

Listening To Jesus Conference

Session 5 - Are We Listening?

Welcome to the Listening To Jesus conference.**Aim:** To become a truly prophetic people who hear and obey our extraordinary Lord.

It is time to put what we have learnt into practice

I'm not planning to teach this morning. It is time for us put what we have been learning into practice.

Please look back over the notes from the previous weeks and really pray about the passage and the questions I have asked.

Please be really honest about your answers and in our sharing next week. We all struggle to hear Jesus clearly. We are not here to pretend, or to compare ourselves with others, but to encourage one another and support and love each other. The Pharisees found it so hard to receive Jesus because they pretended to be better than they were. That is why it was the tax collectors and sinners that received Jesus – they were not pretending!

But we also want to raise your expectations and confidence that Jesus really does want to speak to us, and it is worthwhile trying to listen. It grows as we practice and as we encourage one another to make listening a priority in our lives.

What difference has this conference made to you?

"You are worried and upset about many things, but one thing is needed"

What is that "one thing" for you?

What does Jesus want you to do about this?

- In your own devotional life?
- In your own Growth Group?
- In your leadership role?
- In your discipling of others?
- In your church?

"My Sheep Hear My Voice"

Do you expect to hear Jesus speak to you?

- How does He speak?
- When did you last really feel you had heard Jesus speak to you?
- Were you obedient?

Has this conference helped you to listen to Jesus through scripture in a deeper way?

- What have you done as a result?

Has your attitude to being challenged or criticised changed?

A Disrupting Visit

Have you got so much invested in a particular form of church that you cannot risk letting Jesus speak?

What does His announcement in v18 mean for how you conduct your life and ministry?

What is Jesus saying to you now?

Jesus went on His Way

Jesus went on his way to the surrounding villages and towns, but the people returned to their synagogue.

Which way are you going?

What does this mean in practice?

Matters Arising...

Should we spend all our time in "church"?

Morris raised a very important point about people who say that to be a "Mary" means you need to spend all your time in church praying and fasting etc. and that those who are busy in the "world" working for their living are "Martha's". We would completely disagree with this view. We are not meant to withdraw from the world and spend all our time in church. We are meant to go out INTO the world and carry the presence of Jesus with us. For most of us that means ordinary work. For some it may be in "full-time ministry". But all of us can get distracted from what Jesus is saying to us, ESPECIALLY church leaders! We all need to cultivate the practice of listening to Jesus in all we do to make sure we are doing what He wants, and not simply what everyone else expects of us.

How do we teach others to listen to Jesus?

James made the really helpful point that our job is NOT to tell people what they should be doing, or tell them what Jesus is saying to them, but to help them listen to Jesus for themselves so that they are obedient to Him and not just to us. A very good example of this is Phillip with the Ethiopian in Acts 8:30-38. The Ethiopian was reading Isaiah but couldn't understand it. So Phillip helped him to understand it for himself. The result was that the Ethiopian said "Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?" Phillip did not tell the Ethiopian what to do, he saw for himself. That is our task as teachers and disciple-makers; to help people understand what Jesus is saying so that they can hear and respond for themselves. It is NOT for us to tell people what Jesus is saying to them or how they should respond. That is the Holy Spirit's task.