

Marriage



MARRIAGE PART 23 - ACTIVE LISTENING

In the marriage covenant pt 23, we are going to unpack “the art of active listening”. Active listening is just that - active. It is purely listening for the sole purpose of hearing and understanding what the other person is attempting to communicate. It is about giving your full attention to what the other person is saying.

When we actively listen, we are not listening to reply or give our opinion or solutions to what is being said. We are not thinking about other things and what we may or may not need to do later on. We are 100% focused on what our spouse is sharing with us for the sole purpose of hearing to understand.

What this communicates to our spouse is that we love and respect them and are genuinely interested and concerned about what they are saying.

We see in James 1:19 a very powerful Scripture which helps define this kind of active listening.

James 1:19 “This you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger;”

Being quick to hear and slow to speak is a posture of heart. You could call it a being attitude of Christ. It’s where you are more interested in the other person and their heart, than you are yourself. It’s a posture that’s life giving and not life taking. It truly has the welfare of the other individual as its main priority and so in turn is eager to hear.

It is the same posture that is keen to hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

Revelation 2:7 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will grant to eat of the tree of life which is in the Paradise of God.”

This kind of listening requires a spiritual humility of heart. The heart that isn’t humble is always quick to reply or quick to add or quick to bring a solution. It is even quick to tell the other person to hurry because this is taking too long.

Those who aren’t quick to actively hear tend to listen to reply. While the person is speaking, they are already formulating what their reply will be, as opposed to just listening to hear and understand what the person is sharing.

Active listening is an art form and doesn’t come naturally to us. It is something we firstly need a desire for and then the desire to grow and develop in. If we are serious about great communication, we will all

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undertake this growing and learning process of active listening.

The other side of active listening is being able to repeat back to the person speaking what has been heard for the purpose of clarity and understanding. This is where the hearer shares with the speaker what has been shared for the purpose of understanding. Once both parties are happy, they can look to move forward in their dialogue together and possibly resolve the area of contention.

QUESTIONS

1. What makes active listening so different from just listening?
2. Why is it vital we are quick to hear and slow to speak?
3. How good are you at active listening and why?
4. Why does love play such an active part in whether one will learn to develop their active listening skills?

Watch the accompanying You Tube videos here: https://youtu.be/nQK8C8_8v8o