



Gospel Listening: Paying Attention with Both Ears Open

Pastor Steve / 10.14.2018

“Deep listening is miraculous for both listener and speaker. When someone receives us with open-hearted, non-judging, intensely interested listening, our spirits expand.” - Sue Patton Thoele

When it comes to listening well, we stumble over our own egos.

- We are preoccupied with ourselves. (Romans 12:3)
- We’re thinking more about how to answer than about what the person is saying. (James 1:19)
- We are convinced that what we have to say is most important. (Proverbs 1:5)
- We are easily distracted.
- We don’t really care. (Romans 12:9)

Jesus is the consummate question asker and our best listener!

- Jesus knew that a critical element of teaching is asking questions.
- That’s because we will never add to our knowledge unless we first examine our preconceptions. Questions help take us there.

When conversing with others, we must listen for the redemptive activities that God is already doing.

- *Creation*: Who or what do they credit or blame for who they are today?
- *Fall*: Why are things and people not the way they are supposed to be and who is to blame?

- *Redemption*: Who or what will rescue them and redeem what is broken in their life?
- *Restoration*: What will the world or their circumstance look like when all is as it should be?

We must listen with one ear tuned to our friend and the other tuned to the Holy Spirit.

- “Do not worry beforehand about what to say. Just say whatever is given you at the time, for it is not you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.” Mark 13:11
- The Holy Spirit gives us supernatural insight into our friend’s heart. (1 Corinthians 12:7-8)

Takeaway:

- Take the time this week to listen closely to someone’s story. Ask gently probing questions. Watch for hints of the work that God is already doing in their lives. Pray that the Holy Spirit will give you insight into the person’s heart.