

As you seek to be a Gospel-motivated voice, here's an acronym that might come in handy as you engage in conversations about life. It's based on the word **CALVARY**. Each letter stands for a step you can take to uphold life.



**Connect** – Life issues are easiest to address when we connect to the person experiencing the life issue. Perhaps this connection is new—like sitting next to someone for a two-hour flight—or perhaps a lifelong friendship exists. Either way, connections are best built on kindness, graciousness, humility, and respect.



**Ask** – It's okay—good even—to ask about a person's views on an issue, how he or she is responding to or experiencing this life issue, or how this issue has affected his or her life. It's important to understand a person's experiences as well as the reason behind his or her views.



**Listen** – After asking a question, listen to the answer. Really listen. What is motivating his or her response? What has shaped his or her view? Is the individual motivated by feelings or logic?



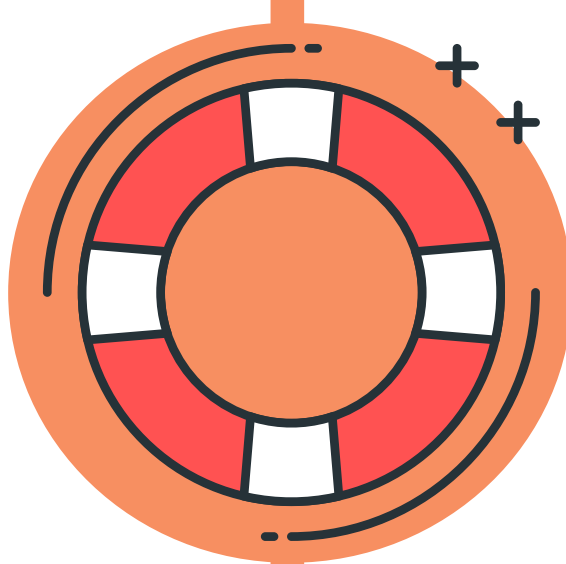
**Verify** – Make sure those listening skills are sharp! Rephrase what you heard and say it back to the person you're speaking to. Be sure your perception of his or her reasoning is correct.



**Affirm** – Agree where you can. Admit that it would be difficult for a woman to raise a child on her own. Affirm that experiencing a terminal diagnosis will mean you need others to care for you. Express empathy for the individual struggling with gender confusion and brokenness.



**Respond** – Here's where all of your work to become educated on life issues comes into play. Use this opportunity to provide a life-affirming alternative to address the life issue at hand. This is where your Gospel-motivated voice shines for life!



**Yoke** – Like two oxen helping to bear the other's burden, your conversation and response should help ease the burden of the individual you're engaging in conversation. How can you help shoulder his or her burden? How can you help affirm his or her life into the future?

# C.A.L.V.A.R.Y. A Life-Affirming Approach