

Origin of Communication

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[0:00] Well, I've got a couple weeks with you to share some things on my heart. And the topic I want us to focus on is a topic that relates to an area of my life where I want to grow this coming year.

And it relates somewhat to tools. I've, over the years, grown an appreciation for tools that help me get projects done throughout my day and week.

It seems as though the older you get, the more reliant you have on tools that make the job go a little easier or even make some jobs even possible. And each tool has its purpose.

And when I use that tool properly, you know, I experience real satisfaction in the activity or the project that I'm doing.

But there are also times when I've used a tool for a reason or used it in a way that it wasn't originally designed.

[1:07] And maybe you've done that as well. It could be in a variety of different things. Jim is shaking his head. You know, the simple one would be the screwdriver.

You use the pry open, a can, a paint can, or even stir the paint. Or use it as a pry bar. And you've done and you've got a screwdriver that's no longer straight but crooked and bent a little bit.

And on and on we go. But when I use that tool for that purpose, you know, I just don't have that same satisfaction. Usually because I'm trying again to do something and use the tool for something it's not designed to do.

So I end up getting frustrated and really the project doesn't go ahead smoothly. But the problem isn't with the tool. The tool is the same. The problem is with me.

I miss using the tool. And again, not using it for its intended purpose. But then I also find that there are some tools that I use over and over again.

[2:10] That's the go-to tool for many different projects. And you've probably experienced the same thing. What are some of the tools or instruments, machines that you find yourself using regularly?

Share some of those with me. Needle-nose pliers. Okay. A hammer. Yep.

There's one that could be misused. A big hammer. Sharp scissors. Ratchet. Used like a hammer. Okay.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. What else? What do you find yourself using pretty much every day? A what? Vehicle.

Okay. All right. A yardstick. A yardstick. Crackpot. Crackpot. Great. Yes. Circular style.

[3:11] Circular style. Good. I mean, your cell phones, more than you should probably. But use it regularly. iPads.

On and on we go. All these tools that we use over and over again. Well, God in his infinite wisdom has provided us with many resources, many tools to use to accomplish our purpose in life.

Our purpose in life being to glorify God and enjoy him forever. Or, as John Piper would say, by enjoying him forever. And for the next two weeks, I want us to focus on one of those resources that all of us use, and we use it every single day.

And that tool or resource is communication. I've titled our lessons, Enjoying God's Design for Communication. And I've given it that title because there is even a certain amount of joy that we experience just in observing his design of communication.

That happens to me at times when maybe you see these shows on big machines and how machines are designed and how they operate to accomplish a certain thing.

[4 : 30] Or I walk through a manufacturing company and see all the machines and how they're being used to produce a product. And I'm not using the tool or the machine, but I'm just observing it and see just the wonder of that machine and what can be accomplished.

Well, that's the way it is even with communication. If I'm just standing back and seeing it in use, it's a wonder. When I think about the wonder of God's design of communication, and I hope to share some of that with you this morning and next week.

But we can experience a real joy and wonder of what he's designed. But even beyond just observing communication, it's the use of communication.

And how important that is in our daily life, in our relationships with God, with each other, and even carrying out our purpose, our jobs, whatever it is that we're doing on a daily basis.

And experiencing the joy and satisfaction that comes in using this wonderful tool that God has provided for us. So we want to take a look at communication this morning and next week.

[5 : 44] And, of course, I'm mainly going to focus on the aspects of speaking and listening. Sometimes we make reference to nonverbal communication.

And we use that quite a bit, too, don't we? And in many different ways. And we can misuse that nonverbal communication as well, as children roll their eyes at us, or as we turn our backs on each other.

But I'm not going to go there with nonverbal communication. We're going to stick with speaking and listening. And where I want to begin is starting with the origin of communication.

I think it's important to understand origins. I think they can have a big influence on how we, again, view the tool, in this case, communication, and eventually how we use it.

And so that's, as I present some of these truths, I want to give you an opportunity in a little bit here to consider, well, how does what we believe about the origin of communication and how we acquired communication, how does that influence our view of it, and then also our use of it.

[7 : 04] And I think it will have and can have a big influence on our use of it. So let's take a look. Origin of communication.

Communication within the Godhead. We begin with this premise here in our Sunday School class that God exists as revealed in the Scriptures. And in the 1689 Confession, we have a statement of God existence.

Three persons constitute the Godhead, the Father, the Son, or the Word, and the Holy Spirit. They are one in substance, in power, and in eternity. These persons, one infinite and eternal God, not to be divided in nature or in being, are distinguished in Scripture by their personal relations within the Godhead and by the variety of works which they undertake.

So we understand that God, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that He has always existed and been actively relating to one another before anything in creation existed.

And in their personal relationship, they were in communion or communication with each other. Now that's part of the wonder of God that we don't understand completely of how this communion, this communication was taking place.

[8 : 29] But it was taking place. They were relating back and forth with each other. And we see this in understandable terms or human terms in Genesis 1, chapter 3, where it says, And God said.

We begin to see in Genesis 1 that God had certain intentions, and He spoke to bring His intentions to fruition. God said, Let there be light in animals, etc., etc.

He had a plan, and He used communication, speaking, to bring that plan to reality. In Genesis 1, 26, God said, Let us make man in our image.

So again, God had intentions for His creation. And here we see Him both speaking and listening. That's both taking place here in this relationship between God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Actively relating to one another and bringing His kingdom into existence. So communication in this eternal relationship of the Godhead, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

[9 : 45] Even just trying to think of the wonders of what that was like. God in His holiness, in His righteousness, in His love, this love relationship. And the beauty of that, again, within the Godhead.

And then using that ability to expand His kingdom and the things that He created. Well, as God brought His creation into existence, it included making people distinctly different from the rest of creation.

He made them in His image, after His likeness. And being thus made, they received, we received this personal gift, this gift of personal communication that enabled them and us, again, to have personal communion with Him and with each other and to carry out His plan for the stewardship over the rest of creation.

And that, too, is a wonder that God has given to us. When we think of this personal communication that now we could experience at His creation, Adam and Eve, this came to us as a gift from God.

It's a wonderful display of His grace and goodness to us. Genesis 1.26, God said, Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.

[11 : 17] So God created man in His own image. In the image of God, He created him. Male and female, He created them. God blessed them and said to them, Be fruitful and increase in number.

Fill the earth and subdue it. And on and on it goes. So with this gift of communication, now we see people being able to use this tool, whether it's in listening or in speaking, in their relationship with God and with each other, and then also carrying out their purpose in having dominion over all the earth.

First of all, let's take a look at their communication with God and how they listen to God. Many times when we start thinking about communication, we just think of that one aspect of speaking.

And maybe it's because we do that more than the other, of listening. But let's think of communication as involving both, so speaking and listening. And so here we see communication taking place between Adam and Eve and God.

They listened to God, Genesis 128. God blessed them and said to them. So they had the ability to listen with understanding to God's loving instruction and counsel that they desperately needed for life in their new world.

[12:39] Again, in the last series that I taught, I emphasized this aspect of how desperately Adam and Eve needed the counsel of God, even in their perfect environment. They weren't created as all-knowing creatures.

And so it was a loving, gracious thing for God to do, first of all, to make them with the ability to listen, to hear, and to understand him, but then also for him to bring to them this wonderful gift of his counsel that they needed for life in their world.

It's a wonderful gift that he was providing for them, this counsel that would bring them so much blessing in their world.

So they listened to God. And they learned something of God. They learned of his great knowledge and understanding. It was God who brought it all, even them into existence.

He understood how it all worked, and they heard his plan for its ongoing existence, as I just said. He told them, Be fruitful and increase in number. Fill the earth and subdue it.

[13:46] Rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and over every living creature that moves on the ground. But also displayed something of his goodness and his grace, for it was God who showed them favor.

He showed his favor toward them in making them in his image, that they had the privilege, the special privilege, privilege of understanding his counsel and receiving counsel from him and for them, again, in their relationship with him and each other and accomplishing their purpose in the world.

That's a gracious and good God. And they heard him tell how they as a man and woman could reproduce and exercise dominion over the rest of creation.

Be fruitful and increase in number. Fill the earth and subdue it. They heard how he provided for their physical needs. Genesis 1.29, I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it that will be yours for food.

I mean, this is almost, has to be an information overload, but a beautiful thing. And again, we're trying to understand how special that is and how does that influence our own understanding, our view of communication.

[15:12] Here they were receiving this wonderful instruction of God that was telling them of the wonders that he had for them in the future. And they could use this gift of communication to understand, to listen, to receive all this.

and they would be happy, I'm sure, in hearing that counsel and receiving it as they made themselves available to hear and listen to his good counsel.

And not only in listening, well, also in the, they had the opportunity to learn of his dominion over them, that they would be subject to him. He was giving them the opportunity to know the joy of willingly choosing to live in submission to him as they learned of the tree that they should not partake up.

And that was a good thing. That was a wonderful thing for them to learn how they could continue to carry on this wonderful relationship with their creator.

It was a good thing they would have and be able to experience the joy of obedience. obedience. And obedience does bring joy.

[16:29] We all experience that. We also all experience the sorrow of disobedience. Adam and Eve could know the joy of obeying and submitting to their creator in this opportunity to not partake of the tree.

But they also had the opportunity to speak. We don't have a whole lot of revelation in God's word about what was taking place there but we have one instance when Adam praised God after God brought the woman to Adam he praised God through what he said in Genesis 2.23 the man said this is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh she shall be called woman for she was taken out of man.

So we see man in this interchange this interaction with God in both listening and speaking but we also see it in their interaction with each other and again we're limited on what is revealed in God's word we have this verse and again Genesis 2.23 because Eve was there when God brought Eve to Adam and this is what Adam spoke his first words to Eve showed some enthusiasm and were complimentary I mean what better way to start out a relationship with this woman that you would be with and so he said this is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh she shall be called woman for she was taken out of man there had to be many more opportunities of interaction between Adam and Eve because this point where we can only imagine the glory and the wonder of that the beauty of that communication that was taking place between

Adam and Eve at that time prior to sin entering the world but we also see communication being used with creation God told Adam to name the animals so Adam used his ability to communicate to obey God and fulfill his purpose to rule over creation and he named the animals Genesis 2.19-20 I don't need to read that verse we've got some additional information so in all of these relationships now we see communication being used communication existing because God exists as a personal triune God and as he made man in his own image he gifted people gifted us with the ability to communicate so that we may commune with him probably the greatest privilege that we could have as human beings is having that ability to commune with him this give and take this back and forth of God speaking to us us being able to listen us being able to speak with him what a privilege and a pleasure that he has granted to us but to commune with him and also to commune and communicate with each other but then also to more effectively carry out his plans for us so a lot of information there but let me put the question to you so how do these truths influence both what we think about communication and how we use our ability to communicate some of your thoughts this is always good where a small group would be so much better but do your best to communicate in the large group thoughts how does this influence our view our thoughts about communication and also influence how we would consider even using communication in our hearing and speaking we would use it rather flippantly not even thinking that it is all right yeah so we start thinking more of God as the model of how communication is used so certainly our view of God who he is should elevate our view of this tool that he has given to us

I know there are some tools that I've just gone out and purchased myself but there are other tools that I have that someone has given to me and sometimes it's difficult to pick up that tool and use it without understanding and thinking and being reminded oh so and so gave this tool to me and so it carries a little bit more special thoughts on my part toward the tool because I know who it's come from and so we're starting to elevate this whole matter of communication our listening and speaking because we understand that this is something that exists within the Godhead God who is holy and righteous and good and gracious and on and on loving and I've been made in his image and his likeness so I'm beginning to elevate you know it's not something I'm going to use flippantly here any longer it's not something I've acquired just at Walmart sorry anybody's employed at Walmart but whatever else you get the point other thoughts that you might have communication is used in teaching and I have learned from other people about things and I've taught other people how to do things so there are a lot of times that you can't figure something out and it's only by asking somebody how do you do it yeah yeah so listening and speaking the tool it's going to really have an influence on how we use this tool

[22:18] God using it for his glory our good our well-being is that actually how I'm using that when I take up this tool have I given some thought as to how I'm going to use it for the glory of God and the welfare and well-being of others we'll get into that a little bit next week of how we're using the tool this is all good Jean what she said plus another analogy would be a tool if I buy a quality tool or use a quality tool by being around other Christians and looking in the word I have quality speech okay yeah okay and that's a good segue into where we're going next because we know even even how good this tool is that as we move through our day we can observe numerous times where the tool is being not being used according to its design it happens with each one of us but it happens in our world today as well among many people and so it has become distorted from its original purpose and design being used contrary to

God's design and producing results that are far different from the very good that God described his creation in the beginning so let's consider what do these distortions look like many times in order for us to make corrections in the misuse of a tool we have to discern how I'm misusing it that's the benefit years ago I've said this before the older you get the more you use that phrase years ago I owned and operated a shoe repair shop and in learning the business I had no idea how to repair shoes this old Italian man that I bought the business from I worked for him for a period of time and he showed me how to use the tools I picked up the tool and I used it and there were times when I was using the tool that he came alongside and showed me you're not using the tool properly and that was a good thing for him to show me and it was a good thing for me to listen and understand and learn how I'm not using the tool properly and so it will be good for us as we take a look in the scriptures and see how it's distorted and if any of those distortions exist within me in my use and in my thoughts about communication but also in how

I'm using this good gift that God has given to me and boy throughout the scriptures I'm probably going to have difficulty covering it all this morning and may have to pursue some additional information next week but let's at least get a good start on seeing some of these distortions and as you read through the scriptures on your own you can see this over and over again what does it look like well first of all with Adam and Eve and their relationship with God their listening was distorted Genesis 3:8 then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden so instead of placing themselves in a position of drawing near to God and to listen to his counsel they ran away and hid from him they didn't want to hear what God had to say they knew that they had strayed from his counsel and disobeyed him and didn't want to be confronted by him interesting as you think about it what they desperately needed in order to correct the situation they were in the counsel of God they sought to avoid it they didn't want to hear it they didn't want to be confronted by the truth not only their listening but speaking was distorted instead of using communication ability to encourage obedience it was used to encourage disobedience now again we don't know the actual verbal interchange that was going on between

Adam and Eve prior to her giving him the fruit but he took it and Adam also uses a speaking tool to blame God and Eve once they did sin Genesis 3:12 the man said the woman you put here with me she gave me some fruit from the tree and I ate it instead of using his words his ability to speak as he did originally that we read of and praise to God for his creation and what God has brought to him in the way of a woman now he's blaming God this woman you just see that the change that has taken place here now sin has distorted his use of this tool of communication and in his relationship with God I can't imagine that he was experiencing that same joy and pleasure when he was praising God for the woman that he had brought and now he is using this tool of speech to blame

God for his own sin but Eve as well she uses her words to shift blame she speaks what is true but with that sense of deflection of responsibility the serpent deceived me and I ate no words of real repentance there so in their relationship with God communication is distorted but also in their relationship with each other the only recorded instance we have here is again with Adam you can just imagine use that imagination that God has given us there Eve is standing there the man that she had heard praise God earlier for what he had designed and brought to her now he hears this man blaming God for bringing her to him that she was the one what does that got to do to a relationship you can just imagine maybe the confusion going on wait a minute what's going on here this man who loved me so dearly who always spoke wonderful things now is using this tool of communication to blame me and instead of this kind of thing happening it's this kind of thing is happening in a relationship but also not just with Adam and Eve we see the progression of this distortion throughout the scriptures with other people in their relationship with God and a number of these I may skip over but we'll hit on some of them

[29 : 24] Cain in Genesis 4 he didn't listen with humility and repentance when God did not accept his sacrifice said he was angry at God and he lied to God and scoffed at God in Genesis 4 9 the Lord God said to Cain where's your brother Abel I don't know he replied am I my brother's keeper what kind of attitude again we'll take a look at where did that come from well we know where it came from we'll take a look at that but we're just seeing the outer symptoms this distortion of communication this wonderful gift that God had given us for a beautiful relationship in communion with him is now being used in accusations scoffing at God the children of Israel also they were told not to worship any other gods they didn't listen and obey instead told they spoke to Aaron and said make an idol for us that we could worship other people that stopped following Jesus

Christ in John chapter 6 they refused to listen to Jesus you know they were ready listeners when he was telling them the things that they wanted to hear the things that they wanted him to give them but as soon as things got a little bit more difficult and he started speaking the things they didn't like to hear then they like Adam and Eve turned away as well they wouldn't follow him any longer people that deny the attributes of God Psalm 73 11 how can God know the proud man says is there any knowledge or is there knowledge in the most high not only with God but in our relationship with each other you see this throughout the scriptures in family relationships we see this with Cain as he again deceived his brother Abel and lured him to a place where he eventually killed him Joseph's brothers using communication with each other to plot against

Joseph instead of using this skill to come up with plans and solutions to problems they used it out of the jealousy of their own hearts to get rid of Joseph so siblings back and forth and as I go through some of these examples these are certainly just examples in the scriptures but if we had time I'd open up so how does that reveal itself today between siblings children of course fight and squabble with each other in their anger etc children to parents Absalom he deceived the people with his promises in his rebellion against his father David making promises to people if I was king boy you know I'd be able to give justice and solve your problem for you instead of using this gift of communication and solving problems in his relationship with David he's using it in rebellion to try and get something that he wants beyond that and of course

Joseph's brothers lied to their father interesting to see how that just continues the ripple effect they lie they plot they use this gift from God for evil purposes and now it has to go on and on and spreads in their relationship to their father parents to children king Saul and his anger he cursed his son Jonathan Rebecca plotted with her son Jacob to get blessing from Isaac her husband parents in the Ephesus church being harsh they had to be instructed don't be harsh with their children don't provoke them to anger so this wonderful tool that was supposed to be used to further and enhance and bring great pleasure in relationships with God and in the family now being used in ways that bring anything but what is good husbands and wives Potiphar's wife used her beauty and words to try and seduce

Joseph instead of using this gift of communication to be a helper to her husband she was using it to gain something that she wanted herself the nagging and brawling wife mentioned in Proverbs 25 Isaac lying about his wife Rebecca putting her in a dangerous situation Nabal spoke and acted foolishly toward David and put his wife and his whole household in danger you're getting the idea of a picture here it gets worse and worse toward co-workers and employers Gehazi lied to Elisha here he was supposed to be a helper to Elisha but he lied to Elisha to cover up something that he had done something he wanted for his own advantage servants were encouraged not to be argumentative disrespectful pilfering from employees toward fellow believers put off falsehood speak truthfully with each other get the idea that they were having trouble in this area of their relationships don't let any corrupt talk toward each other take place but rather edifying speech how about governmental authorities

[34 : 40] Titus 3 1 through 2 they're encouraged to be submissive to rulers and authorities do not speak evil against them toward your neighbors don't bear false witness against your neighbor neighbors oppress and fight against each other in Isaiah 3 5 well those are just a few in the scriptures almost daily and root cause of sinful communication we go back to the beginning as well the original cause and

Adam and Eve their disobedience to God in Genesis 3 we see right after their sin we see them using communication sinfully and we already have covered that and And so sin entered the realm of human relationships, and we begin seeing the effects of that sin in the lives of people.

But what about the ongoing cause? We also see scriptures giving us instruction that we need to understand what's going on in me, that I would use this gift in sinful ways.

Well, certainly, because we are sinful, we bring forth that which is sinful. Look at these verses. There's something within me. Again, it's not just so-and-so said this to me, therefore, of course, I'm going to say this back to them.

Or if you understood the difficulty of my day, you would know why I'm speaking this way. If you know what it's like to have a brother or sister like this or a teacher like this, a boss like this, a husband like this, a wife like this, on and on we go.

[38 : 57] Now, the scriptures give us a clear picture of why we use this gift of communication the way we do sinfully. Look at these verses.

Proverbs 4.23. Matthew 12.34-37. And you brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good?

For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. But I tell you that men will have to give an account on the day of judgment of every careless word they have spoken.

For by your words you will be acquitted and by your words you will be condemned. Because again, that which is coming out is an indication of what is inside. And Luke 6, 43 through 45, very similar.

No good tree bears bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. Each tree is recognized by its own fruit. People don't pick figs from thorn bushes or grapes from briars.

[40 : 05] The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart. The evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks. So the verses show us that our bad, our sinful communication comes from within each one of us.

It may not be easy to admit and hear, but it's something important. We do have to recognize and be ready to act on.

If we miss again recognizing and admitting the true source of my sinful communication, I'm not going to be able to correct it. And that's true with our children as well.

You know, when our children say and use their words and listening in a sinful way, we can't just say, I don't ever want to hear you say that again. Well, we don't ever want to hear them say that again, but we want them to understand what's the source of that?

Where did that come from? And so that they can understand again their need of redemption, as we'll take a look at next week, and how they can have redeemed communication.

[41:12] Our sinful bad communication is not just a matter of better communication skills. Do we need the skills to communicate better? Yeah, we do. But if that's all we're teaching, then we'll just use those better communication skills for sinful purposes.

And so we have to go beyond teaching better communication skills. They need to be identified and corrected at some time, but not apart from dealing with what we're seeing in the scriptures as the root cause of sinful communication.

Well, I have to stop there. There's just a little bit more to finish here, but if I try and finish that, it'll take us beyond the time that we have. But next week, I want to, again, finish this a little bit as we take a look a little bit more at where does this come from?

But then we want to move to this message of hope we have that communication can be redeemed. God has a solution for our sinful communication, and we'll learn about that next week as we progress.

Let's close in prayer. Father, this morning we do give thanks for your communication to us, and not just that communication of truth, Father, but the work of your Holy Spirit that would quicken us, that we might see and understand and also receive that communication, the truth that we desperately needed.

[42:44] So as we move from here, Father, throughout our day, pray that your Spirit would really enlighten us to areas where we need to change in our listening and speaking.

Give us humble hearts, Father, hearts that will be ready to admit, ready to receive truth that we have from your Word, wisdom as we continue to learn from your Word, what we could replace that with so that we could again magnify the riches of who you are and enjoy this wondrous, rich tool that you've given to us for your glory and our joy in knowing you.

In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. Amen.