

Listening Makes Cents

Clark Cothorn, *Discipleship Journal* – July/August 1997



Are your small-group members good listeners? Here's one way to find out.

Give each person in your group five pennies. Then divide into groups of three and provide the groups with a current news story or a Bible passage to discuss. Explain the ground rules: "When you speak, you must forfeit one penny. No one else may interrupt while you are speaking. Once you have made your comments move onto the next person". Once everyone has forfeited their pennies, come together as one group and discuss the following questions.

- Did you find it easy or hard to follow the rules of this exercise? Why?
- Did any of you run out of pennies before you ran out of things to say?
- Did any of you find it hard to forfeit all your pennies?

- Did comments other groups made indicate that they were listening? What body language did they use to say, "I'm hearing you"?
- Did you find you had more thoughts on the subject than you expected?
- Did you feel your contributions to the group were appreciated?
- What made you feel that way?
- Did the awareness of listening more carefully make the conversation more effective or less effective?
- Could this exercise improve our Bible study discussion? How?

What would happen if Christians practiced better listening before responding to non Christians? What would listening do for other relationships — with workmates, friends, relatives, your spouse?

Undiscovered Resource

Esther Bailey, *Discipleship Journal* – July/August 1997

When was the last time you visited your church library? You may be overlooking an excellent, convenient resources for small-group leaders and members alike.

Ask your church librarian to give a brief tour for small-group leaders so they will know what is available. Once you're familiar with your library you can share its riches with all small-group members.

When you're about to start a topical study, compile for each person a list of available books, videos on the subject. If someone is struggling with an issue visit the library together to see what is available. When special needs arise, let your librarian know so they can find appropriate materials.



Make the library an ally in your leadership role, and your whole group will benefit.