

Supplement to Lesson 7, Workbook 2

Growing in Intimacy with God

Supplemental notes to page 23 - How to have a Quiet Time - Listening to God

Why do we pray Psalm 119:18?

To prepare us to be receptive, teachable, and expectant when we open God's word, that we will hear and learn from Him.

But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

1 John 2:5-6

Meditating on God's word helps to keep us growing in God's love and to walk as Jesus walked.

In Quiet Time Learn to listen

Meditating in our time with God involves listening to what the Spirit is saying through His word, and letting Him teach us, rebuke us, correct us and train us in righteousness. 2 Timothy 3:16-17.

It is natural for us to come into our Quiet Time with fleshly prayers and thinking. We come into prayer and devotion often with our body and soul, our senses and personality. But we need to hear what God is saying to us through our spirit in the heavenly realm.

Reminder:

Body - relates to the physical world, our senses of sight, smell taste, touch, hearing.

Soul - Comprised of the mind and emotions relates to people through our personality

Spirit - The deepest part of us that relates to and communicates with God and will live with Him forever.

As we listen with our spirit, the Word teaches us through the Holy Spirit.

Jon Courson writes:

We may limit our prayers and meditation to the body and soul realm when we want tangible answers to prayer or to feel better after we pray. But God knows what we are truly craving can only be fulfilled in the spirit realm.

Examples:

"My finances are low I need bread." He knows bread will not satisfy our need. He is the bread of life. He wants us to depend on Him. John 6:35

"I need direction." He says "I am the way" John 14: 6

"I need peace." He says, "you will find peace in me" John 16: 33, Isaiah 26:3

What we think we need is rarely that for which we pray. What we need is the Lord himself.

- *Prayer is not to get God's goods it is to enjoy the One who is good.*
- *Prayer is not to get the gifts, it's to have fellowship with the giver.*
- *Prayer is not to claim the promises, it is to embrace the person.*
- *Everything you crave is found in the person of Jesus Christ. You will discover that to be true if you pray and don't faint.*

Prayer grows in proportion to its grounding in God's word. (Ben Jennings, The Arena of Prayer).

Do you come to God with your physical senses, your personality and interpretation of the scripture, or do you come ready to hear through your spirit what the Holy Spirit is saying to you? It is most often through the spirit our prayers are answered.

When we come daily to have our quiet time in prayer, it is important that we learn how to listen with our spiritual ears to hear what the Holy Spirit wants to say and reveal to us through His word.

Throughout the bible, God exhorts and commands and instructs His people to listen, to hear, to be taught by His word and to teach His word. God wants us to know Him, to know His ways, to know His voice.

Teaching was a vitally important component of Jewish faith:

- Moses commanded the people to know and listen to the laws and commandments he taught them that they may live (Deut 4:1).
- They were to learn them (Deut 5:1) and in turn teach them to their children (Deut 11:18-19.)
- The king was to write down his own copy to learn the fear of the Lord. (Deut 17:19).
- David prayed "*teach me your paths*" to learn, and to be transformed by God's direction in his life, a gift promised to the humble (Psalm 25:4,9).

God wants us to hear Him, to meditate on His word and seek Him for transformation, and for guidance:

- Exodus 33:14. ***My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.***
- Isaiah 30:21 ***Your ears will hear a word behind you saying this is the way walk in it***
- Isaiah 45:19 ***I have not spoken in secret...I did not say to the seed of Jacob "Seek Me in vain"***
- Isaiah 48:1, 12, 14, 16-17 ***Hear this...Listen to Me...assemble yourselves and hear! Come near Me and hear this: I have not spoken in secret...I am the Lord who teaches you to profit, who leads you...***
- Psalm 32:8 ***I will instruct you and will teach you in the way you should go. I will guide you with My eye.***
- Psalms 73:24 ***You will guide me with Your counsel, and afterward receive me to glory.***
- Proverbs 4:20-22, 5:1-2, 12-13 ***Pay attention to my words, incline your ear to my sayings,***
- Matthew 13:9 ***He who has ears to hear let him hear...***
- Rev 2:7,11,17,29, 3:6,13,22 ***He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches...***

New Testament example of listening to the Spirit

Acts 16:6-40:

- v6 Spirit forbade them
- v7 Spirit did not permit them
- v10 Spirit called them
- v13-14 divine Appt with women Holy Spirit had prepared. Lydia opened her heart.
- v16-24 Satanic attack, hindering Spirit leads to uproar against them, beatings & prison,
- v25-40 Praise in prison turns the persecution to a miracle and salvations.

Acts 16:7 "They tried to go but the Spirit would not let them".

Why Paul had green lights then red light:

1. Because the timing wasn't right.
2. Because God needed Paul and Barnabas elsewhere.
3. Because God wanted them to be more seasoned before embarking on such a major mission.

God loves us so much He will save us from our own misguided plans if we will take time to know Him and to listen to His voice.

*My sheep **listen** for My voice, I know them, and they follow me.* John 10:27

It's a journey of growth. Sheep not lambs listen for His voice. It's the journey of experience that teaches us to listen - when we stop running, when we flee from the idols, we will learn to hear Him speaking.

*He who has ears to hear, **let him hear!*** Matthew 13:9

***He who has an ear,** let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches* Revelation 2:7

*Son of Man, **look** with your eyes and **hear** with your ears, and **fix your mind** on everything I show you, for you here brought here that I might show them to you.* Ezekiel 40:4

"Often there is nothing as godly as inactivity on our part, or nothing as harmful as restless working, for God has promised to work His sovereign will. "Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted in this situation." (Canadian preacher AB Simpson)

Prayer:

Lord, help me to pray and not faint. Help me to pray in the Spirit. As I open Your word to spend this time with You, open my ears to hear Your voice and my eyes to understand Your word. Help me to fix my mind on You and rise above my flesh. Quieten all other voices and speak to my spirit. Teach me more about You through Your Spirit and truth. Teach me, rebuke me, correct me, change me, and lead me to know you and to walk in the way of Jesus, for Your glory.

Be Still and Know That I AM God Psalm 46:10