

Week #2 – Just Listen

Last week, we reviewed that one of the basic truths about life is that we were made for relationships—both with God and with each other. As a result, we have great freedom to talk to God about anything and everything. This week, we are going to move to the other side of the relationship: *listening*.

Whether we are talking about relationships between people, or between individuals and God, the fact remains that communication is the defining characteristic of a relationship. For our relationship to be healthy and thriving, there must be both *talking and listening*. But it's one thing to listen to a person who's sitting across the table from us, and quite another to listen to a God that we can't see or touch, and who doesn't make a big habit of talking audibly these days.

We start by getting ourselves out of the center of the picture. Whether we realize it or not, many of us tend to approach prayer like a bad conversation—we have a list of things that we want to say, we run through them and then we're done and off to something else on our to-do list for the day. However, to have actual communication with God, we have to make a conscious effort to do so.

Psalms 46:10. ***“Be still and know that I am God...”*** Letting go of our desire to direct and control everything, and simply resting in the knowledge that God is able to care for what is on our minds and this is our starting point. This is what prayer is about: that we stop the busyness of our lives, the incessant worry of our minds, and our constant appetite for more—and simply recognize the continual presence of a God, who is bigger than all our joys, trials, wins, and losses. We bring our lives to a halt, take ourselves out of the driver's seat, and let God be God.

Thought to Ponder:

What is it about familiarity in relationships that makes us less likely to listen to others?

Prayer Activator:

As you would expect, your challenge this week is to take five minutes every day and simply ***“be still”*** before God. No planning, no talking, no thinking things over in your head—nothing. Clear your mind of your to-do list and many distractions (for example – your mobile device), and simply ***be still and know that He is God***. Maybe five minutes is too much of a stretch, then begin with two minutes. Set a timer, find a quiet spot, and listen.

Hint - If you find your mind “running on ahead” and distracted, then simply make Psalms 46:10 a breath prayer— *“Father I chose to be still... Lord, I know that You are God...”* and continue to recite in your mind for the duration of your time. Do whatever you need to do to clear your brain and to enable you to listen.