

## Doctrine of Conversational Guidelines

1. Be swift to hear and slow to speak.
  - *James 1:19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.*
  
2. Be willing to listen without comment to what another person is saying.
  - *Proverbs 18:13 He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.* To constantly interrupt a narrative is foolishness and a shame.
  
3. Do not feel that every question has to be answered or can be. Many questions are designed to inflame. Even Jesus responded with silence in such moments.
  - *Isaiah 53:7 He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.*
  
4. Be care about injecting oneself into someone else's concerns.
  - *Proverbs 26:17 He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears.*
  
5. Temper every remark with grace.
  - *Colossians 4:6 Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.*

“It is easy to become sarcastic and controversial towards those with whom we differ. It is always hard to understand why there should be differences of interpretation of God's Word between good and sincere men. We dare not impute to them any motive that we do not apply to ourselves. If they appear wrong to us, I must realize that I appear just as wrong to them. God reserves the right to use those with whom I disagree.” – Author Unknown
  
6. Do not level false guilt or accept false guilt. A legitimate inquiry is not an indictment. A mere accusation is not proof. A suspicion is not sufficient proof to become judge, jury and executioner in a matter.
  
7. Remember that most negative charges are reflective of one's own beliefs and behavior. A biblical example of this is found in Exodus 12.
  
8. Remove anger from the discussion. For the Christian cessation of anger is not just a good idea it is a Royal Command.

- *Ephesians 4:31 Let all bitterness, and wrath [seething hostility], and anger [boiling temper], and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*

9. Do not talk to someone in anger. Do not talk to someone who is angry. Wait for a more calm moment. Listen to the concerns. Take to heart what is said but do not respond. Time and distance are good healing tools.

- *Proverbs 15:1 A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.*
- *Proverbs 15:18 A wrathful man stirreth up strife: but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife.*

10. A gracious heart can absorb harsh speech.

- *Proverbs 19:11 The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression.*

It is not uncommon for a pastor to be ridiculed, mocked, railed against, slandered, suspected, accused and condemned without question or comment because something has been said and believed. Jesus was verbally abused until the anger against Him was so great He was put to death.

- *Mark 15:28 And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors. 29 And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads... The servant is not above the Master.*
- *Luke 21:17 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake.*

11. Do not be surprised when unreasonable anger and hostility comes from those once closest to you. Therefore, do not say what you never want to be repeated.

- *Micah 7:5 Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom. 6 For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house. 7 Therefore I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me.*

12. Remember that the tongue can be set on fire of hell.

- *James 3:5 Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! 6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.*

13. God will redeem the tongue of any individual determined to be Christ like. Christians are instructed to pray to be a peaceable and quiet people

- *1 Timothy 2:1 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.*