

Encounter Church
Sunday October 25, 2026

Above the Noise
Learning to Listen

DOES LISTENING REALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Jeremiah 7:24 (NLT)-“But my people would not listen to me. They kept doing whatever they wanted, following the stubborn desires of their evil hearts. They went backward instead of forward.”

Isaiah 28:12 (NLT)- “God has told his people, “Here is a place of rest; let the weary rest here. This is a place of quiet rest.” But they would not listen.

Isaiah 55:2-3(NLT)-“.....Listen to me, and you will eat what is good. You will enjoy the finest food. “Come to me with your ears wide open. Listen, and you will find life....”

God is declaring! God is speaking! God is sending out signals-instructions and guidance-targeted just for you and me!

You are surrounded by the presence of God!

The question then is not, is God speaking? Rather it is this: ***are we listening?***

Job 33:14 (NLT)- “For God speaks again and again, though people do not recognize it.”

Are we listening to what God has to say? If not, then what are we listening to?

We live in a fast paced world where busyness is equated with importance and success. We think because someone is busy that person is important. But that's not the way God sees things.

One of the illnesses that many people struggle with today is Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD).

In Christianity, we have a similar illness called Spiritual Attention Deficit Disorder. The acronym for it is S-A-D-D.

And when we're S.A.D.D. we can't hear God. We're not slowing down to hear God!

Luke 10:38-42 (NLT)- “As Jesus and the disciples continued on their way to Jerusalem, they came to a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. Her sister, Mary, sat at the Lord’s feet, listening to what he taught. But Martha was distracted by the big dinner she was preparing. She came to Jesus and said, “Lord, doesn’t it seem unfair to you that my sister just sits here while I do all the work? Tell her to come and help me.” But the Lord said to her, “My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her.”

There is only one thing to be concerned about and Mary had chosen it-**listening!** She was seated at Jesus feet listening as He taught!

Listening is something we have to make a conscious decision to do in the middle of a busy world.

When was the last time you sat at Jesus feet and just listened? Think about it, when was it?

HOW DO WE BECOME A GREAT LISTENER?

1. We Learn to Listen

Listening to God is really the only way to succeed in life.

God is continually speaking to us but we must slow down, stop and be still and listen. We can’t be so consumed with our lives that we miss the most important thing- Jesus!

Otherwise we ll be like Martha, Jesus can be staring us in the face and we ll still miss Him.

One of the lessons we learn here is that prayer has to more than just talking to God. Prayer is a two way street where we talk to God but we must also listen to Him!

In fact, the way God created our anatomy is a great reminder to us that we should listen twice as much as we should talk. He gave us two ears and only one mouth.

Ecclesiastes 5:1,2 (MSG)- “Watch your step when you enter God’s house. Enter to learn. That’s far better than mindlessly offering a sacrifice, Doing more harm than good. Don’t shoot off your mouth, or speak before you think. Don’t be too quick to tell God what you think he wants to hear. God’s in charge, not you—the less you speak, the better.”

What is this really saying? We should posture ourselves to LISTEN! We should have an attitude of LISTENING!

When was the last time you sat at the feet of Jesus” and just listened? When was the last time you just let your heart dwell on your relationship with God?

How will I be different today because of what Jesus has just said to me?

Psalm 46:10 (MSG)- “Step out of traffic! Take a long, loving look at me, your High God...”

James 1:19 (NLT) “Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.”

If we are going to learn to listen we need to quiet our souls. We need to be still and listen.

The second prerequisite for listening is this (and you need to catch this) , when God speaks you need to obey!

2. Obey

If we only listen and don't obey it defeats the whole purpose. Why should God keep speaking?

We should follow through on our part and complete the process of hearing by obeying!

THEY'RE ONE AND THE SAME! WHEN YOU HEAR HIM SPEAK, YOU AUTOMATICALLY OBEY! ONE CANNOT HAPPEN WITHOUT THE OTHER.

LISTENING =HEARING AND OBEYING

James 1:22-25 (NLT)- “But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.”

Have you ever made this statement to your children: ***You better listen to me!***

You didn't just want your kids to hear you, you wanted them to obey you.

LISTENING IS OBEYING!

In the Hebrew the word for listening includes the word obey!

If God revealed something to me and I didn't obey, why should He keep trying to instruct me? What's the purpose of continuing to reveal things that I never use or heed.

It s so important for us to tune in to God s frequency and hear His voice and then obey!

John 14:21-(NLT) "Those who accept my commandments and obey them are the ones who love me. And because they love me, my Father will love them. And I will love them and reveal myself to each of them."

God is saying that if you will truly listen, not just hear, you will get to know Him.

Listen and Obey! But listening is not just about obeying! And if you don t hear anything else today hear this, listening is also about

3. Belonging

Romans 8:14-17 (NLT)- For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children[a] of God. So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father. For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering."

Listening is Belonging!

John 10:14 (NLT)- "'I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me,"

John 10:27 (NLT)- "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."

CLOSING: One time Mother Theresa was asked why she spent so much time in prayer-whether she was praying for all the orphans or praying for all the request she received from people all over the world?

She replied: ***I spend hours in prayer listening to God and following His counsel.***"

Luke 10:41-42 (NIV) - "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

What is the Holy Spirit saying to you today?

