



THE COURAGE TO CARE

THE CONVERSATION THAT PROTECTS YOUR GROUP

— “The DNA of love is a willingness to confront.” —

— PAUL DAVID TRIPP



A photograph of two women sitting at a wooden table in a bright, modern office or cafe. The woman on the right, with dark hair and wearing a blue top, is gesturing with her hands while speaking. The woman on the left, with long dark hair and wearing a red top, is seen from the back, listening. A yellow mug sits on the table. The background features a large window with a white lattice pattern, a white brick wall, and a wooden shelf with small potted plants and a framed picture.

The hardest part of leading people is loving them enough to have the conversations we'd rather avoid.



Ignored problems rarely heal they usually deepen.

A group of people are sitting in a circle in a dimly lit room. In the background, a large, dark silhouette of a tree is visible against a lighter, hazy light source. The people are mostly in silhouette, with some faces partially illuminated. The overall mood is contemplative and somber.

The conversations we avoid don't disappear. They disciple our groups.

'Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock -
shepherd the church of God.' - Acts 20:28



A photograph showing two men in silhouette sitting at a wooden table in a dimly lit room. They are facing each other, and the man on the right is gesturing with his hands. A window with four panes is in the background, letting in bright light that creates a strong backlight effect. The scene is dark, with the light from the window illuminating the silhouettes and the table.

**Every healthy LifeGroup eventually
requires a courageous conversation.**



"Raise your hand if you've ever avoided a conversation because you didn't want someone mad at you."



Sometimes the most loving thing a leader can do is have the conversation everyone else is avoiding.

THE FOUR LIES

THAT KEEP LEADERS SILENT



LIE #1

**LOVE KEEPS
THE PEACE**



**Peace isn't always the absence of tension. Sometimes
peace is the presence of truth.**



We've confused being peacemakers with being peacekeepers.



Blessed are the Peacemakers...— Matthew 5:9



Love and comfort are not the same thing.

A top-down view of a person's feet wearing brown sneakers with white laces and white soles. They are standing on a dark asphalt surface. A large, semi-circular area is drawn on the ground with white chalk, and the words "COMFORT ZONE" are written in a semi-circle within this area. The person's feet are positioned just outside the bottom edge of the "COMFORT ZONE" line. In the background, there are some faint, partially visible chalk markings, including a question mark and some numbers.

COMFORT ZONE



Sometimes love creates temporary discomfort so that someone can experience lasting transformation.

“Get behind me Satan...” – Matthew 16:23



Real love tells the truth because real love wants redemption.



"Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy." - Proverbs 27:6



Biblical love is willing to wound today so that God can heal tomorrow.



PEACEKEEPING

PEACEMAKING

Peacekeeping avoids problems. Peacemaking resolves them.

**AVOIDS
PROBLEMS**

**RESOLVES
THEM**

LIE #2

**IF I SAY
SOMETHING...**

THEY'LL LEAVE



A low-angle, close-up shot of a person's legs and feet as they ascend a set of concrete stairs. The person is wearing black leggings and white sneakers with pink accents. The background is a bright, slightly blurred outdoor setting. A black rectangular box with white text is superimposed over the middle of the image.

Fear asks, "What if they leave?" Love asks, "What if they stay?"

"As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore." - John 6:66





You are responsible for your obedience. You are not responsible for their response.



**Healthy groups aren't built because leaders avoid hard conversations.
Healthy groups are built because leaders lovingly have them.**



**NEVER SACRIFICE
THE HEALTH OF THE FLOCK
BECAUSE YOU'RE AFRAID
OF THE REACTION OF ONE SHEEP.**

LIE #3

MAYBE IT'LL

FIX ITSELF





Time doesn't heal what truth never addresses.



"Do not let the sun go down on your anger...and do not give
the devil a foothold – Ephesians 4:26-27



Every stronghold begins as a foothold.





I believe one of the reasons revival tarries is because we've allowed footholds to become strongholds.

The image is a composite of two scenes. The foreground shows a kitchen with a gas stove where a frying pan is on fire. In the background, a living room is visible, with a large fire burning in the fireplace and on the floor. The text is overlaid on a black banner across the middle of the image.

The conversation you avoid today becomes the crisis you manage tomorrow.

LIE #4

**“I DON’T WANT
THEM TO THINK
I’M JUDGING THEM.”**

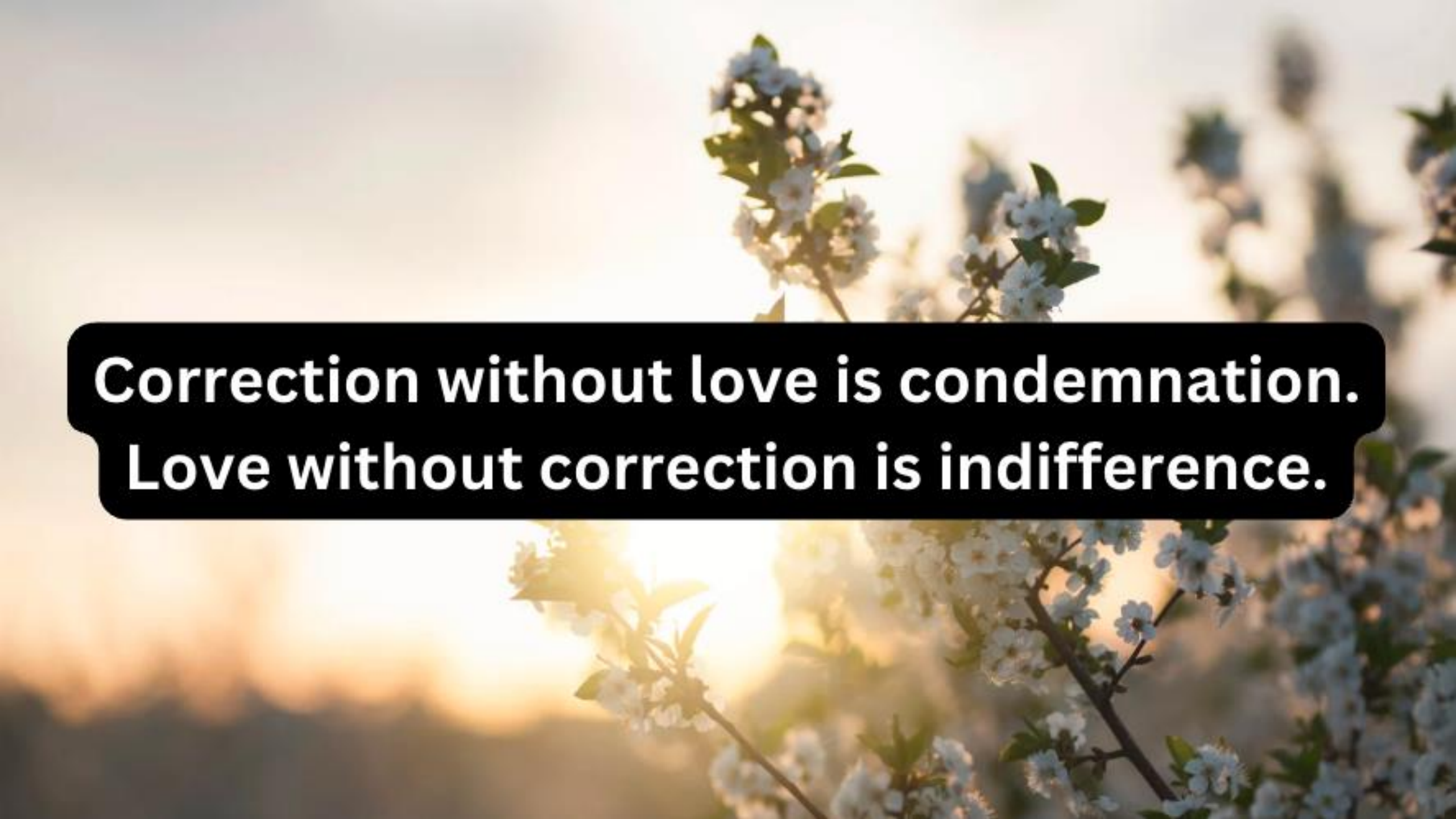


Is it more loving to let someone continue in sin or to lovingly help them see what they can't see on their own?



"Full of grace and truth." – John 1:14

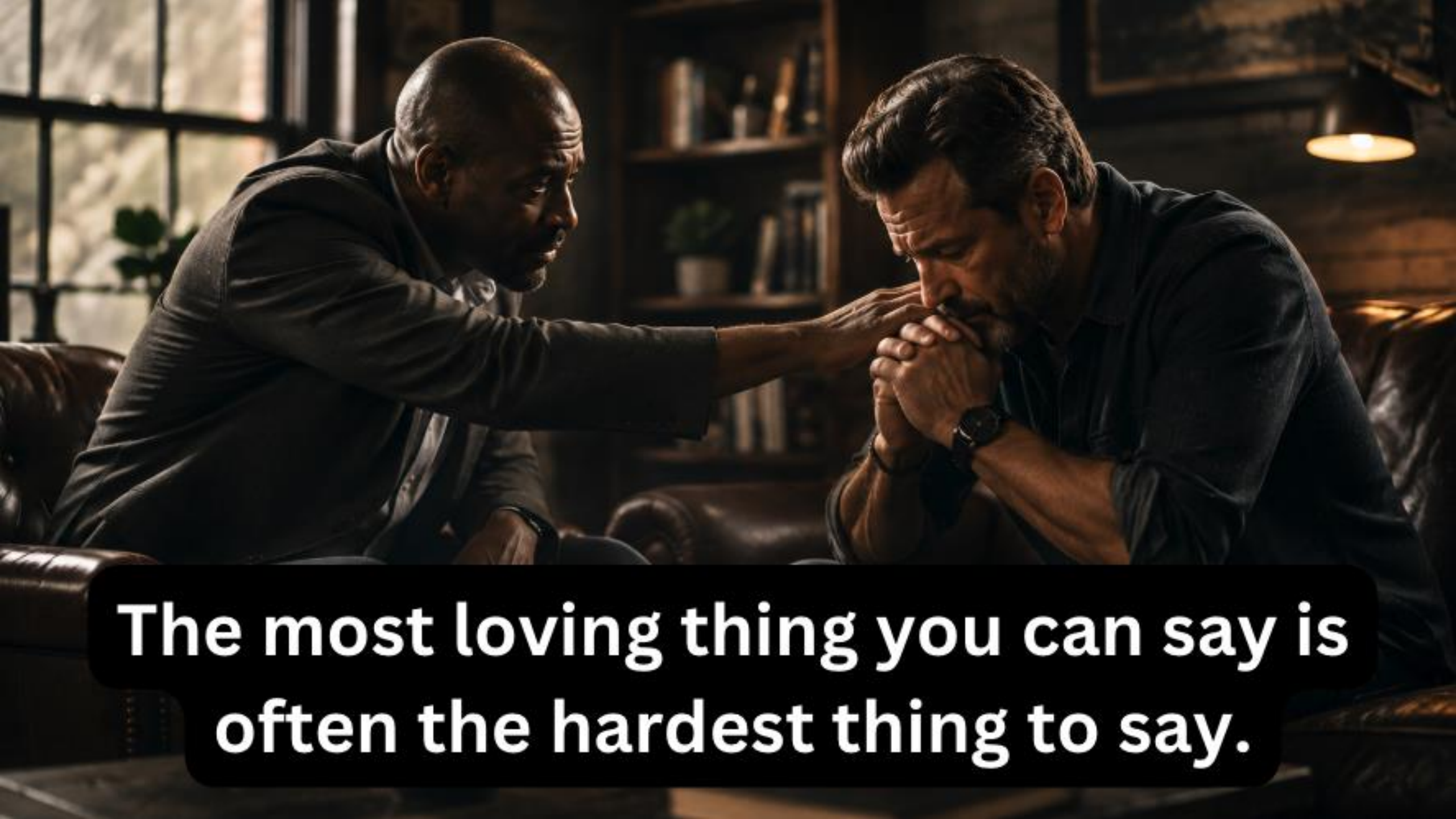




**Correction without love is condemnation.
Love without correction is indifference.**

**Truth without grace crushes people.
Grace without truth changes nothing.**





**The most loving thing you can say is
often the hardest thing to say.**

JESUS' PATTERN

FOR HARD CONVERSATIONS



JESUS' PATTERN

FOR HARD CONVERSATIONS

1. CHECK YOUR HEART BEFORE YOU OPEN YOUR MOUTH

- Pray first.
- Check your motives.
- Assume the best until facts prove otherwise.
- Ask, "Am I trying to restore them or prove I'm right?"
- Never have the conversation while you're emotionally charged.



Never make a permanent decision with temporary emotions.



"Search me, O God, and know my heart."
– Psalm 139



The tone of the conversation is usually determined long before the conversation ever begins.



JESUS' PATTERN

FOR HARD CONVERSATIONS

2. PAUSE TO RESTORE

"Restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness." – Galatians 6:1

Correction is the pathway. Restoration is the destination.

"Quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger." – James 1:19

- Let them **finish**.
- Ask more **questions** than you make statements.
- **Clarify** before correcting.
- Speak **calmly**.
- **Don't** interrupt.
- **Don't** match emotion with emotion.



IF THEY'RE GETTING LOUDER...
YOU SHOULD GET CALMER.



JESUS' PATTERN

FOR HARD CONVERSATIONS

3. SPEAK TRUTH WITH LOVE

"Speaking the truth in love..." – Ephesians 4:15

- Address **behavior** - not identity.
- Use **examples**, not exaggerations.
- Say *"Help me understand..."* before saying *"Here's what I noticed..."*
- Don't attack **motives** you can't see.
- Focus on **one issue**, not ten years of history.

Specific conversations produce specific change.



JESUS' PATTERN

FOR HARD CONVERSATIONS

4. LEAVE THE DOOR OPEN

- End with **prayer** if appropriate.
- Reaffirm your **care** for them.
- Don't **gossip** afterward.
- **Follow up** in a few days.
- Trust **God** with the outcome.



*Your responsibility is obedience.
God's responsibility is the outcome.*



IF YOU REMEMBER NOTHING ELSE TODAY...

REMEMBER THESE FOUR WORDS.



PRAY.

Pray *before*
the conversation.



LISTEN.

Listen *during*
the conversation.



SPEAK.

Speak the
truth in love.



TRUST.

Trust *God*
with the outcome.

“ —————

“I want you to know
before we talk that
I **care** about you,
I'm **for** you, and
the reason I'm
bringing this up is
because our
relationship
matters to me.”

————— ”



“

TRUTH MAY CHANGE
SOMEONE'S BEHAVIOR.

LOVE MAY CHANGE
SOMEONE'S HEART.

BUT **TRUTH** SPOKEN IN **LOVE**
IS HOW **GOD CHANGES BOTH.**

”





Someone in your
LifeGroup needs more
than a comfortable leader.

They need a
faithful one.

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