

Hebrews 2:1-3 - So we must listen very carefully to the truths we have heard, or we may drift away from them. For since the messages from angels have always proved true and people have always been punished for disobeying them, what makes us think that we can escape if we are indifferent to this great salvation announced by the Lord Jesus himself and passed on to us by those who heard him speak?

How important is it to learn to listen?

Great leaders know how to listen. Listening is a skill that improves based on your decision that you want to be better at it. Listening is not the same as hearing. Listening is an active pursuit of what is heard. God wants you, as his leader, to be a good listener and to think about what you hear. Your brain is constantly making decisions about what you hear and if what you hear is important or not. There are countless truths in the Bible but reading them without taking the time and mental discipline to listen to the words will not give you the insights you need to be an effective leader.

- *Luke 11:28 - He replied, "Yes, but even more blessed are all who hear the Word of God and put it into practice."*
- *Romans 10:17 - Yet faith comes from listening to this Good News—the Good News about Christ.*
- *Malachi 2:2 (NIV) - If you do not listen, and if you do not resolve to honor my name," says the Lord Almighty, "I will send a curse on you, and I will curse your blessings. Yes, I have already cursed them, because you have not resolved to honor me.*

Everyone is surrounded by sounds and noise, but the brain is a great filter for making sense of it all. And, there will always be people in your life and business whose words seem to take a greater significance in your brain. You listen to someone who is considered to be an expert or who you know is reliable. Yet, have you taken that to include spiritual significance? Is there anyone more reliable than God? Jesus Christ gave you a model of great leadership. The Bible gives you the world's best insights to leadership. How then do the "experts" of the world compare?

- *Hebrews 4:12 - For whatever God says to us is full of living power: it is sharper than the sharpest dagger, cutting swift and deep into our innermost thoughts and desires with all their parts, exposing us for what we really are.*

The Bible gives many warnings to anyone who ignores the God's word. As a leader you would be foolish to think that you can reach your potential without God's help and learning to lead his way.

- *Romans 2:8 - But he will terribly punish those who fight against the truth of God and walk in evil ways—God's anger will be poured out upon them.*

The Bible says to "listen very carefully." In other words, you want to pay even closer attention to what God is saying than to other things and other speakers. If you have not already, it is certain that at some point in your life you will say to yourself, "If I had only made a different decision." Well, life is full of the "if only" moments. When you reflect on what transpired before you were wishing that you had made a different decision, it is highly likely that you did not pray or check in with the Holy Spirit. Or, perhaps you were impatient and did not wait for the "go ahead" from the Holy Spirit before you did or said something.

- *John 16:13 - When the Holy Spirit, who is truth, comes, he shall guide you into all truth, for he will not be presenting his own ideas, but will be passing on to you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future.*

Everything about God is centered on his love for you. God wants you to be your best in all things. If God has called you to leadership, then God wants you to be an effective leader. How

can argue against that? The mistakes you made in your past or the ones you will probably make in your future are never based on God abandoning you, but they happen when you are not listening to him.

- *John 8:47 - Anyone whose Father is God listens gladly to the words of God. Since you don't, it proves you aren't his children."*

Listening to the Holy Spirit while you are at work may be one of the more important things you can do as a leader. As you know, life can become very confusing, frustrated, busy, and overwrought. Satan is always going to push you in a wrong direction. You combat that by knowing how to stay tapped into the Holy Spirit. Keep God first.

- *Matthew 6:33 (KJV) - But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*

This is another reason why you should be working, as much as possible, with other believers. Find a couple of believers that truly put Christ first in their lives and ask them for their input or advice. When two or more believers are together, even at work, then the spirit of Christ is there.

- *Matthew 18:20 (NIV) - For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."*

And there will be times when God will change the circumstances simply because you made the decision to seek the advice from other believers instead of relying only on the world. No matter who you are, there will be times when another believer is more in tune with God and they will know what to do. God loves to give you answers for the problems you face.

- *Proverbs 20:18 - Don't go ahead with your plans without the advice of others; don't go to war until they agree.*
- *Proverbs 19:20 - Get all the advice you can and be wise the rest of your life.*

You may speak more than one language. That's great! But God's language is one that you want to know. Listening to someone speak in a language that you do not understand would make it terribly difficult to follow their advice. It's the same with God. While he always speaks in a language you can understand, you may not recognize his voice if you are not accustomed to it. How do you become accustomed to God's voice? Read the Bible. If you don't take that step on a regular basis you will certainly miss much of what God can do for you.

- *Psalms 119:24 - Your laws are both my light and my counselors.*

If you are married to a believer, then learn to listen to your spouse. You may be surprised at how much God will work with the two of you as a team. Your spouse cares for you and when you are distressed about anything they may be the voice that God uses to bring your comfort and direction.

- *1 Peter 3:7b - Remember that you and your wife are partners in receiving God's blessings, and if you don't treat her as you should, your prayers will not get ready answers.*
- *Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 - Two can accomplish more than twice as much as one, for the results can be much better. If one falls, the other pulls him up; but if a man falls when he is alone, he's in trouble. Also, on a cold night, two under the same blanket gain warmth from each other, but how can one be warm alone? And one standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer; three is even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken.*

Listening to God's good advice begins with your attitude. Do you believe that God is for you? You have to answer that question first. When you believe that God is for you, then you will seek his counsel. When God gives you insights, wisdom, knowledge, advice, counseling or a path to follow, then you need to take that counsel and do what the Lord has told you is the right thing to do. You are more than victorious in Christ, but not if you aren't listening.

- *Proverbs 12:15 - A fool thinks he needs no advice, but a wise man listens to others.*

Excerpt from Leading God's Way for Lasting Impact – by Dr. R. A. Weigel

- *Proverbs 11:14 - Without wise leadership, a nation is in trouble; but with good counselors there is safety.*
- *Proverbs 13:10 - Pride leads to arguments; be humble, take advice, and become wise.*
- *Proverbs 19:20 - Get all the advice you can and be wise the rest of your life.*
- *Proverbs 27:9 - The sweet smell of perfume and oils is pleasant, and so is good advice from a friend.*
- *Proverbs 15:31-33 - If you profit from constructive criticism, you will be elected to the wise men's hall of fame. But to reject criticism is to harm yourself and your own best interests. Humility and reverence for the Lord will make you both wise and honored.*

God gave you an ability to listen carefully, but it is a decision you have to make. God's word has everything you need for your life and leadership. The Bible provides clear warnings of what will happen when you don't follow God's advice. Make the choice to listen to God's word and enjoy his salvation and the eternal benefits of keeping him first.