



CRAIG REES • 30 APRIL 2023

The Bridge and the Mirror

Key Idea: Communicating effectively and empathizing with others are essential plays for building and maintaining healthy relationships.

Key Scriptures: Colossians 4:6; 3:13-14; Proverbs 27:19, 17; Job 42:7-9

1. Read Colossians 4:6. In sports, our posture matters a great deal. How would you apply the communicational posture Paul champions in this verse to your most important relationships? How could your communication be 'full of grace and seasoned with salt'?

2. Read Job 42:7-9. In this passage, Job's friends regret what they said and wish they had spoken the truth about God like Job did. There are many other examples of people expressing regret for what they said. There is the example of Peter denying Jesus, Judas betraying Jesus, and King David regretting his response to Nathan. There's also Job's wife encouraging Job to curse God and die. She is not mentioned again; whether she changes her mind or regrets what she said is unclear. The Bible contains people who say things they shouldn't have; some acknowledge it while others don't. How difficult is it for you to express regret for what you said? What are the consequences of failing to acknowledge regret for our spoken words? Has expressing regret for your words ever negatively impacted your relationships?

3. How does the metaphor of a bridge being strong and well-constructed to support the weight of people and vehicles passing over it apply to effective communication?

4. It is important to keep your communication with key people in good condition. On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being low and 10 high, how much effort do you put into keeping your communication with key people healthy? What practices do you use to help you do that?
5. According to Proverbs 27:19, "As water reflects the face, so one's life reflects the heart." How can this proverb be applied to our daily lives, and what does it suggest about cultivating a healthy inner life?
6. Alonso Schokel says, "We need the other to know ourselves; we know the other by (knowing) ourselves." Is it truly possible to know yourself without other people?
7. What is the role and importance of empathy in building and maintaining healthy relationships? How can we cultivate empathy in our interaction with others?
8. How does changing one's perspective play a crucial role in showing empathy toward others? What are some effective ways to develop this skill?
9. How does regulating our emotions contribute to building and sustaining healthy relationships? What effective strategies have you used to manage and express your emotions constructively and empathetically?
10. What is the significance of setting clear and appropriate boundaries in fostering healthy relationships? How can we communicate and establish boundaries effectively while still maintaining a positive and respectful dynamic with others?