

LISTEN TO BECOME AWARE

B.L.E.S.S.: Week 3

October 18, 2026

Pastor Brian

TOTAL NEEDS: _____

*"Dear brothers, don't ever forget that it is best to LISTEN MUCH, SPEAK LITTLE..."
(James 1:19, The Living Bible)*

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR LISTENING SKILLS

1. DON'T BE FOOLED BY FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

"Stop judging by outward appearance! Instead, judge correctly." " (John 7:24, GW)

Why First impressions are Often Wrong

- 1) We tend to judge others in terms of our own self-image.
- 2) An impression based on just one contact is unfair.
- 3) Focusing on one trait often blinds us to the complete person.
- 4) In many situations, both people have put their best foot forward.
- 5) Unfair conditions cause unfair impressions.
- 6) We are highly influenced by people's external appearance.
- 7) You may be turned off by non-verbal signals.
- 8) You may be prejudiced by what others have said about that person.
- 9) Impressions are colored by a person's relationships.
- 10) Our expectations are often "set up" by our needs and wants.

"...The Lord doesn't see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." (1 Samuel 16:7, NLT)

2. SILENCE YOUR MOUTH TO OPEN YOUR HEART.

"Do you see people who speak too quickly? There is more hope for a foolish person than for them." (Proverbs 29:20, NCV)

4 FAULTY ASSUMPTIONS

- 1) Words have the same meaning to different people.
- 2) There's only one way to see things.

- 3) Everyone thinks like I do.
- 4) I can detect people's motives.
- 5) I can finish the story.

"It's stupid and embarrassing to give an answer before you listen." (Proverbs 18:13, CEV)

Judge CONTENT, not delivery.

3. LISTEN WITH LOVE.

4 Styles of Listening

- 1) **Advice** – unsolicited advice.
- 2) **Asking for Information** – seeking clarity but disregarding compassion.
- 3) **Critical Response** – disapproval.
- 4) **Empathetic** – non-judgmental.

"Looking at the man, Jesus felt genuine love for him..." (Mark 10:21, NLT)

See also *Blind Bartimaeus* (SG Session 2)

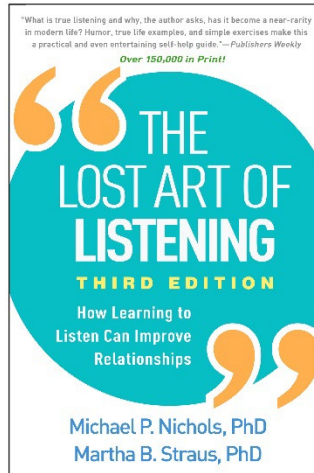
4. DISCOVER THE NEED.

"A person's thoughts are like water in a deep well, but someone with insight can draw them out." (Proverbs 20:5, GNB)

Creative Questions

- Tell me more about that.
- And then what happened?
- Wow! What was that like for you?
- How did that make you feel?
- Interesting. Can you give me an example?
- Really? What else?

The Understanding Test: PARAPHRASE & SUMMARIZE!



The Lost Art of Listening: How Learning to Listen Can Improve Relationships
by Michael P. Nichols and Martha B. Straus

5. RECOGNIZE THAT HEARING BRINGS HEALING.

*“Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.”
(James 5:16a, NLT)*

Healing occurs when people feel valued, loved, and heard.

ACTION STEPS

Volunteer in Kid’s Ministry!