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People as Social and Cultural Beings

Lesson 3 Reading Summary

In this week's reading, Rynkiewich asks the reader to consider the complexities that arise from the development of language and linguistics that today's modern society takes for granted. Although most people subconsciously group verbal language, non-verbal communication, written communication, and other forms of communication, Rynkiewich makes the distinction between the different forms of language and the evolution of communication of ideas throughout the history of man. In doing so, Rynkiewich also gives his readers a brief description of each phase of communication, and this forced me to consider how potent each individual form of communication is in its ability to portray feelings, emotion, tone, and powerful messages. I was reminded of how my facial expression can portray so much independent of the message that my words carry. But additionally, my hands may carry a very different message independent of what my facial expressions or my words are communicating. This is especially important to realize as one who desires to be an effective communicator on public platforms and in private conversation. As a potential, future pastor, how can I use all these aspects of communication to clearly and accurately display the attributes of God to those who I am called to serve. On the other hand, how do I also guard my communication from sending the wrong message to my congregation. Perhaps feelings of anger, frustration, and pain can be communicated to the people even when that is not intended, and this can extremely damage the social and spiritual union amongst the people.

Much of the chapter deals with the evolution of written communication and how a person's thought is transformed into words on a page, and those words are processed and intercepted by another person who has their own preconceived notions and worldview that impacts their immediate context. This section really challenged my belief in God's role in the scriptures. Does he override our human bias and tell us the objective truth as his revelation or does Paul, for example, write to other churches out of his human reaction to their actions?