

Fresh Start

By Jerry Bader

We Never Talk Anymore

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It's commonly believed that financial troubles are the number one cause of divorce. In fact, money finishes in second place as a marriage-ender, behind communication failures. As Mark Perry put it on the website Health Guidance:

“Major disagreements occur due to lack of communication, which eventually forces two soul mates to move towards the court for legal separation. With little or no exchange of feelings, emotions and other basic issues, divorce seems to be around the corner to put an end to the mounting unsolved troubles. Lack of communication builds anger, frustration with little room for agreement on any subject matter.”

In fact, lack of communication is a potentially fatal barrier in any relationship; that includes your relationship with God. He desires constant communication with you as much as a spouse or friend does. And contrary to what many people believe, He speaks to us often. In human relationships, poor communication leads to misunderstandings between both parties. Poor communication with God results in you misunderstanding Him or missing His messages altogether. How is your communication with God? Here are some things to consider as you evaluate your communication.

- 1) Do you believe God hears you and will answer you? This seems obvious, but even devout Christ-followers can be guilty of wishful thinking when they intend sincere dialogue with God. *“Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us.”* Psalm 62:8 (ESV). Anything that even remotely resembles “God if You’re listening” is a big tip-off with this one.
- 2) Do you have a loving relationship with God? Are you comfortable with treating Jesus as your friend as well as your Savior? *“I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you...”* John 15:15-16 (NIV). You love Him, He loved you first. He’s perfectly comfortable with an intimate conversation. Are you?
- 3) Do you know God’s voice? *“When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.”* John 10:4-5 (NIV).

I’ve heard God’s voice come from two small girls, a panhandler and a note mailed to me from someone I barely knew, among other places. While we can hear His voice anywhere, God most often speaks to us in His Word. The more you read the Bible the more you will see verses that

seem to have been written specifically for your eyes; at the moment you need them. That's God's voice at its clearest. And the more you read the Word, the more you'll come to recognize His voice in other places. The next time you see a glorious sunset at the moment you really need one, realize it's God speaking and thank Him.

- 4) Do you reserve time to spend with God every day; just you and Him? Do you then listen for Him and speak to Him all day long? A common complaint among married couples is: "we never talk anymore." Can Jesus say the same thing about you? "*...so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love.*" Ephesians 3:17 (NIV). Jesus has taken up residence in our heart. How often do we visit him there? He's ready, willing and waiting, 24/7/365.

Trust God is there and hears you, remember He is also your friend, know His voice and seek it often; in the Word and all around you. Remember, God never mishears, takes out of context or ignores anything you say. What are you waiting for? Chat Him up right now!