

Date: **August 25, 2024**  
Series: **Conflict Resolution Series**  
Title: **Fruitful Communications**  
Text: **Colossians 4:6**

August 4, 11	Freedom from Internal Discord
August 18	Fighting for Peace
August 25	Fruitful Communications
September 1	Forgiveness Dynamics

## **Introduction**

Linda Hill, Professor of Business Administration at Harvard Business School and faculty chair of the Leadership Initiative speaks about conflict in the workplace:

### **First, the stakes are usually high when emotions are.**

- “With conflict, there are typically negative emotions involved, and most of us aren’t comfortable with those kinds of feelings,” she says.
- Our discomfort can make us fumble over our words or say things we don’t mean.

### **The second reason that we often say the wrong thing is because our first instincts are usually off.**

- In fact, it’s often the words we lead with that get us into so much trouble. “That’s because too often we end up framing the issue as who’s right or who’s wrong,”

### **Third, there’s often misalignment between what we mean when we say something and what the other person hears.**

- “It doesn’t matter if your intent is honorable if your impact is not,” Hill says. Most people are very aware of what they meant to say but are less tuned into what the other person heard or how they interpreted it.

## Fruitful

- Of a tree, plant, or land- producing much fruit;
- Producing good or helpful results; productive.
- Fruit of the Spirit - love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **gentleness**, self-control

## Communication:

- The imparting or exchanging of information.
- Communication is the sending and receiving of information.
  - We tend to be good at sending...
  - ...but not so good at receiving.

## Colossians 4:6

Let your conversation **be always** full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

- How do I answer a person who brings up a sensitive topic?
- How do I control my responses so they do not add fuel to a spark which will start a fire?
- How do I do my part to help our conversations be productive and positive?

## PRIME THE PUMP

### 1 John 4:7-8

<sup>7</sup> Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup> Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

- Laying a foundation of love
- Sweet water, not poisoned water
- Texts, cards, flowers, praises
- An environment and establishment of love

## A TIME AND A PLACE

### Ecclesiastes 3:7b

*"...A time to be quiet and a time to speak."*

- Not before bed
- Not on a date

If there is no good time to discuss,  
If there is no openness to discuss,  
Then no fruit-filled growth can be accomplished.

There must be a time to speak.  
There must be the ability to listen.

### **The discussion is not meant to be easy!**

- Something must be addressed.

Thomas Paine said, "He who dares not offend cannot be honest."

## **THE ART OF LISTENING**

### **Listening to the Spirit**

- Hearing from both at the same time

#### **John 14:26**

*But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.*

### **Listening to the Person**

#### **Proverbs 18:13**

*To answer before listening— that is folly and shame.*

- Open your ears to hear the heart
- Open your ears to hear the position or request

## **BEFORE WE SPEAK**

### **Pause and Consider**

#### **Proverbs 15:28**

*The heart of the righteous weighs its answers, but the mouth of the wicked gushes evil.*

- Consider their heart.
- Consider their thoughts.
- Weigh the cost of your response.
- Let your response be righteous (right standing before God).

The urge to respond, to defend, to attack will be high and it may be hot!

Here is the fruit of patience –

- Aristotle said, "Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet,"

#### **Proverbs 16:23**

*The hearts of the wise make their mouths prudent, and their lips promote instruction.*

- Prudence calls for editing
- Words should be instructive not destructive
  - Instruction - detailed information telling how something should be done, operated, or assembled.
  - Not how someone should be or think

### **It is possible that the moment calls for silence**

#### **Possibly, Say Nothing**

##### **Proverbs 17:27-28**

*The one who has knowledge uses words with restraint, and whoever has understanding is even-tempered. Even fools are thought wise if they keep silent, and discerning if they hold their tongues.*

- “If the emotional level is high, your first task is to take some of the emotion out,” she says. “Often that means sitting back and letting someone vent.”
- Comfort
- Counsel
- Correct

A Chinese proverb: Wisdom has two parts.

1. Having a lot to say
2. Not saying it

Silence is not agreement, nor must it be indifference.

- We cannot allow silence to become a weapon or an escape.
- Unresolved matters build bricks that build a wall around the heart.

Mishandling people, then avoiding communication, is not protecting your peace; it’s avoiding accountability

#### **WHEN WE SPEAK**

##### **“Seasoned with Salt”**

Seasoned – *artuó* - I arrange, make ready; I season, flavor.

- Ready and arranged in grace to bring flavor to the discussion.
    - A good flavor that one would want to digest.
- I like kimchi** – but if I have it, there will be no kisses and it will come through my

pores for days. If I season the conversation with something the other cannot take, it will stink up the conversation for days.

Salt - *hálas* – salt; (figuratively)

- Not saltiness – not throwing salt into a wound
- Salt as a preservative
- God preserving and seasoning a believer as they grow,
- I.e., in loving the Lord with all their heart, soul, mind, strength and in all their relationships (cf. Mk 12:30, 31).

### **First Words**

- We, not me.
- No drawing lines in the sand.

### **Proverbs 11:17**

*Those who are kind benefit themselves, but the cruel bring ruin on themselves.*

- Someone once said, “Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see.”

### **Ask Questions**

#### **Proverbs 18:2**

*Fools find no pleasure in understanding but delight in airing their own opinions.*

- Ask follow up questions to gain clarity and understanding
- Acknowledge the pain and the rationale

### **Own Your Part**

#### **Romans 3:10**

*As it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one...”*

- It is crazy how no one in this world is perfect, yet everyone is so judgmental.

#### **Psalm 38:18**

*I confess my iniquity; I am sorry for my sin.*

- One therapist said, “Your feelings are always valid, your behavior is not.” “Feel what you feel **BUT** you need to be accountable for what you do as a result of those feelings.”
- Apologize
  - Benjamin Franklin said, “Never ruin an apology with an excuse.”

## **Do Not Preach**

### **James 1:26**

*Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless.*

## **Be Brief**

### **Proverbs 10:19**

*Sin is not ended by multiplying words, but the prudent hold their tongues.*

- Not time for a lecture – the grand filibuster
- Not time for a sermon
- A brief, kind response, without rebuttal is in order
  - Thank them for their honesty
  - State that you acknowledge their position
  - Ask if they welcome a reply
- Sometimes a person simply needs to share or vent
- They are not seeking counsel or correction

## **Be Appealing**

### **Proverbs 15:2 NLT**

*“The tongue of the wise makes knowledge appealing, but the mouth of a fool belches out foolishness.”*

ESV – *Adorns knowledge*

- Learn to make a response appealing
- Appealing – (verb *yatab*) - Uses the tongue rightly - to be good, well, glad, or pleasing

This calls for a dismissal of the need to defend.

- Not the time to bring up their failings.

- Not time to create a “You did this!” scenario.
- Address the need at hand, and only the need at hand.

**1 Cor. 13: 5b, 7**

*Love holds no record of wrongs - It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.*

**Be Loving and Grace Filled**

**Ephesians 4:15**

*Instead, 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.*

- When facts seem incorrect, lovingly request clarification on how a position was adopted.
- What resources, study or research brought them to a position
- Feelings matter, and if facts that are in error have brought about the feelings acknowledge how those facts should bring on those feelings
  - Lovingly share additional facts.... Not slamming the erroneous facts.

**Colossians 4:6**

*Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.*

- Full of grace
- Seasoned with salt
- Know how to answer a person

Prayer