

Breaking the Cycle of Unloving Communication

Step One: Each night get alone with the Lord and ask Him to soften your heart and to speak to you on what you could have done differently in your discussions, arguments or situations with your spouse on this day.

2 Corinthians 13:5 (NKJV) Examine yourselves *as to* whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.

Ask the Lord: Was there something I could have said or done with or to my spouse that would have glorified God better and/or stopped a situation from turning into an argument?

Step Two: Read the following verses and let the Lord reveal to you your part in this situation.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 (NKJV) Love suffers long *and* is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. But whether *there are* prophecies, they will fail; whether *there are* tongues, they will cease; whether *there is* knowledge, it will vanish away.

1: Were you impatient? Suffering long means you exercised the fruit of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22 (NKJV) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

Or did your flesh rise up and want justice or your own way?

2: Were you unkind? The opposite of kindness is unkindness. Did you provoke your spouse? Did you get angry, yell, say hurtful/mean things? Did you judge them, ignore them or were you resentful towards them?

Romans 12:10 (NKJV) Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another;

Marriage Is A Ministry - Homework

3: Was jealousy the motive behind your actions toward your spouse?

Romans 13:13-14 (NAS) Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.

4: Were you haughty or arrogant? Did you belittle your spouse or make them feel unimportant?

1 Peter 5:5 (NKJV) Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders. Yes, all of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.

5: Were you rude or act unbecoming? Did you embarrass your spouse or say something bad about them in front of someone else? Did you do something rude toward them that they have asked you not to do?

Ephesians 4:29 (NKJV) Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

6: Were you only thinking of your position or side and not considering your spouse's view? Did you become defensive and try to defend your position and/or excuse your actions?

Philippians 2:3 (NKJV) Let nothing *be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.

Marriage Is A Ministry - Homework

7: Were you harboring bad thoughts toward your spouse minutes, hours, or days before this situation occurred? God has told us not to harbor bad thoughts but to forgive.

2 Corinthians 10:5 (NKJV) casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,

We need to take responsibility when we allow our mind to be consumed with bad or evil thoughts toward our spouse. If God knows us, all our sin, past, future, and yet His thoughts toward us are only good – **Psalm 139:17-18** – then how can we justify evil thoughts toward our spouse?

8: Have you been allowing discouragement and hopelessness toward your marriage overwhelm you? Have you been doubting God and His almighty power to intercede for you? "Love hopes all things." Not doubts all things. If you doubt God and focus on your past problems and not on the loving all-powerful God, you will become discouraged and you will act this out to or in front of your spouse.

Romans 5:5 (NKJV) Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Jeremiah 29:11 (NKJV) For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Step Three: Pray & ask for God's forgiveness.

Step Four: Pray now and ask God for the humility and the strength to sit down with your spouse and admit your faults and ask for forgiveness. Then pray together with your spouse and together ask God for His strength to break these ungodly and sinful habits that have been practiced for so long.

Remember: Understanding how to meet each others companionship needs as a husband and wife takes time and loving communication. It also takes an attitude and willingness of wanting to learn and change.

- Q: Do you agree? Yes No
Q: Are you finished learning? Yes No

