

# The Old Paths

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## “When We Don’t Talk...”

Jarrod Jacobs

**D**angers occur when men stop (or never begin) speaking with one another. Often misunderstandings are calmed when the parties involved speak with each other. I was reminded of this fact when I tried to program a computer I am using to recognize the printer I am using. Without getting too technical, when I first plugged the printer into the computer, they weren’t “talking” to each other! Both machines worked fine; there were no “technical” problems with either machine. Unfortunately, the computer refused to recognize the printer, and so the printer could not print my document. After installing a computer program, they now “talk” fine, and the reason you are reading this bulletin is because the computer and printer are in “communication” with each other!

Such is the case with men. When men, who are otherwise good men, who are productive, and have great knowledge and abilities (like a computer and a printer!) do not communicate as they should, bad things can happen. Perhaps work that could be otherwise accomplished is slowed, or neglected altogether because these men refuse to communicate, share ideas, and help each other.

### Husbands And Wives

If we can see the need for communication among machines, can we not also see the

need for communication in our own lives? Husbands and wives are said to be “one” in the sight of God (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:6; Eph. 5:31). Seems to me like folks who are “one” will be in communication with one another. Yet, when a husband and wife do not communicate, there are problems! Sadly, in many marriages, spouses are not talking with each other, and the situation is just asking for difficulties!

The Bible says husbands must treat their wives as they treat their own bodies (Eph. 5:28-29). A man would go to the doctor demanding treatment and therapy if he found that the various members of his body were not “communicating” as they once did. How much more ought there be a sense of urgency when two people living under the same roof and in the same bed (Heb. 13:4) refuse to communicate?

### Parents and Children

In Ephesians 6:4, we read, “*And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*” Obviously, there are responsibilities a father has in reference to his children. This includes communication with them as he tries to raise them correctly, both in “instructive,” as well as “corrective” discipline (i.e., “nurture” and “admonition”)! Mother must also take the initiative in teaching and training her young ones (Prov. 22:6; II Tim. 1:5; Titus 2:4).

Yet, a sad trend I see taking place among parents is the trend to let children “raise themselves” as it

were. Children are growing up with no discipline, no instruction on how to do good, and certainly no correction for their wrongs! Solomon said, “*a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame*” (Prov. 29:15). Sadly, this is exactly what is happening in households across this nation, including households where father and mother are claiming to be Christians!

What has happened to the communication among parents and children? Are we the kind of people who just “assume” that “junior” knows right from wrong simply because he is living in our house? Are we the kind of people who are positive that “sweet little Sally” will never do anything wrong? Why think this way if we have never taught “Sally” right from wrong? Our children need parents who spend time in communication and in loving behavior with them. In the long ago, God encouraged such communication, for He demanded that fathers take their children and teach them God’s will “*when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up ... write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates*” (Deut. 6:7, 9). This kind of diligence is not seen in the family whose means of communication is “huh?” “what?” “shut-up!” “move out of my way,” and various grunts. As we pointed out from Ephesians and other places, God still expects fathers and mothers to be conscientious of their duties as parents and bring their children up right. May parents ever feel that great responsibility upon their shoulders, whether the children are 2, 12, or 22, etc.

### Among Brethren

Perhaps the following points are obvious to us, and certainly can be ex-

panded upon. Yet, it is also true that brethren need to communicate with one another. When brethren agree to work and worship within a local body (Acts 9:26-28), it establishes a relationship between brethren that demands communication. Paul wrote the Corinthians, telling them to be *"perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment"* (I Cor. 1:10). What is being described here in the term "joined together" is akin to a husband and wife "cleaving" to one another in marriage (Matt. 19:5). In other words, there needs to be a closeness and camaraderie that characterizes brethren in the same location. Unfortunately, this is not always the case. When this is lacking in a local body, we will no doubt find folks who are good people, are kind, and have great abilities, but their lack of communication is such a hindrance that the congregation will experience problems and even be hindered in their growth because of it!

When we see Jesus describing brethren who had personal problems to resolve, Jesus described people who obviously made the effort to try and speak to one another. Remember, He said, *"... if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother"* (Matt. 18:15). Take note of that word, "tell". To "tell" implies communication, does it not? This is not a "brow-beating" session, nor an occasion for griping and complaining, per se. Jesus is describing an occasion for communication and the airing of differences FOR THE PURPOSE OF resolution, forgiveness, and growing closer to one another as fellow-servants in the Lord. I am confident, however, that this will never happen until

folks are first willing to communicate with each other. It is far too easy to tell "everyone else" the problems one has with a certain brother. It is a different matter entirely to *go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone*!!

### Conclusion

Could it be possible that you are guilty of such behavior? Some fine people I know are kind of like my computer and printer used to be — not working to their fullest potential because they were not "talking"! Once computer and printer "communicated" through the software, each one became more useful to me, the operator, than before.

Think about it: God is our maker, the One who rules and controls this life. Shouldn't we strive to make ourselves as useful as possible for the Master's service? In this work, we can also be instrumental in helping others be fit for the Lord's work. Knowing that together we can accomplish more than we can separately, why not communicate and talk with your brothers and sisters in Christ? Spouses who are *"heirs together of the grace of life"* (I Pet. 3:7) need to talk with each other, and parents must communicate with children. Don't allow another opportunity pass without speaking, communicating, listening, and discussing with one another so that we can help each other see Heaven one day.

## The Few

Author Unknown

Some assemble with the church just for  
the walk,  
Some go to laugh and talk.

Some go the time to spend,  
Some go to meet a friend.

Some go for speculation,  
Some go for observation.

Some go for sins to cover,  
Some go to meet a lover.

Some go to doze and nod,  
A few go to worship God.

### Editor's Note:

The author of this poem is unknown to me. I found it in a book of old lessons and writings from a dear friend of mine and thought it was worth sharing in the bulletin. Jesus said that those who worship God *"must"* do so *"in spirit and in truth"* (Jn. 4:24), for these are the kind of people God is looking for to worship Him. Let us consider our reasons for being here today. Our assembling is not for "free baby-sitting," nor is it "social hour." This is not an opportunity for business deals, nor is it simply a way to "kill time." We are assembled to worship our King and Creator. Let us remember this as we worship God today!

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