

## **Comparison Blocks Empathy (April 9, 2026)**

“For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.” (2 Cor. 10:12) This is a mistake that is very easy to fall into. And it’s always unwise.

When other people are communicating with us, it is always best to “seek first to understand.” But as we are listening, we will often become aware that the other person is sharing from a very narrow perspective. They are not including all the facts. They are only focusing on their feelings and opinions. And they have forgotten that “there is nothing new under the sun.” (Ecclesiastes 1:9) In those moments, we may want to bring some objectivity into the conversation. But how and when we do, will impact the relationship moving forward.

When we compare someone’s pain with others who have it worse, we must be careful that we do not invalidate the person we are trying to understand. Just because someone else in the world is suffering more than they are, it doesn’t mean that they aren’t suffering at all. The objectivity may offer some perspective, but it doesn’t make the pain go away.

The fact that there are starving children halfway around the world doesn’t make Brussel sprouts taste any better. It is important for us to remember that there are Christians in the world suffering for their faith, but that doesn’t mean I won’t cry when my cat dies. And if someone is sharing a difficulty with us, it’s typically unhelpful and unwise to remind them that others have it worse.