

40 Days of Prayer and Fasting

October 30th

Daily Devotional #30

We Are in the Season of Listening

As We Ask, "What Is GOD Preparing Us/for Us to Do?"

Today marks the final day of our "Season of Listening." It is my hope and prayer that we have all tested this idea of "Listening" and committed to making it a much more regular part of our growing prayer life.

As we "wind up" Listening, let's take a stroll down Daily Devotional Lane (#21-#29) and reflect on what we've learned about Listening...

#21 – from the clouds, GOD told Peter, James and John (and us!), *"This (Jesus) is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased. Listen to HIM!" (Matthew 17:5)*

Listening in the Biblical sense is Listening to understand, learn, adopt, and committing to become that which is being taught. We Listen to GOD by saying to Him, "Teach me, LORD! I commit to become what you teach!"

#22 – Karen's bookmark prayer about Listening and committing to Listen. Here are a few nuggets from that prayer: *Gracious Lord, I am intentionally stilling my physical and mental activity in order to place myself in Your hands... I am forcing my mind to focus on You and Your awesome power and love... I am waiting like a child in full confidence that You, Father, know what is best for me...*

#23 – Lamentations 3:25-26 reads, *The LORD is good to those whose hope is in Him, to the one who seeks Him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.*"

Our challenge is to purposefully still our minds (purposefully fight through the "noises" of life) and wait quietly for the salvation, for the favor of, for direction from the Lord. Let's commit to fighting for this promised blessing.

#24 – Michele shared with us her experience of GOD's responding to her promise of availability. GOD "spoke" to Michele through one of His people, and because Michele was purposefully available (i.e. Listening), she "heard" GOD's call and responded. GOD speaks to us and interacts with us in many ways and at many times. We are deeply blessed when we are ready and available to Him!

#25 – a quick trip back to Day #21 and Matthew 17:5, *"Listen to HIM!"* Even when trying to focus on GOD, we can get tripped up. Jesus, the Word of GOD, is what we need to focus on and pursue. So, as we commit to Listen more, let us be very careful not to get distracted in our quest for Listening to Jesus!

#26 – *"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)*

This is Listening: Devouring, consuming, gobbling up, and knowing the Scriptures so deeply that GOD decides to “partner up” with us (through the Holy Spirit) and more fully teach us, reveal Himself to us, and grow us through that Word we have digested. This is how GOD chooses to transform us for Kingdom Living... by teaching us more fully what we have “efforted” to learn.

#27 – a meditation on Ecclesiastes 5 where we are told, “*Guard your steps when you go to the house of GOD. Go near and **listen** rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools... do not be quick with your mouth... let your words be few... Stand in awe of GOD*”
Sage advice from Solomon. May we engage ourselves in it...

#28 – a study out of “Pilgrim Heart” (Darryl Tippins) of “*the sheer sound of silence*” from 1 Kings 19 when Elijah “met GOD, not in dazzling special effects, but... in the ensuing silence.” This “sheer sound of silence” from GOD is an intimate communication from Him. Its depth of love is hinted at in the whispers of a mother as she comforts her child, and the wordless intimacy shared by the deepest of friends and richest of loves.

#29 – I shared Milton’s, “When I Consider How My Light Is Spent” - a sonnet that has (positively) haunted me for years. Milton, though he went blind as an adult, struggled and wrestled with his worth and purpose for several years. His answer? Standing and waiting on GOD is as high a form of serving GOD as speeding over land and sea to a GOD-assigned task. Listening, is indeed, very, very good.

That brings us to today. Not that we close out our Listening efforts and learnings, but that we purposefully move to a time of Dedication beginning tomorrow. Listening, as well as Gratitude and Cleansing, must first purposefully precede Dedication. And yet, Dedication is seen within and through them as well. So, just as we continue to be Grateful (and more so as we grow in and into Him), and just as we continue Cleansing (purposefully examining our lives and habits in order to be more pure and Holy), we also continue our Listening to GOD and Listening for GOD’s wisdom and direction for our lives and for the life and future purpose of Western Hills.

I like how Ken’s grandpa put it, “God gave you one mouth and two ears. You should use them proportionally.”

Imagine engaging that idea into our prayer lives: talking to GOD some, and then Listening to GOD twice as much. That sounds like an excellent idea. Let’s keep giving this Listening thing real effort. Let’s let GOD speak to us – even in the abiding call of His sheer silence. Let’s give GOD the room to move and grow within us. Let’s say “Yes!” to Him and allow Him to transform us. Let’s be plugged in to Him and do and be what He is creating us to be so that we can do what He is preparing for us to do! (Ephesians 2:10)

