

Prayer: Study #10

Listening

Thank you for joining me today for “It’s a Good Life.” We’ve been going through a study about “Prayer: Supernatural Contact.” So far, we’ve looked at praise, confession, waiting, Scripture praying, intercession, supplication, personal needs, thanksgiving, singing unto the Lord, and meditation. And today we want to look at a subject that’s very important, and it goes hand in hand with meditation and that’s listening to the Lord.

In Ecclesiastes chapter 5 and verse 2, it says, *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven, and thou upon earth.... and notice these words.... therefore let thy words be few.* At this point in our prayer time with the Lord, our private time with the Lord, we need to be listening.

E.M. Bounds said this about prayer. He said, “Prayer in one phase of this operation is a disinfectant and a preventative. It purifies the air. It destroys the contagion of evil. It is a voice which goes into God’s ear, and it lives as long as God’s ear is open to holy pleas as long as God’s heart is alive to holy things.” And we all know that God’s ear is going to be alive forever. His heart is going to be alive forever to holy things. God is holy. There is nothing sinful about God at all. When we go to God and we talk with the Lord in our private time, it becomes as a disinfectant and a preventive to help us. It purifies the air around us. It destroys the contagion of evil. So, therefore, we need to have a private time with the Lord and we need to listen to Him.

At this point in our private time with the Lord, we are to listen. We are to listen for that still small voice of God, our Father. Listening, although closely related to waiting, number three in our list of steps in prayer with the Lord, closely related to

waiting in our private time with the Lord and meditation, number nine in our private time with the Lord, meditation is not the same. We are to stay tuned for that still small voice.

In I Kings chapter 19 and verse 12, it says, *And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.* Psalm 46:10 says, *Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.*

A good example of someone listening to the Lord is Samuel. Samuel came into this world and was given existence in direct answer to prayer. He was born of a praying mother whose heart was full of earnest desire for a son. And notice that he came into life under prayer surroundings, and his first months in this world were spent in direct contact with a woman who knew how to pray. It was a prayer accompanied by a solemn vow that, if he should be given, he should be lent unto the Lord, according to the Word of God and true to the vow, this praying mother put him directly in touch with the minister of the sanctuary. This would be Eli. And under the influence of the house of prayer. It was no wonder he developed into a man of prayer. We could not have expected otherwise with such a beginning in life and with such early environments as Samuel had. Such surroundings always make impressions upon children and tend to make character and determine destiny. That’s the reason we need to train our children in the way they should go. The Bible tells us that we are to bring up that child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

In I Samuel chapter 3, verses 1 through 10, we see how that God spoke and that, at first, Samuel did not understand who it was. He thought it was Eli

speaking to him at first, but Eli said, “Now, look. This evidently is something that God is trying to tell you.” And in verse 10 of I Samuel 3, the Bible says, *And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.* He was listening. He was listening for the voice of God, and God spoke to him.

Well, what is listening in our prayer time? What is listening? Listening is tuning into God. It's listening for the still small voice of the Lord. Meditation can be defined as pondering thoughts while another definition of listening can be receiving thoughts. And I see this as I study these two words, meditation and listening,....they go hand in hand. We meditate to listen and we listen to meditate. We ponder the thoughts of the meditation of that still small voice that God brings to us that is He speaking to us.

Well, how are we to listen? In Hebrews 10:22, the Bible says, *Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.* We are to listen. We are to have our hearts cleansed. And remember, one of our steps in prayer was confession, number 2. We confess our sins and He's faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. We come to Him with a clean heart, and, of course, we come to Him as a saved individual. We've trusted Jesus as our Savior, and we come to Him with a true heart. In Psalm 36:10, it says, *O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.* Proverbs 14:2 says, *He that walketh in his uprightness feareth the Lord but he that is perverse in his ways despiseth him.*

And on and on, the Scriptures go and it talks about the upright, the true in heart, and those people who have trusted Jesus as their Savior. That's the first thing that we need to do is know Him as our

Savior. And I pray today that you know Christ as your Lord and Savior.

We're also to listen with a full assurance of faith. Romans 14:23 says, *And he that doubteth is damned if he eat because he eateth not of faith for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.* We need to go into our prayer time believing, having faith that God is going to speak to us. In I Timothy 2:8, it says, *I will therefore that men pray every where, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.* Don't doubt God when you go to Him in prayer. Don't doubt Him. Trust Him. Understand that He wants to speak with you. He wants you to listen to what He has for you.

We are also to listen with our heart, sprinkled from an evil conscience, according to I John 1:9. In I John 1:7, it says, *But if we walk in the light, as He is in light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin.*

We are also to listen with our bodies, washed with pure water. That means that we're saved. In Romans 12:1, it talks about presenting our bodies to the Lord. *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.* We are to present our bodies. We are to give ourselves to the Lord. We are to dedicate ourselves to the work of the Lord to Him.

Revelation 22:1 says, *And he showed me a pure river of water of life clear as crystal proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.* We have been washed in the blood of Christ. We are cleansed through His blood. The Bible talks about the water of life. He's given to us the water of life, everlasting life through His blood. The Bible likens it to water, of the cleansing that takes place in our lives, in our souls.

You can also read in connection with this John chapter 4, verses 7 through 14. It talks about the

woman at the well who came to Jesus and he said, *But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.* And you'll remember in John 3:16, how that God said He sent His only begotten Son to give us everlasting life. That's through the Lord.

Well, we also pray and we listen with expectation. John chapter 10, verses 14 through 16, says, *I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep...* This is Jesus speaking and He says...*and am known of mine.* ¹⁵*As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.* ¹⁶*And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*

Verse 27 of chapter 10 of John says, *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.* We need to understand that Jesus wants us to come to the Father in prayer, expecting to hear Him, to expect great things from our Heavenly Father. How do we hear God?

He may recall Scripture to our memory. In II Timothy, chapter 2 and verse 15, it says, *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.* God speaks to us through Scripture, Scripture memory. We need to memorize Scripture. We need to read the Scripture. We need to study the Scripture. God also may simply speak to our heart and bring us peace. It's a peace that passes all understanding. Philippians 4:7 says, *And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.* We are to listen to the Lord. We are to have a private time with the Lord. We can hear the Lord because we now have the mind of Christ according to I Corinthians chapter 2 and verse 16.

Do you know Him today as your Savior? Have you trusted Him as your Savior? Then you too can go to your Heavenly Father and say, "Lord, I'm ready to listen. Speak to my heart. I want to hear You today." If you've never trusted the Lord, may I ask you to bow your head right where you're at and ask Him to come into your heart right now. "Lord Jesus, come into my heart. I know I can't save myself. I want to go to Heaven, Lord, to be with You. Save me today. I'm trusting You."

If you'll pray a prayer something like that, my prayer won't save you, but the prayer that you pray to Jesus, faith believing that He will save you, He will take you to Heaven. And if you've trusted Jesus today as your Savior, or recently, if you'd like some Bible study helps, be sure and go to our website, www.LRWM.org. On that website, you can email us and send a request and I'll be glad to send to you free information as to how you can live the Christian life. The Christian life is the best life that there ever was and there ever will be because it gives us the knowledge of knowing that we're on our way to Heaven.

On the Website, www.LRWM.org, you can also download a transcript of this program and other programs of "It's a Good Life." You can also listen to this program and other programs of "It's a Good Life." On that Website, www.LRWM.org, you'll be able to find Bible study helps that will help you to understand the Bible more and better. You'll be able to present the plan of salvation to others. As you go to the Website, then you'll see a section on there about being born again. You can also write to me, Lewis Woodard, 497 Judith Avenue, Fruitland Park, FL 34731. Whether you write me or go to the Website, be sure and request a free transcript of this program, "It's a Good Life."

Well, it's been good being with you today, and as always, let me invite you to tune in once again when you'll hear me say, "It's a Good Life." May the Lord bless you richly is my prayer.