

A Composite Picture of Christ the Communicator
An Instructional Game
Michigan State University, 1975

Purpose

To stimulate reflection and sharing of the communication skills and characteristics of Jesus.

Supplies

One large sheet of paper and 20, 3x5 cards to each team.

Teams

Four to eight people (not important that teams be exactly the same size)

Procedure

1. Each group is to make a list of characteristics of Christ as a communicator. The group comes to consensus on twenty of these characteristics and writes them on the 3x5 cards (one characteristic per card). Specify that the groups will have 15-20 minutes. But . . .
2. After five minutes call for the groups to share from their lists—read two or three of the characteristics aloud. Also, after this brief sharing has served to encourage the groups about the way the exercise is being interpreted, the leader should read the following: “Consider this proposition: If an item on your list is true of Jesus, but could not be in any way true of Christians today, it probably shouldn’t be on your list. As a communicator, Jesus used human resources very effectively. Even with the woman at the well, his insight could have come from careful listening rather than from supernatural mind reading. Considering this proposition, whether or not you accept it, will encourage you to think in more personal terms about what you are writing on your lists.”
3. After 20 minutes of group work, ask groups to share the twenty items they have selected for their cards.
4. Distribute the “Propositions about Effective Communication” (see below), one to each person. Within each group look through the cards to see if there is at least one illustration of each of the eight propositions on the list. Stack the cards according to the eight propositions.
5. The groups will find that some of the propositions aren’t clear to them. After a group or two has asked for help in defining and clarifying the propositions, provide the list of “Definitions of Communication” (see below).
6. At the end of the work session (10-15 minutes), ask the groups how many of the eight propositions their cards illustrate.

Sharing

With the group as a whole, the leader can review the eight propositions, asking each group’s spokesperson to read from their cards to illustrate each proposition.

Propositions about Effective Communication

- Effective communication begins with careful listening.
- Meaning is attached by the hearer.
- Effective communication depends heavily on feedback.
- Mutual trust enhances effective communication.
- Non-closure style keeps communication lines open.
- Simple, direct, planned language transmits ideas more effectively.
- The medium colors the message.
- Secondary messages can crowd out the major message.

Definitions of Communication

Communication is the exchange of information, ideas or feelings through verbal or written messages.

Communication is a 2-way process to achieve understanding. Participants exchange information, ideas and feelings but also create and share meaning.

Communication is a means of connecting people or situations.

Communication is the study of how people communicate through speech, gesture, technology, publishing and broadcasting media.

A process of exchange using symbols, signs or behavior.