

Houston: Learn to listen

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Over and over again, I hear people mentioning their desire of having someone listen to them. Jesus himself listened to the hurt of people and gave his life for them.

James 1:19 tells us to be “quick to listen” and “slow to speak.” I believe the general interpretation of the verse is that we should be more perceptive before we speak or act. For most of us, hearing simply happens. Listening, on the other hand, is more conscious and requires us to be more attentive to interpret what the words and actions of a person mean. By listening, I truly believe we will be more likely to reach out to people with an understanding of what we hear from them.

We first must be completely committed to perceiving the will of God through prayer and reading God’s word. After that, and only after that, we also must be perceptive to people—to what they say and how they feel. We often are told that the world is in a constant push against God. While I believe this is true, I also believe we must consider that Jesus said the harvest is plentiful. So, we Christians should take to heart that we could be guilty of missing people by simply hearing people and not listening to them.

In attempting to listen more, I have been able to have more one-on-one meetings with people who are non-Christians. I truly believe this is because I had to really sit down and start to improve my listening skills, especially when it comes to perceiving the will of God. I initially thought they were good, but the amount of meetings I had with non-Christians proved that untrue. It’s a constant process and one to which we believers always must be attentive.

God could've just let us live in our condemnation, and he would have been completely in his rights. Instead, he listened to our pain, and Christ died for us. I'm so glad that we serve a God who is such a great listener. We must renew our minds every day to be more perceptive listeners. It's not because we owe any person anything; it's because we owe God everything.

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