

Knowing Jesus – Philippians 3:10

I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death

Last week: Imitate Me as I Imitate Christ

Teaching: Our brother Imanuel brought us to the understanding that to be a disciple we know Jesus not just with our minds but in all that we are and all that we do.

Only a disciple will inherit eternal life. Eternal life is not the same as eternal living.

This is why we have 4 Responsibilities

1. To know Jesus.
2. To be a disciple.
3. To make other disciples.
4. Teach them to obey Jesus

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Conclusion: Knowing Jesus Vs Obeying Jesus. Simply knowing who Jesus is and what He did in His life is not enough. We must believe in Him as the Son of God that died on the cross for all of us.

Jesus' teaching has an eternal ability that only living to **obey** Him can accomplish. We do not do that alone because our faith enables the Spirit in us, giving us certainty, strength, courage and a faith that gives us a promise in this life and the life to come.

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Open Communication – Honouring God's Will

Overview:

James 1:19-20 19 My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, 20 because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.

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Open Communication – the Christian context

How important is it for a follower of Jesus to be a good listener?

The simplest definition is “the personal skills needed for successful social communication and interaction with others.”

Things to Consider as We Strive to Improve Our Listening Skills

1. We Must Learn to Listen to God First

Colossians 3:16 – “Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.”

Proverbs 23:12 – “Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to words of knowledge.”

1 Thessalonians 2:13 – “And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe.”

Things to Consider as We Strive to Improve Our Listening Skills

2 We Must be Humble to Be Good Listeners

1 Peter 5:5 In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders.

All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, “God opposes the proud but shows favour to the humble.”

1 Peter 5:7. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

Things to Consider as We Strive to Improve Our Listening Skills

3 After Listening, We Must Carefully Consider How and When We Speak

Ephesians 4:29-30 – “Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”

Things to Consider as We Strive to Improve Our Listening Skills

2 Corinthians 5:18-20: 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

Open Communication to Those Closest to Us

Proverbs 18:13: “To answer before listening - that is folly and shame”.

Simple Rules to Encourage Open Communication

- 1. Be available when children, family or close friends want to talk.**
- 2. Give your children, family or close friends your full attention when they are talking to you.**
- 3. Listen by asking open-ended ended questions.**

**What do you think about ...
Why did you say that?
How did you feel when ...**

Simple Rules to Encourage Open Communication

4 Paraphrase or clarify what they are saying.

5 Interact, don't react in anger or annoyance

6 Be open with them – no topic should be off limits

Simple Rules to Encourage Open Communication

Ask your children, family, or close friends how you can pray for them and share with them how they can pray for you:

Ephesians 4:15 on speaking to our children. “**speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.**”

So, what have we learned today?

1. Open communication opens up hearts
2. Listen to verbal cues and watch out for non-verbal cues to understand their emotions and hearts
3. Be available. Give your them your full attention when they are talking to you.
4. Do not over react. Ask open ended questions and seek first to understand before you want to be understood.

Conclusion

- Early applications of the principles we have discussed this morning will greatly improve our chances of positive intercession.
- Our children are our responsibility under the law of the land, but also under God's law.
- As our children grow, they should naturally take more responsibility for the decisions that they make. Our responsibility though never fades.

Conclusion

- The ups and downs of life in terms of circumstances and experience can be moderated by continuing good communication practices.
- “A problem shared is a problem halved” is a relatively modern saying. The full saying is ““A problem shared is a problem halved. A joy shared is a joy doubled”. That will always stay true.

Ephesians 4:29: ²⁹ Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Amen