

**RELATIONSHIPS**  
**LISTEN 'N TALK**  
JANUARY 10, 2021  
**LEADER NOTES**

Welcome to “Relationships”! In this series we are exploring six keys to healthy, happy relationships with others. Today’s topic is “Listen ‘N Talk”. Relational health is all about communication. How we speak and how we listen makes all the difference. You cannot have a healthy and happy relationship without healthy communication. For our LifeGroup study, we’ll explore some key Scriptures that give us practical advice on how to listen and talk. Communication is a skill we can develop. LifeGroup should be a lab where we learn to communicate in ways that honour God and others. Let’s dive in and practice the art of healthy communication!

**ICEBREAKER:** Our words are powerful! Sometimes our words stay with a person for a lifetime. Years ago when I was a teen, my youth leader said to me, “*Your ministry to people ...*”. Until that moment, I had not thought of myself as having a ministry! 😊 His words have stayed with me and shaped my life. What words has someone shared with you that have impacted your life? Why were these words so impactful?

**STUDY:**

- What was a key highlight for you from Pete’s teaching on Sunday?

**1. Communication Defined**

Communication is the process by which I understand and am understood. It is the process by which I know others and am known by others.

- When you think of communication in this way, how does it impact the importance you place on what you say and how you listen?
- Think of someone in your life whom you would say is a great listener. What listening qualities does that person have?

**2. God Listens to Us**

READ: Psalm 116:1-2

“I love the LORD, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy. Because he turned his ear to me, I will call on him as long as I live.”

- How do you think the Psalmist knew that God heard his prayer?

LEADER NOTE: In Psalm 116, the psalmist looks back on a difficult experience and recounts how God helped him through. “I was facing death, and he saved me.” (vs. 6). This was evidence to the psalmist

that God had heard his prayer. The psalmist exercised faith. He believed God would help Him, even in the middle of his difficulty (vs. 10). He believed God would hear, even before God acted.

- How does this Scripture encourage you that God listens?

### **3. Jesus Listened**

READ: John 4:4-26 Jesus and the Woman at the Well

- In what ways do you see Jesus listening in his conversation with the woman at the well?

LEADER NOTE:

Jesus listens and understands her life situation (Sin – multiple husbands, live-in man. Religion – lack of knowledge about how to be in a right relationship with God)

Jesus listens and understands her deepest need - Ex. Vs. 9 – she asks Jesus, “Why are you asking me for a drink?” Jesus begins to prompt her to see He could offer her something much greater than a simple drink of water. (see vs. 10, 13-14)

- How did Jesus show He valued the woman through listening to her?

Leader Note: Jesus took the time to hear her questions and to answer. He focused attention on her to understand her life situation and her need.

- What can we learn from Jesus about active listening?

LEADER NOTE: Active listening involves taking the time and energy to focus on another person, to hear their words and seek to understand their need. Ultimately, active listening communicates our love and our desire to see the person be in a right relationship with God.

- How would you rate yourself in the area of listening? How would those closest to you rate you? What practical step can you take to grow in the area of listening?

### **4. Jesus Talked**

Look back through John 4:4-26 again.

- What words did Jesus use to influence the woman at the well?

LEADER NOTE:

“Please give me a drink” vs. 7 – Jesus made himself vulnerable by asking her for a drink. This opened up the potential for trust and open communication.

“... ask me, and I would give you living water.” vs. 10 – Jesus offers to help her, to add value to her life.

“... those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again.” vs. 14 – Jesus offers her not just a temporary fix (one drink) but the remedy for her deepest need – salvation.

“Go and get your husband.” vs. 16 – Jesus invites her to be honest with him, to be vulnerable.  
“ ... you have had five husbands ...” vs. 18 – Jesus reveals to her His divine knowledge.  
“God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.” vs. 24 – Jesus teaches her how to have a right relationship with God.  
“I am the Messiah!” vs. 26 – Jesus reveals who He is – the solution to her deepest need.

- What can we learn from Jesus about how to speak to others?

LEADER NOTE: With our words, we can be vulnerable. Jesus modeled this by asking the woman at the well for a drink. All of us have needs. Healthy communication happens when we are vulnerable with one another about our needs. With our words we can gently confront. Jesus did this when he asked the woman about her husband and as they discussed the proper place to worship. When we confront, we can open others up to the sin in their lives and to their need for a Saviour.

With our words, we can share hope. Jesus did this with the woman at the well by offering her living water and by revealing to her who He is.

## 5. The Power of our Words

READ: Proverbs 18:21

“Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruits.”

Proverbs 15:4

“Gentle words are a tree of life, a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.”

Proverbs 12:18

“The words of the reckless pierce like swords, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.”

Ephesians 4:29

“Don’t use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.” NLT

- We have to recognize the power of our words. With our words we can tear others down, or we can build others up and encourage them. How do these verses speak to you about the power of your words?

LEADER NOTE: It is so important that we are aware of our words. Some of your group members may have a challenge with this. We can be unaware the negative impact our words are having. All of us can grow in the way we use our words to encourage and build up others. Ask your group members what this looks like practically. For example - We can use our words to invite vulnerability by making ourselves vulnerable. Example – “I’m not perfect.” “Can you help me?” We can use our words to share God’s love with others. Example – “God loves you.” “How can I pray for you?”

## 6. Key Takeaway

- What has been a key takeaway for you from this week's study?

## **PRAYER**

Let's pray this week for our youth ministries (Revolution – highschool) (TNT – grades 7 and 8) at Creekside. Here are some specific ways we can do that:

- Pray for our youth to feel connected and loved during the COVID lockdown.
- Pray for your youth to experience and know God's love is real and that they would grow closer to Him.
- Pray for the youth leaders to find creative and effective ways to connect and love the students in their LifeGroups. Pray they will stay encouraged while leading during this difficult time.