

Facilitator:

1. Open with Prayer
2. Welcome any newcomers
3. Read Proverbs 11:13; James 1:19 and Genesis 2:25. Give a five-minute review of the sermon using Peppy's sermon notes.

Facilitator:

Please don't feel you have to cover every question. They become increasingly deeper and more thoughtful toward the end. It may help to highlight questions you want to be sure to cover, depending on the dynamics of your group and the time available. Try to keep your discussion to an hour and a half at the most.

CONNECT Group study questions, Proverbs 11:13; James 1:19 and Genesis 2:25

September 20, 2015

Title: Communication Highway

“Well, bless your heart!”

Have you ever heard this particular Southern phrase? If you've lived in the South for any extended time, you probably couldn't avoid it. I'm amazed at the many different messages those same words communicate depending on how they are said. The tone, the volume, the word or words that are emphasized, the context, the facial expression of the person saying it make all the difference in the meanings those words communicate.

As we look into this week's lesson, let's consider how what we say is affected by how we say it, and how what we mean can be entirely different from what is heard.

Facilitator: Select three or four volunteers to each turn to the person next to them and say, *I love you*. Ask the person to whom those words were spoken to describe the meaning that was communicated to them. Now ask that the same words be repeated emphasizing the word in boldface caps: *I love you*, then *I **LOVE** you*, then *I love **YOU***, and ask the person receiving the communication what meaning they heard.

Question: Words have meaning, but if the words we say carry a different meaning from what we intend, how can we be sure we have communicated accurately or received the communication as it was

intended? **Facilitator:** A possible answer may be: To be sure you have communicated accurately, ask. To be sure you have heard accurately, repeat in your own words what you thought was said. This is called active listening.

Question: Communication is the highway by which love travels from one person to another. What possible potholes or obstacles in the highway would prevent communication from getting through. What are some reasons for a connect group to go to a deeper level? Why is it difficult to go to deeper levels of communication in a connect group?

Question: Which of the four character qualities are you strong in, which need work, and why? Do you have examples of times your character quality strengths or weaknesses became apparent?

Question: We all need to cultivate the four character qualities Peppy developed for us in the lesson. With those qualities in mind, how would you encourage a person to communicate at a deeper level?

Meditation: Read Psalm 14:3-5a as a prayer, and examine the heartfelt message it gives us. What is the message to the speaker? What is the message to the one spoken to? **Facilitator:** Here is the passage from Psalm 141:3-5a:

*Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth;
keep watch over the door of my lips!
Do not let my heart incline to any evil,
to busy myself with wicked deeds
in company with men who work iniquity,
and let me not eat of their delicacies!*

*Let a righteous man strike me—it is a kindness;
let him rebuke me—it is oil for my head;
let my head not refuse it.*

Homework: Choose someone with whom you share mutual trust and respect—a spouse or an accountability partner, for example. Practice communicating at a level four or five by discussing how you may have fallen short in your character qualities and steps you would take to strengthen

them. (Hint: It's not a good idea to have this level of communication on Facebook.)