

# Life Coach: Marriage

## Communication, Part 5

Introduction: Having addressed in detail the elements of Godly communication from both a positive and negative perspective, Paul summarizes this important section by giving four overarching principles, the golden rules of communication. Successful marriages internalize the golden rules, making them the automatic response in both good times and stressful situations. Failure to internalize these golden rules always results in failed communication, eventually leading to failure in the marriage. More than what you say, the golden rules address who you are.

- I. The OUTWARD Rule: Kindness (Ephesians 4:32)
  - A. Used in this form only once in the Greek New Testament, the special word translated “kind” carries the idea of “gentleness in bearing with wrong.” It strongly includes nuances of courtesy and politeness.
  - B. Barnes’ Notes on the New Testament is helpful in refining the definition:

And be ye kind one to another - Benignant, mild, courteous, "polite" - χρηστοὶ chrēstoi. [1 Peter 3:8](#). Christianity produces true courteousness, or politeness. It does not make one rough, crabby, or sour; nor does it dispose its followers to violate the proper rules of social contact. The secret of true politeness is "benevolence," or a desire to make others happy; and a Christian should be the most polite of people. There is no religion in a sour, misanthropic temper; none in rudeness, stiffness, and repulsiveness; none in violating the rules of good breeding. There is a hollow-hearted politeness, indeed, which the Christian is not to aim at or copy. His politeness is to be based on "kindness;" [Colossians 3:12](#). His courtesy is to be the result of love, good-will, and a desire of the happiness of all others; and this will prompt to the kind of conduct that will render his conversation with others agreeable and profitable.

- C. One may draw several practical concepts from the definition:
  1. Kindness restrains negative emotions so as not to express them explosively or hurtfully. Once internalized, the golden rule of kindness keeps a lid on temper. People with temper problems have not internalized kindness.
  2. Kindness restrains the content of expression—the word choice—by filtering out hurtful and derogatory speech. Once internalized, kindness restricts the use of certain words and phrases. People who use abusive or hurtful speech have not internalized kindness.

3. Kindness considers the impact on another before the words are spoken. Kindness phrases good words in such a way as to have a positive impact. Once internalized, kindness thinks before it speaks. People who “shoot from the hip” have not internalized kindness.
4. Kindness endures being wronged without wronging in return. Once internalized, kindness expresses thoughts without purposing to harm—even if it has been harmed. People who practice retaliatory speech, always having to have the “last word” have not internalized kindness.

D. I Peter 3:7-9 expands upon the golden rule of kindness

1. Knowledge—men must take the time to genuinely know their wives—what makes them happy, sad, nervous, afraid, etc.
2. Honor—men must always treat their wives with respect—with greater respect, in fact, than they treat any other human being.
3. Togetherness—as “heirs together,” men must remember that their wives are on equal plane with them before the Lord. The idea of “heirs” also has an eternal aspect, hinting that, whatever the marriage relationship will look like in heaven, there will be an ongoing sense of partnership throughout eternity.
4. Unity—couples should display “one-mindedness” (8). Differences should be settled, compromises made, and agreements reached.
5. Compassion—generous actions of consideration for one another.
6. Friendship—“love as brethren” (8) emphasizes the strong emotional, friendship, and kinship bond. Married couples are not just lovers; they should be friends.
7. Pity—consistently taking into considerations the feelings of another AND always giving the benefit of the doubt.
8. Courtesy—maintaining appropriate speech and actions. Letting one’s hair down at home does not mean abandoning common social graces and courtesy.
9. Blessing (9)
  - a. No retaliation in action—“evil for evil”
  - b. No retaliation in speech—“railing for railing”
  - c. Note: Being the victim of evil or railing does not give on the right to deal in the same. The “he said it first” or “she did it first” mentality of school children does not fulfill Christian expectations.
10. Promise (10-12)—Proper speech patterns are a pathway to a happy life and good days.
  1. Truth is the core value of healthy speech (10).
  2. Peace is the chief end of healthy speech (11).