

## **Are You Listening? (Part 2)**

### **Sermon, June 11, 2017**

Three weeks ago, I started a series about COMMUNICATION. We agreed that the first and most important rule in communication is LISTENING. We heard that often people feel disconnected from each other. They live in the same household, under the same roof, but the moon seems to be closer to them than their partner or their own children. They don't talk, they don't do things together, and they just tolerate each other's presence. The root of this problem is in lack of communication. They don't communicate because they don't know how to communicate anymore.

We all should learn more about LISTENING. Three weeks ago, we had time to focus on only the first three steps we have to follow to maintain healthy communication. These can be summarized as LOOK AND LISTEN:

- The first step we discussed was about EYE CONTACT and the importance of eye contact. The first step in being a good listener is to make eye contact.
- The second step was to be present in a conversation. Do not continue to do your work when somebody is talking to you but pay full attention to the person.
- The third rule was not to give any sign while the person is talking that you want to interrupt him or that you are ready to respond. When you are listening, please listen carefully. Do not interrupt the person who is talking to you.

Today we are talking about the next 2 very important rules and how our Lord implements those in His conversation with us.

#### **4. Pause before you reply. With other words: **Wait Two Seconds to Respond****

During a conversation, it is very important to know and to make sure that the person who talks to you has finished his thought. For this, it is very important to wait at least two seconds after the person finishes speaking. This is especially important when talking on the phone, because we cannot see their facial expression.

Some people often just pause for ONE or TWO SECONDS to gather their thoughts and are not really finished speaking. If you feel eager to jump into that pause just because you want to talk as quickly as possible, it could happen that you will talk at the same time someone else is talking, and then chaos will be created. For this, it is very important to learn to remind ourselves that we have to pause at least for two seconds.

**5. Let Them Go First.** If you start talking at the same time someone else is trying to finish their thought, you have to STOP and say, "I'm sorry, please continue" and let them finish before responding. Let Them Go First. This is the fifth rule in healthy communication. Even if you think that what you have to say is more important or if you would think that you already know the answer on that question which is not finished or presented to you yet, please let the person talk slowly, pay attention to every word that he says and, show him your respect by letting him finish. I certainly notice when people allow me to complete my sentences without "over talking" or interrupting. Do you?

Proverbs 19:20 “Listen to advice and accept instruction, that you may gain wisdom in the future.”

Listening patiently is not an ear problem but a heart problem. Listening is a choice you have to make. We can choose to listen and then act upon that which is heard or we can listen but not really hear. It is a selective hearing loss of sorts.

Proverbs 19:27 warns if we “Cease to hear instruction, my son, and you will stray from the words of knowledge.”

Did you realize today that, often in a conversation, you can catch yourself rehearsing your answers before someone even finishes their thought; and this is because you think that what you have to say is more important than what is on another person’s heart?

The Lord Jesus Christ is inviting you today to be a good listener. If we are listening to the Holy Spirit, He can help me and you today to realize that we are not as good of a listener as God desires us to be. It would be very helpful for your future to be humble, to realize that this is my issue, and this is a very serious issue. God gave you two ears and one mouth. Ask the Lord today, here and NOW to help you, through the Holy Spirit, to become a better and much more engaged listener.

Come to the Lord Jesus, and learn from Him, who is the best listener.

There is no one quicker to listen than He. You never have to snap your fingers to get His attention. When you talk to Him in prayer, He never looks away, as you do when you are bored with others. You never have to repeat yourself several times to make sure He heard what you really said. He never interrupts you. He never spins what you are saying. He never talks over you when you are trying to tell Him something. There is no one who listens as attentively, respectfully, and compassionately as your Lord, Jesus Christ to you.

Indeed, I think that you and I need healing for spiritual deafness and grace for listening, first and foremost to the Lord. He is always speaking, through the Scriptures, and HE only speaks words of life.

I am inviting all of you to include a sentence in all your prayers as often as you can from now on: *“Lord, do not let me be a foolish person who is not listening to You.”*

The Lord wants your ears that you might listen, and He wants your heart that He might give you even more of the riches of His grace. Amen