

## C.A.R.E like Jesus through compassionate listening

Compassionate (love in action)– Accountable (forging unity)– Relational (purposeful living)– Edifying (conforming truth).

In order for us to care well we must first be able to listen well!

Three types of people who have trouble listening:

1. *Clueless* often assumes instead of seeing clearly or listening deeply. Clueless hijacks the conversation and says something like “yeah that happened to me once...I know exactly how you feel” – seriously? Clueless says stuff like: “Oh I’ve got it, enough said...I know just what you need” – but the answer is rarely biblical and usually only makes the problem worse.
2. *Careless* loves to give advice. They speak before understanding. Careless might be well meaning but cuts you off and gives you the 4 steps to parenting or the new book that will help you get romance back in your marriage. Careless can be callous and may start barking Scripture at you before you even know they heard you out or care about you.
3. *Compromising* wants to help but settles for image management. Compromising addresses fruit issues instead of root issues. They are bent on fixing you or practicing biblical behaviorism, which is really just “fruit exchange.” Compromising says things like: “You just need to stop looking at that stuff, you know that’s sin” or “you need to be at church every Sunday and don’t worry, your husband will eventually come around.”<sup>1</sup>

*Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God”. James 1:19*

*“If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame”, “An intelligent heart acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge”, “The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him” Proverbs 18:13, 15, 17*

**To care well, we must seek to listen carefully & compassionately to gain clarity.**

### Obstacles to healthy listening:

- Thinking about the next question
- Distracted/Distractions
- Biased listening
- Interruptions
- Over talking
- Thinking of how this applies to you.
- Assumptions.
- Finishing their sentences.
- Letting our mind wonder on other things.
- Problem solving – wanting to fix the problem.

### Benefits to healthy listening:

- \_\_\_\_\_ patience, concentration, focus, and ability to keep quiet.
- \_\_\_\_\_ respect, compassion, genuine interest, and a willingness to connect and understand.
- \_\_\_\_\_ misunderstandings, confusion, false assumptions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ the situation for clarity so you can care well.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.biblicalcounselingcoalition.org/2012/06/28/listening-by-walking/>

## C.A.R.E like Jesus through compassionate listening

- \_\_\_\_\_ the relationship for both the speaker and listener to be transparent and genuine. We strengthen each other through good listening.

Listen to understand, not to respond. “*Seek first to understand before being understood*” St. Francis of Assisi

### Things to consider when listening:

- Don't interrupt someone when they are speaking.
- Don't finish their sentence, allow them to complete their thought.
- Do you lack patience and just want someone to hurry up when sharing a story? If you feel hurried in a conversation, express that to the person you are listening to with kindness.
- After someone speaks summarize the words back to them to bring clarity.
- Ask questions that demonstrate care and understanding. Not ones that demand answers, are interrogating, intimidating, or reveals you weren't listening.
- Try to provide your undivided attention and express that in your eye contact and body language.
- Observe the body language of the person you are talking to. How are their feelings being expressed in their posture, participation, facial expressions, attentiveness, etc.?
- Be aware of your areas for growth as a listener and have a willingness to make change.
- Examine your heart – do you have a genuine concern for this person and their well-being? What is hindering you from caring well? Is there anything that you have made more important than loving them in that moment? Ask the Lord for help you with this.

### A compassionate listener is listening for: *(this is a full list but a place to start)*

- What is truly going on in this person's life? How is this person struggling in this situation?
- Are they idle, fainthearted, weak?
- Is there sin in their life? We want to be aware of sin, but we aren't sin hunting to shame them, but we are after a gospel response.
- We need to have a 'gospel ear'. Where is this person not understanding the gospel or not understanding how to apply the gospel to their life.
- What are they worshipping right now? How can I stir their affections to Christ?

*Compassionate* seeks to understand and listen deeply. *Compassionate* does not hijack the conversation or cut you off when you are speaking. *Compassionate* is not callous and wants to listen well so when they share biblical encouragement - it is done so wisely, with clarity, love, gentleness, and personally. They might share a book about marriage or parenting, but it is done not to get rid of you but offer additional resources for encouragement, and they plan to follow up with you on it to see how it has helped. *Compassionate* is an active listener that wants to understand how they can help you apply the gospel to your heart and life. There are no selfish motives and listens in a way that will help them to stir your affections to Christ within every conversation.