

WHY LISTENING SAVES MARRIAGES



Most couples don't have a
communication problem.

They have a listening problem.

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THE ART OF LISTENING

Why It Could Save — or Is Already Saving — Your Marriage

“He who answers before listening — that is his folly and his shame.” — Proverbs 18:13

01 | THE SILENT MARRIAGE KILLER

Most couples don't suffer from a lack of words — they suffer from a lack of listening. Arguments repeat. Resentment builds. Distance grows. And neither spouse understands why, because both are talking and no one is truly hearing.

- She said she was overwhelmed — he heard complaining. She needed compassion, not a solution.
- He said he felt disrespected — she heard an attack. He needed acknowledgment, not defense.
- They both spoke. Neither listened. The marriage slowly died in the silence between their words.

02 | WHERE AFFAIRS REALLY BEGIN

Infidelity rarely begins in a bedroom. It begins the moment someone outside the marriage makes a spouse feel genuinely heard. Emotional connection precedes physical betrayal — and emotional disconnection is almost always rooted in one spouse not feeling listened to.

- “He never listens to me” is one of the most common statements in a therapist's office.
- A person who feels unheard at home becomes dangerously vulnerable outside of it.
- Listening is not just courtesy — it is protection for your marriage covenant.

03 | WHAT REAL LISTENING LOOKS LIKE

- Eye contact, undivided attention, and a quiet phone — before a single word is spoken.
- Asking, “Help me understand what you mean” instead of jumping to a rebuttal.
- Repeating back what you heard before responding — not to parrot, but to confirm.
- Letting silence sit without rushing to fill it. Sometimes your spouse needs space to finish a thought.

04 | THE BIBLICAL STANDARD

James 1:19 instructs us to be “*swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.*” God places listening first — not as a technique, but as a reflection of love and humility. To truly listen to your spouse is to honor the image of God in them. Proverbs 18:13 adds the weight of consequence: “*He who answers before listening — that is his folly and his shame.*” The Hebrew word for *folly* here is *ivvelet* — it describes moral recklessness, not just ignorance. And *shame* is *kelimmah* — public disgrace. God is saying: the spouse who refuses to listen is not just unwise. They are destructive.

- Listening says: your words matter more than my next point.
- Not listening says: winning this moment matters more than saving this marriage.

The most powerful gift you can give your spouse costs nothing.
Put down the phone. Close the laptop. Look them in the eyes.
And listen — like the marriage you want depends on it. Because it does.

— Lloyd Allen / Marriage Educator, Therapist, Family Coach and Theologian

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