

**Reel Communication**

**Core Competency  
Gentleness**

James 1:19  
Proverbs 16:20-24; 10:11-14

**Core Competencies**

**Core Beliefs**

- Trinity
- Salvation by Grace
- Authority of Bible
- Personal God
- Identity in Christ
- Church
- Humanity
- Compassion
- Eternity
- Stewardship

**Core Practices**

- Worship Prayer
- Bible Study
- Single-Mindedness
- Biblical Community
- Spiritual Gifts
- Giving Away My Time
- Giving Away My Money
- Giving Away My Faith
- Giving Away My Life

**Core Virtues**

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Patience
- Kindness/Goodness
- Faithfulness
- **Gentleness**
- Self-Control
- Hope
- Humility

Dear Friends,

**Communication**—we hear this word over and over again these days as one of the essential ingredients for a healthy relationship. It’s interesting that this emphasis is relatively new in our culture, perhaps the last 20 years or so, but it’s not a new emphasis with God. If you think for a moment about it, God is the ultimate communicator. He communicates through His creation, through angels, through prophets and spokespeople, through signs and wonders, through His written Word, and ultimately through The Word—Jesus Himself. God is the ultimate listener, too. He hears our prayers, He pays attention to our ways, and He knows all of our thoughts. God is a communicator. He wants us to communicate well with one another (and with Him). Let’s dig in and see the instructions God offers us to be better communicators—like Him!

Learning to listen,

*Richard Gotthardt*

**Engaging Our Minds & Hearts**

**Day 1**

**Today’s Passage: Proverbs 16:20-24, Proverbs 10:11-14**

This week we will seek to understand how the **virtue of gentleness** impacts the way we communicate with one another. We will start with two passages from Proverbs.

The book of Proverbs is a compilation of true sayings which give wisdom and instruction. These sayings are inspired by God, so don’t rush through them. Give adequate time for meditation and application as you allow God to speak to your heart and life today.

Read through each passage and use the charts to help you list the truths that you see.

**Proverbs 16:20-24**

<sup>20</sup> Whoever gives heed to instruction prospers, and blessed is he who trusts in the LORD. <sup>21</sup> The wise in heart are called discerning, and pleasant words promote instruction. <sup>22</sup> Understanding is a fountain of life to those who have it, but folly brings punishment to fools. <sup>23</sup> A wise man’s heart guides his mouth, and his lips promote instruction. <sup>24</sup> Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

ATTITUDES & RESULTS	LISTENING & RESULTS	SPEAKING & RESULTS

**Proverbs 10:11-14; 18-21**

<sup>11</sup>The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life, but violence overwhelms the mouth of the wicked. <sup>12</sup> Hatred stirs up dissension, but love covers over all wrongs. <sup>13</sup> Wisdom is found on the lips of the discerning, but a rod is for the back of him who lacks judgment. <sup>14</sup>Wise men store up knowledge, but the mouth of a fool invites ruin. <sup>18</sup> He who conceals his hatred has lying lips, and whoever spreads slander is a fool. <sup>19</sup> When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise. <sup>20</sup> The tongue of the righteous is choice silver, but the heart of the wicked is of little value. <sup>21</sup> The lips of the righteous nourish many, but fools die for lack of judgment.

<u>GOOD COMMUNICATION</u>	<u>BAD COMMUNICATION</u>

Within the context of our current series entitled “Reel Families – Playing the Role of Your Life,” take time to reflect on your communication with those in your family. If you are honest, there is plenty of room for improvement. The place to start is allowing God to apply His truth to your life.

List the members of your family with whom you communicate. Beside each name, list one truth that you could apply in communicating with that person. Then go to God. Admit where you are weak and ask for His strength. Close with the words of **Psalm 19:14**, “**Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.**”

## Day 2

**Today’s Passage: Mark 7:1-23**

***Pray first!***

Today we will see what Jesus had to say about the words of our mouth. Read through the passage in Mark several times.

1. What was the Pharisees’ concern that they expressed to Jesus?

2. Jesus loved a “teachable moment” and in verse 14, He called the multitudes to Himself to do just that. What is it that Jesus didn’t want the multitudes, the disciples or you and I to miss?
  
3. As you read through the list of things that proceed from within and defile us, which of them could affect the way you communicate with those around you?

Often times we make more effort in our communication with those outside our own families than we do with those within. But the true condition of our heart, regardless of whom we are talking to, is where we must begin to change the communication of our lips. Ask God to reveal to your mind the conditions of your heart towards Him and those in your family. Ask Him to forgive you for defiling attitudes that you have allowed into your heart. Express to Him your desire to have a pure and gentle heart that will influence the communication of your lips and life. Spend your remaining time today praying for each member of your family.

## Day 3

### Today’s Passage: James 1:13-27

#### *Pray first!*

The book of James has a lot to say about our tongue and communication. Today we will spend our time in the first chapter of James, allowing God to speak to our hearts and lives. Read through James 1:13-27 several times, familiarizing yourself with the main things talked about.

1. What is the issue being addressed in verses 13-18?
  
2. Keeping in mind the truths we saw in Proverbs and in Mark, what types of temptation do you face in communicating with those around you?
  
3. Beginning in verse 19 through the end of this chapter, list below:
  - a. What is God’s 3-step advice to you?
  
  - b. Why does He warn you against anger?
  
  - c. How or where does the work begin? (clue word “Therefore” in verse 21)

## Day 4

**Today's Passage: James 3:1-4:10**

***Pray first!***

In the last few verses of James chapter 1, we are exhorted to keep control of our tongue. In James chapter 3 verse 2, we read that anyone who is able to control his tongue is a perfect man and able to control his whole body as well! Read James 3:1 through 4:10 several times.

1. What does this passage say is a problem with our tongues?
2. The end of the chapter draws a comparison between earthly wisdom and wisdom that is from above. List the characteristics of each.
3. Starting in verse 6 of chapter 4, God tells us where we need to begin in this battle with our tongue. List the steps you see in these verses.
4. Now give yourself some time to meditate on each of these steps and allow God to show you how to apply each of them to your own life so that your life can reflect the truth in James 3:13 "Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom."

## Day 5

**Galatians 5:22-23** describes the fruit of the Spirit in the life of a believer. Included in this description and our core value for this week, is the virtue of gentleness. The Greek word translated "gentleness" in Galatians 5:23 has the following meaning.

Primarily it does not denote outward expression of feeling, but an inward grace of the soul, calmness toward God in particular. It is the acceptance of God's dealings with us considering them as good in that they enhance the closeness of our relationship with Him.<sup>1</sup>

Appropriate synonyms would include humility, mildness and clemency. Antonyms include anger, wrath, irritation and indignation.

Described negatively, meekness (gentleness) is the opposite to self-assertiveness and self-interest; it is an equanimity of spirit that is neither elated nor cast down, simply because it is not occupied with self at all. This is well-illustrated in the case of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was neither depressed by the rejection of His service nor elated by the plaudits of the multitudes that would have crowned Him, for He was "meek ... in heart," Matthew 11:20-30.<sup>2</sup>

Our creed regarding gentleness states, "I am thoughtful, considerate, and calm in dealing with others." Philippians 4:5 exhorts, "Let your gentleness be evident to all, the Lord is near."

<sup>1</sup> Zodhiates, S. (2000, c1992, c1993). *The complete word study dictionary : New Testament* (electronic ed.) (G4236). Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

<sup>2</sup> Vine, W. (1997, c1996). *Collected writings of W.E. Vine* (electronic ed.). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

## Feedback

What is helpful?  
What could be better?  
What is missing?  
Is it helping you be more prepared for Sunday?

Send your feedback to  
[engage@gccaz.org](mailto:engage@gccaz.org)

Read through the assessment statements below and use them and your study of God's Word this week to evaluate your heart and actions in the specific area of communication.

- a. I consider my own shortcomings when faced with the failures of others.
- b. I am known as a person who is sensitive to the needs of others.
- c. I am known for not raising my voice.
- d. I allow people to make mistakes.

As you consider the truths that God has revealed to you this week regarding the words of your mouth and the meditation of your heart, why not use Romans 12:1-2 as a model of prayer to God.

*Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.*

## Engage the Context

### James 1:19

**<sup>19</sup>My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.**

- ◆ "Take not of this" is a weakened translation of the opening phrase of this verse as it begins with a very forceful command, "Know this!"
- ◆ "My dear brothers" is literally "my beloved brothers." James uses affectionate terms such as this throughout his letter.
- ◆ Note the similarity of this verse to the proverbs below. The book of James has been called the "NT Proverbs."
- ◆ There are writings in the Mishnah and earlier rabbis that have similar wisdom to this verse. For instance 'Abot 5:12 says "There are four types of disciples: swift to hear and swift to lose—his gain is cancelled by his loss; slow to hear and slow to lose—his loss is cancelled by his gain; *swift to hear and slow to lose—this is a happy lot*; slow to hear and swift to lose—this is an evil lot" (italics mine).

### Proverbs 16:20-24

**<sup>20</sup>Whoever gives heed to instruction prospers, and blessed is he who trusts in the LORD. <sup>21</sup>The wise in heart are called discerning, and pleasant words promote instruction. <sup>22</sup>Understanding is a fountain of life to those who have it, but folly brings punishment to fools. <sup>23</sup>A wise man's heart guides his mouth, and his lips promote instruction. <sup>24</sup>Pleasant words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.**

- ◆ "Instruction" is literally "the word." It refers to the teaching of a rabbi. These verses are an introduction to this section of the book of Proverbs and is designed to entice the student to want to learn (and obey) more of the proverbs that follow.
- ◆ "Blessed" is the common Hebrew word '*ashrey*.' This is most likely the same term used by Jesus in the Beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3-8). The idea is "O the happiness(es) of" or perhaps, "O the bliss of." The biblical idea of being blessed has to do with the whole person. It is much deeper than a temporary feeling, rather it gets at the deepest parts of a person's desires and soul.
- ◆ Verse 23 has a repetitive force to that of verse 21. The writers of Proverbs often use this literary device to drive home a point.

### Proverbs 10:11-14

**<sup>11</sup>The mouth of the righteous is a fountain of life, but violence overwhelms the mouth of the wicked.**

- ◆ This string of Proverbs is quite powerful. The Hebrew poetry is well-translated here by the NIV as it reveals how each verse is a contrast.
- ◆ "Fountain of life" means literally a fresh-water stream, but is used symbolically of the life-giving qualities of wisdom.

**<sup>12</sup>Hatred stirs up dissension, but love covers over all wrongs. <sup>13</sup>Wisdom is found on the lips of the discerning, but a rod is for the back of him who lacks judgment. <sup>14</sup>Wise men store up knowledge, but the mouth of a fool invites ruin.**

- ◆ The meaning of "cover" is to "pardon or forgive" rather than an idea of covering up." A similar idea is found in James 5:20.
- ◆ Verses 13 and 14 are paired together by wisdom/wise and lips/mouth. Notice the close connection between wisdom and the use of the mouth.