**Video Conference # 7 – Monday Nov. 14 – 8 PM. Central**

**Tools for Your Relationship Toolbox**

**Communication Tools – Part 2**

In our last month’s video conference we began considering the important topic of communication in marriage. We shared with you 7 communication rules that will improve any relationship. What are those 7 rules?

 1. **Choose to not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**, talk over or cut each other off but out of respect, choose

 to listen and understand what is actually being said.

 2. **Choose not to \_\_\_\_\_ others negative \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** that tear down the worth and

 value of a person, but **choose words that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** each other up and reflect

 mutual **respect**

 3. **Avoid \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ around** **from issue to issue**, but focus on one issue at a time.

 **4. Avoid outbursts of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** as a means of communicating. Choose instead to

 control your anger and speak in mutually respectful tones.

 **5. Avoid using \_\_\_\_\_\_ button words.** What are examples of hot button words?

 **6. Avoid Physical Signs of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.** (Rolling the eyes, sighing,

 hands of the hips, crossing of the arms, scowling, finger pointing, etc.

 **7. Do not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and pout or use the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ treatment.**

What are **3 communication tools based on Biblical truth** that are very effective when people apply those tools? (Get Feedback)

 1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Method – Prov. 15:1

 2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Thru Method – James 1:19-20

 3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Sandwich Method – Illustrated in 1 Cor. and Rev. 2-3

Tonight, we are considering additional insights into healthy communication

Throughout the mid-west farmers are harvesting (reaping) their crops. The type of crops they harvest (reap) will vary, but the results of the harvest will be directly tied to the **seven laws of sowing and reaping. What are those laws and how do these laws apply to the words we speak?**

In. Galatians 6:7-9 we read “**7**Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man (spouse) reaps what he (they) sows.  **8**Whoever **sows to please their flesh**, from the flesh will reap destruction; **whoever sows to please the Spirit,** from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”

**What are these 7 laws of the harvest and how can we experience the positive blessings of sowing to the Spirit in our marriage and family relationships?**

One way is through the way we \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and use our words.

Prov. 18:21 says, “The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat it’s fruit.”

Prov. 15:4 says, “The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life”.

What word pictures are used to describe the tongue in these verses?

The words we sow in the lives of our spouse, children, family, etc. can be words of death, or life, encouragement, comfort, and healing. How do these 7 laws of sowing and reaping apply to the seed we sow with our tongues as well as the harvest we will reap in our lives?

**THE SEVEN LAWS OF SOWING AND REAPING**

**1. We reap only what has been sown**

a. It takes effort and discipline for a farmer to prepare the soil and sow the seed.

 b. What would happen if he was lazy and didn’t sow seed?

 c. What would be involved to “please the Spirit” with our words?

 d. 1 Pet. 3:9-11 – “Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the

 contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so

 that you may inherit a blessing. **10**For, “Whoever would love life and see

 good days **must keep their tongue from evil** and their lips from

 deceitful speech. They must turn from evil and do good; they must

 seek peace and pursue it.

 e. What types of words does Peter mention in this passage?

**Discussion Question:**

 f. What is one way you have sown a seed (words) of blessing in

 someone’s life (or your spouse’s life) in the last week?

**2. We reap the same kind of seed as we sow**

 a. If we sow to the flesh what will we reap? Gal. 6:8a

 b. If we sow to the Holy Spirit what will we reap? Gal. 6:8b Cmp. Gal. 5:22-23

**3. We reap later than we sow**

 a. Farmers are patient. They sow, and continue to work, and wait for the harvest. –

 James 5:7-8

 b. Are there times when we sow positive affirming words and have to wait to see the

 results in the life of our spouse, a child, a friend?

 1 Cor. 15:58 – “Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let

 nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the

 Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”

 c. What does God promise in Gal. 6:9?

 d. We must be patient and wait upon the Lord after sowing to the Spirit. Following

 the leading of the Holy Spirit - Ps. 27:13-14, 37:7-11

**4. We reap more than we sow** – This law \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the farmer – Gal. 6:9b

 a. In Luke 6:38 Jesus said, “**Give**, and it will be **give**n to you. A good measure,

 pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap.

 For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

 b. How would the sowing of words that bless others (our spouse) result in our

 being blessed?

**5. We reap in proportion to what we sow –** planting less than what is recommended

 will result in a lower yield per acre.

 a. What will be the result if we sow abundantly to the Spirit (walking in the Spirit,

 surrendering daily to His control and leadership and manifesting the fruit of the

 Spirit?

 b. If we sow abundantly to our sinful flesh with sinful actions and attitudes what will

 we reap?

 c. See Prov. 11:24-26 – What will believers who are kind and generous with their

 words of blessing will reap?

**Discussion Questions:**

How should the 5th law of the harvest affect our communication in marriage?

What will a habit of speaking words of life, blessing and encouragement develop in your marriage and family?

What will a habit of speaking negative words develop?

**6. We reap the full harvest of the good choices we make through persevering –**

 **Gal. 6:9-10**

 a. The gardener or farmer cannot just plant their crop and leave it. What happens if

 they don’t take care of the crop once it’s sown?

 b. What is a characteristic of true believers?

**Discussion Question:**

Would you share an example from your own experience of how learning to communicate and understand required a commitment to persevere and not give up?

**7. We Can’t Do Anything About Last Year’s Harvest (A Crop Failure of the Past)**

 **but we can care about and make preparations for next year’s harvest.**

 a. Focusing on our past failures and defeats can keep us from positive sowing

 today.

 1) What does Paul say we must do in Phil. 3:13-14?

 2) We must learn from the past but not let the past define us.

 b. Don’t let the past failures and the guilt or shame associated with those failures

 keep you from living and walking with Christ today.

 c. What does God’s discipline in our lives do and what kind of a harvest will it

 produce in the future? Heb. 12:11

**Personal Application for your prayerful consideration:**

What do I (we) need to do to apply these 7 Laws of the Harvest in our life and marriage?