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## Do People REALLY Listen When You Speak?

Colossians 4:6: (NASB) *Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.*

There are few things in life that give you as good a sense of well being as the feeling you get when you truly believe that you have been clearly understood. Being understood elevates your confidence in others, relieves many of the pressures of today and opens up wider possibilities for tomorrow. To be understood is to be respected and we all want to be respected. So, how can we be better understood by those around us and better understand them as well? Communicate - simply communicate. Stay with us as we look into one of the most under-appreciated arts of humankind - the art of communication!

The Bible does not seem to talk about communicating in the way that we often refer to it, from the standpoint of understanding feelings. It does, however, give a number of examples of communicating through co-laboring, and through common cause. The only words translated "communicate" in the Bible are along these lines.

These next words are all VERY similar but deal more with actions between us and not necessarily words. Communication scripturally is more that we are headed down a common path.

**Communicate**: Strongs #2841 koinoneo (koy-no-neh'-o); *to share with others (objectively or subjectively)*:

Galatians 6:6: *Let him that is taught in the word **communicate <2841>** unto him that teacheth in all good things.*

1 Timothy 5:22: *Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be **partaker <2841>** of other men's sins: keep thyself pure.*

**Communicate**: Strongs #2842 koinonia (koy-nohn-ee'-ah); *partnership*

Hebrews 13:16: *But to do good and to **communicate <2842>** forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.*

Romans 15:26: *For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain **contribution <2842>** for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.*

**Communicate**: Strongs #2843: koinonikos (koy-no-nee-kos'); *communicative, i.e. liberal*:

**Only use**: 1 Timothy 6:18: *That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to **communicate <2843>**;*

We are to be liberal in our giving, to have a great amount of generosity.

All of these words carry the sense of participation in another's life and not merely contributing input. They seem to imply an understanding - a sense of "being on the same page."

### What does the process of communication look like?

**Communicate**: Strongs #4790 sugkoinoneo (soong-koy-no-neh'-o); *to share in company with, i.e. co-participate in*:

Philippians 4:14: *Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did **communicate with <4790>** my affliction.*

In other words: "You're putting yourself out on my behalf; you are bearing some of the weight of my affliction."

Revelation 18:4: *And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye **be not partakers <4790>** of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*

True communication really has three parts:

1. The imparting or giving of that which is to be communicated.
2. The hearing or receiving of that which is communicated.
3. The grasping or understanding of that which is communicated, as shown by the ability to feed it back to the communicator.



### Becoming "the great communicator," *Ronald Reagan*

- *I won a nickname, "The Great Communicator," but I never thought it was my style or the words I used that made a difference. It was the content. I wasn't a great communicator, but I communicated great things. And they didn't spring full bloom from my brow - they came from the heart of a great nation - from our experience, our wisdom and our belief in the principles that have guided us for two centuries.*

The greatest thing we can communicate to one another is the good news of the Gospel - the resurrection of Jesus and the redemption of all mankind.

The Apostle Paul was such a great communicator! He sets himself up to be heard and received:

1. The imparting or giving of that which is to be communicated

1 Corinthians 9:18-23: (NASB) <sup>18</sup>What then is my reward? That, when I preach the gospel, I may offer the gospel without charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel. <sup>19</sup>For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I may win more.

<sup>20</sup>To the Jews I became as a Jew, so that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law though not being myself under the Law, so that I might win those who are under the Law; <sup>21</sup>to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God but under the law of Christ, so that I might win those who are without law. <sup>22</sup>To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, so that I may by all means save some.

2. The hearing or receiving of that which is communicated

3. The grasping or understanding of that which is communicated, as shown by the ability to feed it back to the communicator

<sup>23</sup>I do all things for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it.

We are now in this together and can now spread it to the next person. If we are communicating something like the Gospel, it is not "me being heard by you," it is "Jesus Christ *through me* being acted on by you."

### Finest Hour, *House of Commons on June 18, 1940, Winston Churchill*

- *The whole fury and might of the enemy must very soon be turned on us. Hitler knows that he will have to break us in this Island or lose the war. If we can stand up to him, all Europe may be free and the life of the world may move forward into broad, sunlit uplands. But if we fail, then the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new Dark Age made more sinister, and perhaps more protracted, by the lights of perverted science. Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties, and so bear ourselves that, if the British Empire and its Commonwealth last for a thousand years, men will still say, "This was their finest hour."*

What are some of the "must do's" of communication?

Be **OBSERVANT** in your communication.

Galatians 2:9: When Peter, James and John saw God's grace working in the Apostle Paul, they opened up to him. Peter, James and John were observant, even though things didn't work out they way they originally planned - they had already chosen a replacement for Judas. They were observant and embraced God's choice.

### The only thing to fear is fear itself, *FDR's First Inaugural Address 1933*

- *First of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself - nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.*

There was a communication of hope to face the fear. It helps to acknowledge the difficulty and put it into perspective. Communication is not so that we feel better, it is so that we *act* better.

**KNOW YOURSELF** and **KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE** in your communication.

Apostle Paul carefully dealing with the Hebrew Christians:

Hebrews 10:21-25: (KJV) <sup>21</sup>And having an high priest over the house of God; <sup>22</sup>Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. <sup>23</sup>Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without



wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) <sup>24</sup>And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: <sup>25</sup>Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

Be **PRAYERFUL** in your communication.

Philippians 1:3-5: (NRSV) <sup>3</sup>I thank my God every time I remember you, <sup>4</sup>constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, <sup>5</sup>because of your **sharing <2842>** in the gospel from the first day until now.

Be **WISE** in your communication.

Paul carefully dealt with the issue of a runaway slave: Philemon 1:4-7:

Be **HUMBLE** in your communication.

Hebrews 13:15-17: If we are continually in a state of giving thanks to God, then we are in a humble position and our ego is not in our way. Our communication comes out more freely because we don't worry about our image.

Where does listening fit into communicating?

James 1:19-20: (NASB) <sup>19</sup>This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; <sup>20</sup>for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.

Hearing in the sense of recognizing the voice: John 10:1-5 Hearing in the sense of perceiving: Matthew 10:27: The hearing should motivate us to action. Matthew 13:13: Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

Some listening tools: "So, what you're saying is..." "Wait - let me see if I got this..." "Help me understand..." "What I hear you saying is..."

Hearing in the sense of being enlightened: John 5:24

Hearing in the sense of listening: Luke 21:38 Revelation 2:7

How do we communicate with those who may not see things our way?

As we examine the art of communication, we will look to view it very briefly through the eyes of the Apostle Paul in the book of Hebrews...why was Hebrews written anyway? And by whom? We believe the Apostle Paul wrote it because of the reasoning style used, even though he did not sign his name. The book of Hebrews provides many lessons in communication. Why didn't Paul use his name? The message was far more important than the messenger! The Hebrew Christians were trying to bring Jewish law and tradition into Christianity. Paul stood firmly against that even though he used to be one of them. They resented him. So to give them a message they would receive, he didn't put his name on it. With humility, we are provoked to love and good works. We have received a valuable communication.



**Ask not what your country can do, JFK Inaugural Address January 20, 1961**

- ...I do not believe that any of us would exchange places with any other people or any other generation! The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it, and the glow from that fire can truly light the world. And so, my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country!

Hebrews 1:1-6: (NASB) Paul immediately begins with the common ground of prophecy, as he introduces Jesus in the context of the Old Testament. They could relate to the "fathers and the prophets." He brings the past up to the present and explains that the next step in God's communication with us is through Jesus, His son.

He quotes from Psalms 2:7-8, alludes to Proverbs 8:22-30, quotes from 2 Samuel 7:14, 1 Chronicles 22:10, 28:6, Psalms 89:26-27 and Psalms 97:7...all within the first six verses! He is going back to what those Hebrew Christians understood! He connected with them through their heritage so that they could understand where he was coming from.



Provoke in a positive way...: [Hebrews 10:24](#) ...Not in a negative way: [Acts 15:39](#)

### How is being respected related to communicating?

There is a difference between "commanding respect" and "commanding attention."

We live in an age where people often command attention - many celebrities, sports figures and politicians fall into this category. When they enter a room you know it; when they speak, people stop and listen. When they move, people's eyes follow them. But it is very surface oriented and we sometimes miss the depth of things.

[Acts 8:9-13](#): (NASB) Simon commanded attention because of the magic performed. Philip was able to do much with the people but in a very different way.

Commanding respect: There are leaders, true heroes, those who have accomplished or discovered truly magnificent things and those who set an example for us step up into this category. When they enter a room, you observe them, even if they are not drawing attention to themselves. When they speak, people listen - they *truly* listen - and when they move, people's hearts follow them. True depth of communication can come from someone whose life dictates that respect.

The Pharisees commanded attention, which is why they were so threatened by Jesus, who commanded respect.

[Peter and John show up and miraculously bestow the holy spirit: Acts 8:18-24](#): Simon was quickly put in his place. He is a classic example of someone in our world today who commands attention but not respect.



**I have a dream, free at last, Washington DC, August 28, 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King**

- *Let freedom ring! When this happens, when we allow freedom to ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old negro spiritual; Free at last, free at last, thank God Almighty we are free at last!*

He communicated what he knew to be true of the unity of the Scriptures. Part of our communication here at Christian Questions is that God has a plan for everyone and all will have the freedom described by Dr. King.

A big part of communicating is listening and communication drives everything that we do. Make the choice to learn and apply the tools of communication and proclaim things that are great to stimulate and inspire one another to stand up and act.

***So do people really listen when you speak...?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!***