

# The Normal Christian Life - A Good Listener

**A quality that is expected to be found in a true Christian is that of being able to listen.**

**To listen, not just in a perfunctory manner, just waiting for others to pause so we can speak, but listening attentively with the object of hearing and understanding what is being said.**

**We should be able to discern three different kinds of speech, the words the person is uttering, the words they are holding back and the words they cannot utter that lie in the depths of their mind.**

**Our ears must be trained to hear.**

**Unless we are well-disciplined we grow weary of tales people need to pour into our ears, and long before they cease speaking we cease listening and then draw our premature conclusions regarding their trouble, [Proverbs 15:28].**

**Or from the very outset we pay scant attention to what they say to us, because we are so impressed with the importance of what we have to communicate to them that we are just waiting for an opportunity to break in and take up the role of speaker, hoping, of course, that they will prove to be good listeners.**

**In the second place, when anyone needs to talk to us, while they are talking we must seek to discern what they are refraining from uttering.**

**Naturally it is far more difficult to get a clear registration of unspoken words than the spoken ones, but we must learn to listen so attentively that we discern the inaudible as well as the audible.**

When people consult with us about their affairs, it is **not** unusual for them to tell half the story and refrain from divulging the other half.

We must **not** be subjective, for subjectivity is one of the main reasons why people are bad listeners.

**If you have your own conceptions about people you will find it difficult to take in what they say because your mind is already full of your own conclusions.**

**Many believers know nothing about mental discipline, all the waking time their thoughts flow on uninterruptedly.** As a result, when people talk to them they cannot follow what is being said, but can only follow the train of their own thoughts and talk of things that are preoccupying them.

**It is essential that we quieten our minds so we can hear what is being said to us.**

**We must learn to enter into the feelings of others.** Even if you listen to what a person is saying, you will still be unable to understand their need unless you can enter sympathetically into their circumstances.

**If someone comes to you in deep distress and you maintain a bright and breezy manner and are untouched by their grief, you will never arrive at a true diagnosis of their problem.**

If our emotional life has **not** been dealt with by the Creator God, we will **not** reflect the love and compassion that our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ showed when He lived like us as a human being on earth, [Matthew 20:34; Mark 1:41; Luke 7:12-15] **not** share others' grief and we must always remember that all true Christians are servants of our Saviour and Lord Jesus Christ. The apostles of

Jesus Christ introduced themselves as servants of Jesus Christ, [**Romans 1:1; James 1:1; 2 Peter 1:1; Jude 1; Revelation 1:1**] in each case the Greek word used is “*dōulōs*” meaning a bond slave, one who had been purchased by Jesus Christ, [**Acts 20:28**].

**Not only should we serve other human beings but also allow our affections go out to them.**

**If we indulge in our own laughter and tears, in our own likes and dislikes, we will be too preoccupied to give of ourselves freely to others. If we have expended our emotions on ourselves we will have none left to spare for others. Just as our physical body has limited strength, so our emotional powers are not boundless.**

If we exhaust our sympathies in one direction we shall have none to give in another direction.

The fundamental need for every true Christian is to know the cross experimentally otherwise we shall be wrapped up in ourselves and governed by our own thoughts and our own feelings.

**Romans 6:3-4, 6** [New King James] *“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” ... “knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.”*

**The true Christian’s old self-centred life has been crucified with Jesus Christ, resurrected from the grave to a new life that reflects the love and compassion of our Saviour Jesus Christ.**

**1 Peter 3:15-16** [New King James] *“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defence to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed.”*

**We need to have a solid foundation of God’s Word, the Christian Bible, and the ability to teach God’s way of life.**

**But to be an effective servant of our Lord Jesus Christ, we need clear quietness of spirit so that we, with the active presence of the Holy Spirit in us, can sense a person’s true condition beyond their own definitions of it.**

**Psalms 139:1-6** [New King James] *“O LORD, You have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O LORD, You know it altogether. You have hedged me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it.”*

**Only the Creator God has this ability to see in a person’s mind and only the Holy Spirit can lead us to a full understanding of a person’s truthful need, [John 16:13].**

**This is the only way we can understand a person’s needs and be guided by God to provide all the love and compassion they need, that begins with our really listening to what they say.**