

## **Phone Calls**

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Everyone who knows me well knows that I really don't like to talk on the phone. I mean, I REALLY don't like to talk on the phone. In fact, about the only form of communication I like less than the phone is email. With email, you can't hear voice inflection or see the expression on a person's face. You can't read body language and never can tell completely if someone is joking or serious. With a telephone, at least you can hear their voice.

I don't call other people, either, for the most part. If I do call, it is usually safe to say that I will communicate the reason for the call as quickly as possible. I usually don't just call to chitchat or catch up on someone else. I don't like to make small talk on the phone, either. I want to state my business and get off the phone. If it is possible to conduct the business in person rather than call them, I usually prefer to do that.

About the only time I call anyone and talk for any length of time, is with someone who is very close to me. When I have been deployed, I would try to call my wife at each port visit. We would usually talk for close to an hour, and even then, it was hard to get off the phone. Since I couldn't be with her physically, I wanted to hold on to the only connection I had with her.

Recently, one of my sons called. Usually, if I answer, he will ask how I am doing and then ask, "Where's Mom?" They both know that I don't enjoy taking on the phone, and frankly I think they enjoy talking with their mother more, anyway. On this one occasion, my wife was ill and I conducted the entire phone conversation myself. It was not even a terribly unpleasant experience. After we finally hung up, I later learned that my son told his wife that he thought that we the longest phone conversation he and I had ever had.

I think the reason I don't like to talk on the phone is because I'm not sure how to do it well. I'm not really good at making small talk and otherwise don't know what to talk about. I just want to pass along the information and be done.

I think that is exactly why a lot of people don't spend more time in prayer than they do. We don't really make "small talk" with God, and we aren't sure what else to talk to Him about.

I have discovered one thing that has helped my own prayer life is making a list. One time I decided I was going to spend a half-hour in prayer. I prayed about everything I could think about and looked at my watch and hardly five minutes had passed. However, when I gave conscious effort to making a list, I focused more on praying about my list and didn't worry about the time. I soon discovered that when I have a list of concerns I really wanted to talk to God about and discussed them fully with Him, I was spending a good deal of time in prayer with Him.

If you need help learning to talk with God, ask someone who is experienced at it to help you. You will find it easier talking with God and you will have plenty to say. God is anxious to hear you and you will find the time with Him enjoyable and fulfilling.

Semper Fi in the Lord and I hope to see you in Church on Sunday.