happiness and cause people to feel your emotional pain

- How could you apply the principle of *listen more; talk less*, developed from Proverbs 10:19; 18:2 and James 1:19 to bring about better communication between you and someone (i.e., a close friend, family member, co-worker) you struggle to talk with?
- How do you create opportunities for communication about problems in your close relationships? What practices ensure you're giving each other the proper auditory and visual attention required for good communication to take place at those times? (I.e., turn the screens off, take turns talking, etc.)