

Courageous Hearts
“With All My Heart, I Will Love you”
Session Eight
Peace in the Midst of the Storm

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” – Matthew 11:28-30

Luke 6:45, Phil. 4:13

When several people use their flesh patterns at the same time, life can quickly become chaotic and complicated. There are several key things you can do to turn a difficult moment into an opportunity instead.

1. Relax. Instead of attacking the other people or trying to avoid the situation, see this as an opportunity.
2. Pray out loud, “Jesus, make the enemy go away.”
3. Attack the problem or issue and not each other.
4. Ask who, what, when, where, and why type of questions that explore other persons’ feelings. God will help you discover real heart issues in yourself and, perhaps, you will be able to help the other person discover their issues. Remember that your only responsibility is to look into your own heart.

Love listens. It’s that simple. You can care for someone’s heart by just listening. Let them talk about how they feel. You can’t argue with feelings. Those feelings belong to them and to them they are real and justified. Care for them by focusing on their feelings even if their facts are wrong.

If you defend, attack, lecture, fix, blame or correct, they will shut down, lock up and feel unloved. If you do any of those things, it’s because the damage in your heart triggers one of your flesh patterns where you’re reacting “naturally” to what they’re saying. Remember, love draws people close, but flesh patterns push people away which causes isolation.

Caring for someone’s heart requires us to focus on the other person’s needs, not our own. When Jesus hung on the cross, He just cared about all of us and didn’t consider the cost to Himself. He showed us how to love without counting the cost or resenting the cost to ourselves.

Here is how to care for someone’s heart. Don’t think of this as a how-to list but rather ingredients that you will need to care:

1. Ask Jesus to help you care about their heart.
2. Find a quiet and relaxing place to talk. Clear your schedule.
3. Pray out loud asking Jesus to make the enemy go away.
4. If you are discussing a personal problem they have, such as anger, ask if they would like to feel that way for the rest of their lives? Ask for permission to help.
5. Ask heart questions. This is non-confrontational communication.
6. Do not pressure, criticize, correct, lecture or fix anything.
7. Help them feel comfortable. Let them talk. Just listen to what they say.

8. You will make mistakes as you learn to care for someone's heart. Don't worry about it – remember that "Love covers a multitude of sins." Usually someone will feel uncomfortable during these times. Be willing to talk it out or take a break and agree to talk about it after some time out.
9. Forgive often and continue to focus on God for help. If you defend, criticize or attack, it is because of strongholds in your heart. The other person also has strongholds going on in their heart, but you need to deal with your own. You want to deal with them so you can love others out of a healed heart through the help of the Holy Spirit.

Our ability to successfully care about another person's heart greatly depends on the condition of our heart. If damage is in our heart, we will often try to love others in ways that can damage them. Romans 6:11-14.

Courageous Hearts Assignment:

The following two paragraphs reveal fruit from a damaged heart and fruit from the Holy Spirit living in us. Circle any characteristics in the next two paragraphs that you feel are active in your life. This will help you to discover what is in your heart. Also read Gal 5:16-24.

If the Holy Spirit fills my heart, I receive power through his love and am confident and secure. The fruits of His Spirit (evidence that the Spirit reigns in my heart and life) are: I am gentle. I am content. I am caring and compassionate. I am thankful and tender-hearted. I am a servant and am willing to share with others. I am patient, kind, humble, and gracious. Forgiveness flows from me easily and quickly. I find myself being friendly, faithful and encouraging. I am able to honor others, and hardly even notice when they love incorrectly. I maintain a non-judgmental attitude toward others and accept them as they are. I experience self-control and peace. I am righteous because of who Christ is in me. I desire a pure heart and extend mercy to others. I display honesty in my daily life and the Bible says I am radiant. I am filled with joy. I have peace even in the face of death. Most of all, I am able to understand love. I can love others and I can receive their love. Others feel loved by me. When someone is unkind to me, loves me incorrectly, or rejects me out of their anger, I can turn the other cheek and continue to love and care about that person. My desire and passion is to love others and reveal a loving God to the world through the actions in my life. I am willing to humble myself and be open, honest and completely vulnerable to achieve that.

I feel stressed, pressured, fearful, angry, anxious, and jealous. I can gossip and slander without realizing it. I am unforgiving, mean-spirited, hard and unsympathetic. I am dishonest, hard-hearted, selfish, or self-centered. I have little desire or passion to read God's Word. I'm ungrateful, wicked and seek out sin. I'm boastful, proud, or judgmental. I lack self-control, and am disrespectful, unhappy, and negative. I have high expectations of others. I can be critical, confused, bossy, depressed, discontented, and inconsiderate. I need to cast blame on others. I worry all the time. I keep a long list of wrongs done to me. I feel pleasure when others have a difficult time or when they are punished. I'm involved in criminal activity, moral failure, drugs, and self-destructive habits. I have eating disorders. I have a rebellious attitude or an attitude of self assurance. My life is driven by a lot of goals. I am driven to achieve and stay busy. I constantly am seeking entertainment or experience a life of procrastination and laziness. I'm set in my ways, I'm stubborn, I expect others to obey me, and I am not a good listener. Sometimes I appear arrogant and independent. I don't like to think about the needs of others or how I can help them. I don't like to ask for help. I demand and expect respect, and I am quick to tell others how to fix their lives but don't check my own heart because I'm right and don't need fixing. I get upset when things go wrong and when I don't get my own way. I spend a lot of time thinking about what I would like to have or buy. I spend money on things I don't need.

Group Discussion

1. Discuss why listening well is a good way to care about someone's heart?
2. What is the key to loving someone well from your heart (hint: think supernatural)?