

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

by
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“Listen to me!” -- a command designed to get our attention and prepare us to hear something important! Who gives such a command? Persons in authority, such as parents, teachers, bosses, and commanding officers, etc., sometimes have important words to say to those they lead and so they interrupt our “distractions” to make sure we are listening. They know that if we don’t listen carefully, we will miss an important message, lesson, or instruction.

Do we always listen carefully to those in authority over us? The answer is obvious when we realize that such a command would be unnecessary if we did indeed always listen attentively. So, it shouldn’t be a surprise that God tells us, his oft-distracted and rebellious children, to listen to and heed his words. Why? Because he needs an audience? Of course not! It is always for our own good, because he is a perfect, loving Father! For example, God made a promise to the Israelites in the desert a few days after they crossed the parted Red Sea:

He said, “If you listen carefully to the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to his commands and keep all his decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you.”
[Ex. 15: 26]

[One often wonders what would happen to the cost of health care if we listened carefully to God?]

Sometimes, God speaks through others and makes it clear that we are to listen carefully. For example, Moses told the Israelites:

“The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own brothers. You must listen to him.”
[Dt. 18: 15]

Was this just a hope or a guess on the part of Moses? No, the Lord had spoken directly to him, saying:

“I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him. If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account.”
[Dt. 18: 18-19]

Who was this prophet to come? When preaching to the onlookers who witnessed the healing of the beggar at the temple gate Beautiful, the Apostle Peter referred [Acts 3: 22-23] to this very passage of Scripture, implying that Jesus was in fact this prophet, and indeed, was the awaited Messiah! The first martyr, Stephen, also used [Acts 7: 37] that same passage in his speech before the Sanhedrin to support his claim that Jesus Christ is God’s Son, the Messiah.

In case there is any doubt regarding the authority given Jesus as the Son of God, we have the clear command repeated by the Father when he spoke from a cloud to Peter, James and John on the mountain where Jesus was transfigured:

“This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”
(emphasis added) [Mt. 17: 5]

Since we are clearly commanded to listen to the Lord, we know that it must be possible to hear his voice! Jesus confirmed this when he said,

“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.” [John 10: 27]

The Holy Spirit is our ever-present Counselor and Teacher of truth, as promised by Jesus:

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever -- the Spirit of truth.” [John 14: 16-17]

“But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.” [John 14: 26]

“When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me.” [John 15: 26]

“I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will take from what is mine and make it known to you.” [John 16: 12-15]

There are indeed many ways that we benefit by listening to the Holy Spirit, from personal protection and guidance to wonderful words of knowledge that bring life and healing to others through ministry, as the “touches” below will illustrate.

Listen to the Life-Saver!

If we are born again, Jesus has brought us from death to life in the eternal, spiritual sense and therein lies our peace and security, forever! So, in the most important, eternal sense, Jesus is the Life-Saver! [Indeed, his name in the Hebrew, Yeshua, means “the LORD saves.”] But he also continues to intervene in miraculous ways to spare us from physical death before our appointed time. Many of God’s children have been protected in dangerous circumstances (or heard testimony from someone who has) in ways that were unexplainable except through divine intervention:

For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. [Ps. 91: 11]

This can happen without any direct involvement on our part (and presumably does on a daily basis!), but we need to be obedient to the voice of the Holy Spirit when he does warn us, in order to benefit from the Father’s protection.

An example of this occurred one day when one of the Father’s Touch team leaders was traveling on the Los Angeles freeway system on his way home from out of town. He had been prompted by the Holy Spirit to plan a small detour to visit a close friend of the family who was near death from cancer and was under hospice care in her home. There was an urgency to make sure that she was walking with Jesus and certain of her eternal destination.

As he was driving on the freeway he was also praying for the Lord to give him unhindered access to visit with her, without the other family members present to hinder the sharing of the gospel. Up ahead about a car length in the lane to the right was a big semi truck traveling at the same speed. All of a sudden, he heard a strong inner shout from the Holy Spirit: “Get behind the semi!” Immediately, without even checking his blind spot, he yanked the steering wheel to the right and got right behind the

semi! At that instant, several pieces of metal debris went flying past at head level in the lane he had just left! One small piece actually hit the front left fender and bounced up over the car!

After asking the Lord to protect everyone else, he started praising God for his deliverance from certain injury (or death!), and the rejoicing began in advance for his imminent visit to the elderly lady with cancer. Surely, the Lord had something wonderful in store! Indeed, a few minutes later as he pulled onto her street, a van carrying the family members was leaving in the other direction. Inside, he had unhindered access to visit and help this woman make certain of her relationship with Jesus. (The hospice nurse heard the gospel as well!) The next morning, God took her to her heavenly home and healed her completely!

What if this servant hadn't listened to the Holy Spirit on the freeway?

Stolen Land!

Special messages (“words of knowledge”) from the Lord during times of ministry can at first be a mystery until further investigation reveals why the Holy Spirit has shared certain information. It is very important for the minister to listen carefully for such words, to test them by asking the Holy Spirit if they came from him, and to then ask what to do with this information. Wonderful deliverance happens in many, many cases where, through a word of knowledge, the Lord makes it clear that he is involved, cares deeply for the person receiving ministry, and is providing a key to help them get free from what is plaguing them.

An interesting example of this help from the Holy Spirit occurred as a Father's Touch team was ministering to a lady in need of emotional healing. After dealing with some of the issues in her life, the Lord spoke two words to one of the team members: “Stolen land!” After asking the Holy Spirit what to do with this puzzling message, the member was given a question to ask the woman: “Has anyone ever stolen land from you or your family?” Looking a bit amazed, the woman replied that her family back home in another state had a homestead where she grew up along with other extended family in several adjacent homes on a large parcel of land. After she had grown and moved away, the neighbors behind her parents old home had moved the fence about 10 feet onto the family property, thus effectively “stealing” some land from the homestead!

But, the stolen land turned out to not be the issue of interest at all! As she continued to describe her family and her life as a young girl on the homestead, she began to sob deeply and shared with the team that her uncles across the street had molested her. She had carried unforgiveness and resentment all the intervening years over what they had done to her. So the team led her in forgiving her uncles and she was wonderfully delivered of deep emotional torment!

The Lord had used this particular word of knowledge to show this woman that he was involved in her life, wanted to heal her of this old wound and to set her free from the anger and resentment that had bound her in emotional hardness. Praise God! He used a “key” that didn't look to the team like it even fit the “lock” they were trying to break open! The Lord then went on to help her in other areas as well that evening, but it was much easier with her increased belief that the Lord really cared!

“Get Your Fingers Out of Her Ears!”

We have seen many cases where a physical affliction has a connection with a spiritual assault, and we have become alert to possible correlations between the physical and spiritual condition of the person needing ministry. One of Satan’s favorite hindrances is to deafen ears to God’s voice, because he knows that when God is accurately heard and obeyed, the results are devastating to the kingdom of darkness! Sometimes there is a physical manifestation of hearing loss that accompanies the spiritual “deafness”, as in the following example where the Father healed both physical and spiritual hearing capability simultaneously.

At a conference a few years ago, a woman was sitting next to one of our team members and she happened to comment after the first session in the morning that she was having a hard time understanding the speaker, due in part to his strong British accent, but also due to her partial hearing loss. She explained that she had experienced marked improvement in her hearing three times in the past as a result of prayer, but each time she eventually suffered loss again! This was a strong clue that Satan was continuing to assault her hearing and gaining back ground that he had no right to!

During the next session, the Holy Spirit prompted the team member to pray for this woman, so after the session ended and the crowd was filing out for their lunch break, a few people gathered around to help pray for this woman’s ears. As they began to pray for her in the aisle, she began to hold her ears in obvious pain and the team leader saw an awful sight in the spirit -- skeleton fingers in each of her ears! So, the wicked spirit was commanded to remove his fingers from her ears and the pain immediately left and her hearing was restored, to the glory of God! Then the Lord gave her a word of encouragement that she would be able to hear his “faintest whisper” to her as he gave her words of knowledge for others in need of ministry!

The next day at the conference, she was rejoicing in her ability to hear clearly and praised God for his kindness to her! We heard from her later that she was receiving many words of knowledge during ministry to others in her home church and that many had been encouraged by her testimony! So, the Lord blessed her spiritual ears right along with her physical ears!

Beloved, it is the Father’s will that we hear him clearly! He will help us clear out the “spiritual ear wax” so that we can respond attentively to his command to “listen to him”! So, why not reach for the spiritual “Q-tips” in prayer and begin the sometimes uncomfortable, but always fruitful, process of opening our ears? It’s another way that you, as the apple of his eye, can bless your Father in heaven!