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Our relationships at home prosper when we have proper, godly communication. I experienced this when I shared a house with some believers who all worked an early morning shift at a nearby store. Due to their schedule, they would eat breakfast before work and then leave dishes in the sink, intending to wash them as soon as they returned home. I typically woke up after they left for work and would also have dishes to wash before leaving the house. To me, it made sense to wash all the dishes.

I enjoyed washing the dishes, and I thought it would bless my housemates. However, I never communicated to them that I was happy to handle that responsibility in the morning. Therefore, when they came home day after day and saw that the dishes were already done, they became concerned that I was feeling obligated to do them. So one housemate brought it to my attention. As we talked, I realized that I had never communicated my joy in washing dishes. I assumed they knew it blessed me. The matter was quickly resolved, peace resumed in the home, and I learned a valuable lesson: communication contributes greatly to a godly, peaceful home.

*Isaiah 32:18:*

*And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.*

God wants us to dwell in peaceable habitations and quiet resting places. We can do His will by growing in our ability to communicate. Let's consider some communication ideas we can implement to help make for peaceful lives at home.

#### WE CAN COMMUNICATE CLEARLY AND RESPECTFULLY

Communication is the transmitting of information, thoughts, or feelings so that they're satisfactorily received and understood. Much of the way we communicate at

home is verbal, written, or visual. In whatever way we communicate, we can do so respectfully. For example, we may let our family or housemates know when we're leaving the house, we may want to keep them updated throughout the day, we endeavor to keep our tone respectful, and we communicate in ways that make for peace.

*Romans 14:19:*

*Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.*

We want our words to be pleasant to the ear and sweet to the soul (Proverbs 16:24). We respect those with whom we live and communicate to them in a clear, complete way that they will understand.

## WE CAN BE GOOD LISTENERS

The goal of communication is for information to be received and understood. Therefore, listening is a major part of communication. It is a vital way to receive information.

*James 1:19:*

*Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.*

God's Word tells us to be swift to hear. This may mean that we eliminate distractions, such as phones, TV, or music, when those we live with talk to us. If a housemate tells us something, we can repeat back to them what we have just heard to make sure that we understand what is being said. As born-again believers, we are to be followers, or imitators, of God (Ephesians 5:1). God listens to us when we talk to Him (Psalms 116:1). We can likewise listen well to one another with the goal of understanding.

## WE CAN HANDLE CONFLICT ACCORDING TO THE WORD

There may be occasions when we have miscommunications, misunderstandings, or disagreements with our housemates. When this occurs, there are steps we can take in our communications to get back to living peacefully. First, as family members or housemates, we look for a set of standards for our living situation. As born-again believers, we have the Word as our standard and we have the ability to renew our minds to God's Word. One Biblical exhortation we can hold on to as we seek to resolve conflict is to make every effort to live peaceably together.

*Romans 12:18:*

*If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.*

Next, we find out where we disagree and move toward reconciliation based on the Word we do agree on. We can keep our voices soft and avoid saying things that we may regret (Proverbs 15:1,2). We apologize if necessary, and we forgive each other so that we can get back to the joy of harmonious living.

Godly communication helps us live with peace in our homes, and there are many ways we can do it. We can communicate with clarity and respect and listen attentively to one another, turning our homes into havens where we experience peace. And if at times we miscommunicate, we can still find ways to do the Word and get back to the peaceful home setting God desires for His children. Let's enjoy living God's Word in our communications at home and having our relationships prosper with peace!

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