



# Two Churches, One Marriage

## Communication: Opening the Door to Understanding



### Introduction

Good communication is an essential ingredient to any successful relationship, regardless of whether or not a couple has different religious backgrounds. Communication skills are important in at least two fundamental ways. First, effective communication enhances a couple's ability to understand one another. Effective communication, for example, allows individuals to more clearly express or articulate their needs and desires, which in turn, makes it easier for a partner to be responsive to those needs. Greater understanding of our partner also fosters greater intimacy or sense of connection. Being able to share our faith with our partner, for example, can help a couple strengthen their spiritual intimacy.

Second, effective communication skills help couples work through the inevitable problems and conflicts that arise in all intimate relationships. Strong communication skills, along with the problem-solving skills discussed in the next unit, will facilitate couples working through many issues, including issues that interchurch couples frequently face. Good communication skills, for example, can help couples from escalating a disagreement into a major conflict. They can also help prevent conflict by reducing the number of misunderstandings that can arise from poor communication skills.

Since communication skills will be the foundation upon which other issues and topics will be explored, developing effective skills in communication is the focus of the first unit. It is hoped that developing and using these skills will help you and your partner work more effectively through the other topics discussed in this program. This unit will address skills that both the speaker and the listener need to develop for effective communication skills.