

IMPROVING CHURCH COMMUNICATION



Participant's Guide

Vibrant Church Renewal
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PURPOSE

The purpose of this module is to raise the value of communication between church members and between the church and the world.

In this module we will explore ways to:

- Identify ways to improve the communication within the church.
- Gain insight in areas of communication with newcomers to our church.
- Learn to communicate more effectively with people outside the church.

II. LESSON

The first step in improving Christian communication needs to begin within the walls of the church. So let's start there:

Section A. Improving Communication within the Church

1. Improving Communication through _____ spent together.

- Spending _____ time in a variety of _____ with one another will improve communication.

Read Acts 2:42-47

A few things that we can note from the early Church:

- a. They spent time together in _____.
- b. They _____ meals together.
- c. They _____ together regularly.
- d. They spent time in one another's _____.
- e. They _____ God together.
- f. Spending time together communicates what physical _____ are present in community.

2. Improving Communication through Openness

- a. _____ one another deeply (1 Peter 1:22).
 - Christian love is much more than a _____ relationship.
 - Christlike love puts others _____.
 - Verbalize your love for one another, show it, and put it in _____.
- b. Meet each other's needs and practice _____ (Romans 12:13).
 - Some people only share the needs they have with the people they _____ well.
 - Hospitality involves loving those who are _____ from us.
- c. _____ our sins to one another (James 5:16).
 - John Wesley's bands practiced confession to trusted _____ friends.
 - Accountability to trusted friends fosters _____.
- d. Open wide your _____ to one another (2 Corinthians 6:12-13).
 - Have _____ for one another.
 - Opening our hearts to one another makes us _____.

3. Improving Communication through Trust.

- Increasing trust between friends _____ communication.
- Communicating _____ in one another improves trust.
- Loving _____ are the foundation of trust.
- _____ of one another builds trust.
- Honest _____ of faults builds confidence in one another and ultimately improves communication.
- _____ for one another in difficult times, builds trust and improves communication.
- _____ of life opens the lines of communication.

4. Improving Communication by Verbalizing the Mission of the Church

- The mission statement of our church is...(state your church's mission statement.)
- We exist to complete this mission. Communicating our mission statement will help keep our church on track.
- _____ our mission statement.
- _____ one another of its importance.
- We need to _____ our mission statement periodically.
- _____ the mission statement.

5. Improving Communication by Giving Grace to One Another

- Value discipline and _____ from others (Proverbs 12:12).
- _____ one another because God, through Christ forgave you (Matt. 6:12).
- _____ reconciliation from everyone (Matt. 5:23-24).
- Love covers a _____ of sins (1 Peter 4:8).
- Let your conversation be always full of grace, _____ with salt (Colossians 4:6).

- To put in a bulletin that the FACT meeting is held on Thursday nights at 7 PM is simply not enough information for newcomers.

- Activity Times and Places (services, special events)
 - We must clearly communicate all times for services and special events. Imagine a newcomer wanting to attend, but coming at the wrong time.
- Traditions
 - Traditional events or traditions within the services are important to explain to newcomers.

Rule of thumb: "When we think we have over communicated, we have just begun to communicate enough."

2. Improving Communication through _____ , _____ , _____ .

Read Acts 8:26-35

- Philip ran to the chariot and listened.
 - We must discover who the newcomers are in our church with sincere interest in their lives.
 - This involves _____.
- Philip asked a probing question, "Do you understand what you are reading?"
 - We must arouse the curiosity of the newcomers to the truth of the Gospel .
 - We might call this process, _____.
- Philip told the man the good news about Jesus .
 - We must _____ the good news when the newcomer is receptive .

3. _____ "we want you here."

- Our ultimate goal is to give _____ to the newcomer.
- A sense that a newcomer is sincerely valued and _____ will bring them back.

Section B. Improving Communication With Newcomer

1. Improving Communication by _____

- Avoid the _____ Assumption — Ministry Names
 - Often times, ministries within the church are called by a name that only regular attendees understand.
 - One local church used the acronym FACT to describe a support group:
Freedom from
Addictions by
Christ's
Transformation

Section C. Improving Communication With the Lost

1. Improving Communication through Cultivating, Planting, and Reaping

- The hard work of evangelism is _____ the Gospel in the lives of unbelievers (John 4:38).
- We are called to _____ the seed of the gospel (1 Corinthians 3:6)
- We are called to reap a spiritual _____ that we may or may not have planted (John 4:35-38).

2. Communicate “Our church values people, and we make decisions on behalf of the people not here.”

* _____ evangelism events are wonderful for this type of communication. Steve Sjogren in Conspiracy of Kindness suggests the following “Servant Evangelism Projects that Work”:

Do these acts of kindness away from your church, where people gather, with this simple statement, “God loves you, and so do the people at (your church name) Church of the Nazarene.”

- Umbrella escorts
- Windshield washing at a gas station
- Gift wrapping at Christmas
- Pen/Pencil giveaways at a college campus
- Soft drink giveaways
- Grocery cart return
- Leaf raking
- Change the oil in cars of single moms

3. Improving Communication Using the “7 Touches, 3 Hearings” Method

• Elmer Towns has said that research demonstrates that most people do not respond to the Gospel until they have had seven loving _____ by Christians and have _____ the Gospel at least three times.

4. Improving Communication Using “Three Story Evangelism”

a. Listen to Their Story

- The first step in story evangelism is to _____.
- Listening earns the right to _____.
- Consider asking questions:
 - (i) Do you give much thought to God and spiritual things?

- (ii) Tell me a little about your spiritual journey.
- (iii) What was your earliest childhood memory of going to church?
- (iv) Tell me about your most memorable spiritual experience.
- (v) What do you think is a person’s greatest spiritual need?
- (vi) When do you feel closest to God?

b. Relate Your Story

- Knowing their story, relate what God has done in your life in such a way that encourages them to want more of God.

c. Communicate His Story

- Use any number of methods to share God’s story of salvation.
 - (i) The Bridge to Life
 - (ii) Four Spiritual Laws
 - (iii) Evangelism Explosion

III. SMALL GROUP WORK

Break the larger group into teams of four or five people. Have them answer the following questions:

1. What are some specific ways that we as a congregation can learn to communicate more effectively with one another?
2. What area of communication needs greatest improvement for our congregation to be more effective with newcomers?
3. What are specific ways our local church can communicate value to those outside our church?