

Sympathetic Ear

Lord's Flock General Assembly Topic

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Some people are better listeners than others. Conversely, others are more interested in talking. When we do not listen, we risk missing important information and damaging relationships. It is important to understand the difference between hearing and listening. A person with a sympathetic ear is genuinely interested in the other person. In our relationship with God, we must get to know Him and communicate with Him. Moreover, if we want to listen to Him, we must know His voice (Jn. 10:4-5, Jn. 10:27).

A. Why do we struggle when we pray? It is important to spend quality time with God. Satan will have many temptations that will distract us. There are many voices that we hear every day:

- 1) The Voice of God (1 Jn. 4)
- 2) The World
- 3) The Voice of the Enemy
- 4) The Self (the most difficult not to listen to)

B. Listening to God's Voice

1. In 1 Sam. 3, Samuel was called by the Lord three times. He did not recognize God's voice. Eli told him how to answer the Lord, *"This is your servant, I am ready to listen."*
2. If we want to hear God, we can hear Him everywhere, anywhere. We must be close to Him to be able to discern His voice (Jm. 4:8).
3. In our quiet time with the Lord, we need to have our Bible, journal and pen, play gentle music, and listen.
4. When God calls us, we better listen (Ps. 121:4). He calls us to do things that may not fit our schedule or agenda; they may not fit our ideas of what should be done. He calls us to do what is right, not what is popular. He calls us to follow spiritual laws, not human laws. He may call any hour.
5. How do we resist the standards of the world?
 - 5.1 We need to spend time listening to God. Learn to stop and ask God (why He is allowing certain things to happen).

- 5.2 God longs for all of us to desire Him. If we are truly listening to Him, we need to obey His commands.
- 5.3 We need to talk to Him in prayers, read the Bible, and listen/learn from other Christians.

C. When we are quiet before God, then He speaks to our hearts. How do we listen better to God?

1. **EXPECTANTLY.** We must come to Him expectantly (Jer. 33:3). Call on Him, then be quiet. Listening time should be longer than talking. Expecting means expressing our faith (Heb. 11:6). He does not speak to someone who always disobeys. We expect action. He expects an action from us, and He will provide.
2. **QUIETLY.** Be still. (Ps. 46:10). Let Him do the talking. He does not need any of our suggestions. Trust Him and obey Him (Ps. 62:8).
3. **OPENLY.** He will teach and guide us, but He will also rebuke, correct, and straighten our ways (2 Tim. 3:16-17). It is important to be open to correction from God. When we come to Him with a mental sifter, we are being selective (Mt. 7:24).

Conclusion:

Today, let us not harden our hearts if we hear His voice (Heb. 3:15). If we fully obey God, His goodness will pursue us (Deut. 28).

Reflection:

1. Are you a good listener? Or are you more into talking?
2. How do you listen to the Lord? Is there a sacred place (at home or work/school) where you communicate with God?
3. How can you do better in listening to God's voice?

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