

## How to Fight Communication Temptations

1. Consider the Gospel again, how Jesus died to forgive you of your sins and bring you to relationship with Him. Now, you have the opportunity to give to others as well in a way that reflects the grace you've received in Christ. (Ephesians 2:1, 8-10)
2. Agree with God that corrupting talk is sinful and invite God's help in stopping. (1 John 1:9)
3. Ask God for help in seeing the needs of the moment more clearly than you have been seeing them. (Mark 11:24)
  - Generally, ask God to make you a better, more tune-in communicator.
  - Specifically, in the moment, ask God to help you see what is best to say in a given situation.
4. Talk to close, trusted friends and ask them if you dominate conversations or speak in ways that are more of a hindrance to their faith and godliness than a help. (Proverbs 27:6)
  - Community Church
5. Theft of any kind (including communication patterns) is a failure to trust God for the things we want or need.
  - Confess to God your failure to trust Him and ask God to give you confidence in His goodness and provision.
  - Ask God to help you see areas of loneliness, insecurity or inadequacy that you may be trying to use humor or wordiness to cover up.
  - Ask God to heal your areas of brokenness so that you are not tempted to act selfishly in your communication any more. (Psalm 103:1-5)
6. Theft of any kind (including communication) is a failure to love those we sin against.
  - Write out a list of 10 ways that the people around you could be helped more if your speech was more gracious and edifying than destructive. (Romans 13:9)
  - Become a communication doctor: investigate properly before you prescribe. In other words, try to listen to people you talk with in a way that hears what they're meaning to say apart from what you assume they're saying. Check with them to make sure you accurately understand what they are saying. (Proverbs 18:13)
  - Ask God to help you to resist the urge to start forming an answer to someone's comments before they're finished talking. It's hard to listen well if you're busy crafting a reply. (Proverbs 18:13)
  - Where there are frequent friends and acquaintances that you have sinned against through your thoughtless speech or hoarding the conversations, confess

your faults to them and ask for their forgiveness. Many times we allow ourselves to continue in sin by failing to publicly turn from our failures. (James 5:16)

7. Pray, and take a hard look at your humor. How much of your humor is built around crass or irreverent jokes and biting sarcasm? Ask God to reveal and help you change these patterns. (Ephesians 4:29)
8. Sin is made worse when the sinner is isolated from other Christians who are genuinely trying to grow. Invite accountability and help from other Christians in the area of your words, wordiness, jokes or other corrupting talk. (Hebrews 3:13; 10:25)
9. Bad company corrupts good morals (1 Corinthians 15:33). Are you in a committed relationship (married, family, dating, friendships, co-workers) with people who are repeat offenders in the area of corrupting/corruptible speech?
  - Take a hard look at these relationships and take active steps to
    - a) Share what you're learning about how God wants us to have pure, appropriate speaking habits.
    - b) Invite the person(s) to join you in cleaning up their behaviors too
    - c) Make some prayerful and hard decisions about whether or not you should continue to spend time with these people who are not helping you to walk with God in this area.
  - Find some people who also want to invite Christ to reign in their communication patterns. Invite them to join you in taking active steps to let God purify their speech. (Isaiah 6:5)
10. Many people have devices like Blackberries, iPhones, iPods, Androids, iPads, etc.. Ask friends if your use of these devices hinders your communication. Are you wasting time or stealing communication time / blessing from friends and justifying it because you're giving to other friends? Theft is never justified. Ask God for help and take action to help you turn away from these bad habits that keep you from building others up appropriately.
11. Consider the freedom that could result from God changing you in this way of communication.
  - Make a list of some ways you'd like to see God use you with your speech.
  - Ask God to help you become that person He can trust in every situation. (Consider: Job prospects requiring excellent speech, parenting, ministry callings that require excellent speech, and others.)
12. Learn to ponder the things you hear, like a master chef mixing seasonings for a marinade, weigh carefully the things you hear and the communication you receive. God has surprised His people many times with the things they heard and the insights he gave them. (Luke 2:18-19; Hebrews 13:2)