

How Do I Help a Hurting Friend?

Opening Question(s) – choose one

1. Have you ever gone through a difficult season and wondered, “Who really cares?” What helped you most during that time?
2. In what ways does our culture struggle to care well for hurting people?

God C.A.R.E.S. and so should we

3. What stood out to you about the example of the early church caring for the poor, sick, and outcasts? Why do you think Christian compassion had such a strong impact on Roman society?
4. Jesus often stopped to notice and **connect** with hurting people (e.g. Luke 7¹³). Why is simply “showing up” so powerful?
5. Why is **active listening** often harder than speaking or giving advice?
6. The Psalmist frequently prays “hear my prayer” (Ps. 4¹) and expresses great relief when the Lord “turned to me and heard my prayer” (Ps. 40¹) Have you ever experienced someone truly listening to you? What made it meaningful?
7. If we listen well, we will often hear a concern expressed that we might feel prompted to **respond** to like Jesus did (e.g. Mark 1⁴⁰⁻⁴²). What practical needs do hurting people often have that we may overlook?

What are some “little big things” that have encouraged or helped you?

8. Hebrews 3¹³ and Ephesians 4²⁹ talk about the importance of **encouraging** others. Why is encouragement so important? What encouragement have you given or received in your life that exemplifies this?
9. When is it helpful to **share** part of your own story with someone who is hurting? When might it not be appropriate or helpful?
10. Why can praying for someone (Eph. 1¹⁵⁻¹⁶), and telling them specifically how you are praying (Eph. 1¹⁷⁻²³), be so meaningful?
11. Which part of C.A.R.E.S. comes most naturally to you? Which is hardest?
12. What is one practical step you could take this week to help a hurting friend?