



Acts 15:1-11; John 10:27

OPEN

When have you experienced good communication with another person? And when have you walked through a time of poor communication with another? What were the main issues that made it particularly challenging or encouraging for you?

DISCUSS

Read the passage above and consider what the early church was facing when they gathered for the Jerusalem Council. Who might have been present? What were the issues they dealt with and what might have made for good or poor communication at this gathering?

As we look back across Scripture we see that God is a master communicator. He used so many ways to grab our attention and communicate love, grace and his will to us. Consider some of the ways God has communicated to his people (angels, visions, dreams, prophets, prayers, other people, the Bible, a donkey, and the flesh and blood human being of Jesus Christ, God's only Son)

Knowing how God has worked to communicate with us, do you find encouragement here in keeping at the task of communicating well with the people God has placed in your life?

What are the challenges or barriers you encounter when it comes to communication?

React to these two quotes:

"The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has actually taken place." - George Bernard Shaw

"The most basic and powerful way to connect to another person is to listen. Just listen. Perhaps the most important thing we ever give each other is our attention . . . A loving silence often has far more power to heal and to connect than the most well-intentioned words." - Rachel Naomi Remen

Stop. Look. Listen.

Spend a week considering the following when you try to connect ideas, emotions and feelings with others: 1) Stop - stop what you are doing and commit to the process of communicating (no matter how hard or messy it gets. 2) Look - really see a person, make eye contact or make time for them, try to understand what angle they are coming from and why they have the ideas they hold. 3) Listen - listen to them. Communicate to know them better not to push your agenda. Can you do this? Can you see the end goal of communication as better community rather than winning an argument?