

# Listening To Jesus Conference

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## Listening To Jesus Conference

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

### Session 1 - One Thing is Needful

The last thing I encouraged you to do on our last visit, at our final gathering at Joseph's place, was to dream dreams.

*We are called to do the impossible*

We are all busy people who get things done. That is how God has made us and He has used our "get things done" character to get things done in His Kingdom. But we are called to do the impossible. His dreams are bigger than ours. We are called to be risk takers.

*We need to be obsessed by Jesus*

But to be fruitful in our risky endeavours we need to listen carefully to Jesus. We need to eat and drink Jesus. We need to get away to a lonely place and listen to Jesus. We need to be obsessed by Jesus and not by the things we try to do in His name.

*Our tendency is to make Him safe and acceptable*

Jesus lived according to Kingdom culture and that often clashed with his native culture. That is the essence of living a prophetic life; courageously walking the Kingdom where it is contrary to our native culture. But our tendency is to make Jesus conform to our culture to make Him safe and acceptable.

*We can easily become inoculated against Jesus*

Covid 19 has set the world on an unprecedented search for a vaccine to inoculate us against the virus. Vaccines generally work by presenting to our immune system a cut-down safe version of the virus, so that our body can recognise the virus and trigger its defence system to prevent it doing us harm. Christians face the opposite problem. Through frequent exposure to the Gospels, especially when made safe for public consumption, we can easily become inoculated against Jesus! We can nod in recognition of the familiar stories without letting them infect us. We have defences against the words that challenge the status quo. We can easily end up like the Pharisees in the Gospels, thinking that we are OK; it's the others who need to hear this.

*Listening to Jesus needs to be a high priority in our lives*

So my hope for these conferences is to re-expose us to the dangerous Jesus so that we get thoroughly infected by Him. My dream is that we all become obsessed with Jesus; that listening to Jesus becomes a high priority in our lives; that we become a truly prophetic people who hear and obey our extraordinary Lord.

What is your response to this?

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

Luke 10:38 As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

What is Jesus saying to you through this incident?

*Discipleship is not about doctrine or behaviour. It is teaching people to listen to Jesus.*

The primary need that all of us have is to sit with and listen to Jesus. Discipleship is not about teaching people good doctrine, or good behaviour. It is teaching people to listen to Jesus. Everything else flows naturally from that.

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?

## **Session 2 - Familiarity Breeds Contempt**

*Our calling is to give Jesus to people*

Our calling is to release the Kingdom of God into people's lives and communities; it is to give Jesus to them so that they can respond to Jesus' invitation:

Matt 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Is this how you see your mission?

*We need to "camp" in the Gospels and feed on Jesus*

I cannot listen for you, nor can I make you listen, but I can invite you to sit at Jesus feet with me. If I visit your home you find a seat for me to sit in whilst we talk. I can give you a chair to sit in at Jesus feet. As a shepherd I cannot put the grass in your mouth and make you eat, but I can take you to where the grass is green and invite you to eat. When you find good pasture, you want to stay there and enjoy it. I call this "camping in the scripture". I pitch my tent and stay there, usually for at least a week or two, and often much longer.

So here now is the pasture I want to invite you to camp in with me.

*A clash between Kingdom and native culture*

Luke 4:14-30.

This is a story of Jesus loving the people he loves most – those He grew up with. But it is a very surprising story. This is dangerous Jesus!

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom.

There are only two people mentioned by name in this story. One is Jesus, the other is His father, Joseph. I want you to imagine you are Joseph. And to help you get into character I'm going to do a little imagining. So close your eyes and put yourself into the story.

*Everything looks nice, everyone is happy*

Everyone has come early today to try and get a seat. Look around you. Here are all your friends and family, that you have grown up with and know intimately. This is your synagogue, which your parents helped to build when you were a child. You helped carry the water and mould the mud bricks. You remember the day when the community held the first synagogue service here. You feel secure and at home.

Today there is much excitement because in recent weeks, your first son Jesus has become the talk of the town and all the towns round about. He has become a powerful and popular preacher in the district. He is coming home today and everyone wants to hear all His stories. The Rabbi said it wouldn't be appropriate for Jesus to talk about Himself in the service, so He is just reading the lesson. But we are all staying afterwards to hear His stories.

As the familiar service gets underway your mind wanders back to the last time you saw Jesus, 12 Sabbaths ago. That Friday afternoon as you were clearing up the workshop in preparation for the Sabbath, Jesus cleaned his tools and put them away, then he turned to you, looked you in the eyes and said, "Father. It is finished." You feel again the shiver that went down your spine at these words. You asked Jesus what He meant. He said, "I have completed the work I have to do for you. I must now go and do my *heavenly* Father's work." He left that afternoon for Jerusalem and you haven't seen Him since. Today He has come home. Your attention comes back as Jesus is asked to read.

*They all love the reading*

He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him.

He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. “Isn’t this Joseph’s son?” they asked.

Everyone looks at you, and your heart brims with pride at how one of your sons has become such a renowned and popular preacher. You can’t wait for the service to end so you can hear Jesus tell of all the healings that you have heard about.

There are smiles on everyone’s faces and the service is about to move onto the prayers and the final blessing. But we never get to the prayers. The service ends in utter chaos – worse than that, it ends in a riot! Just as the Rabbi is about to start the prayers, Jesus speaks again.

*Jesus deliberately provokes them*

Jesus said to them, “Surely you will quote this proverb to me: ‘Physician, heal yourself!’ And you will tell me, ‘Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.’ Truly I tell you,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown. I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah’s time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian.”

All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff. But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

You can’t move with shock. You are the only one left sitting in the synagogue, but you see it all through the open door. You are shocked and shaken. You are confused and dismayed. You can hardly believe what has just happened.

*Jesus walks away*

The last thing you see is Jesus walking away from the village. And now here you are; alone, wondering.

## Questions

*What did Joseph think?*

Staying in character as Joseph, what is your reaction to this incident?

What other characters are there that we could imagine being? - an angry member of the congregation, the leading Rabbi, an uncomprehending child, one of

Jesus' disciples, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, God the Father, a passer-by, a sparrow!  
And finally, a 21<sup>st</sup> century reader.

*What do you think?*

As a 21<sup>st</sup> century reader what are your immediate reactions / thoughts / questions about this?

- Why did Jesus provoke them?
- Why did they react so strongly?
- Why did Jesus walk away?

*No prophet is accepted in his hometown*

Let's try to answer some of these questions by thinking about what Jesus said after the people said "Isn't this Joseph's son?" (v22):

Jesus said to them, "Surely you will quote this proverb to me: 'Physician, heal yourself!' And you will tell me, 'Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.'

Although outwardly the entire congregation are enthusiastic about what Jesus said, in their hearts, Jesus knows they are sceptical about the reports they have been hearing from nearby Capernaum. The reason for this is indicated by the next thing Jesus says:

Truly I tell you," he continued, "no prophet is accepted in his hometown."

**What is a prophet?** – Someone whom God has called to bring God's specific revelation to others.

**What does it mean to "accept" a prophet** (what kind of response is God looking for?) – Give special consideration to what they have to say; to listen carefully in the expectation that God wants to say something important to you.

**Why is a prophet not accepted in his hometown?** The congregation see Jesus as a familiar member of their community – someone they grew up with. They do not think of him as anyone special. They are used to discussing ideas as all equally valid, from which they hope to come to some common agreement.

Why was this not a problem at Capernaum?

*Can the Gospel stories become too familiar to impact us?*

**Do you think we can become so familiar with the Gospel stories that we miss what Jesus wants to say to us?**

## Session 3 - We don't like being challenged!

*Aim: To become a truly prophetic people who hear and obey our extraordinary Lord.*

Jesus lived according to Kingdom culture and that often clashed with his native culture. We are called to courageously walk in Kingdom culture where it is contrary to our native culture.

In our first session we reminded ourselves that, like Mary, we must listen to Jesus and not just busy ourselves with many distractions like Martha.

I reminded you that discipleship is not about teaching people good doctrine, or good behaviour. It is teaching people to listen to Jesus.

Last week, in our second session, I reminded you that our mission is to bring people to Jesus so they can find rest for their souls in Him.

And then we looked at Luke 4:14-30 - Jesus visiting his home synagogue after His baptism. We thought about this story from Joseph's point of view.

*What is Jesus saying to you?*

When I read this story a few months ago I felt the Holy Spirit say that He wanted to speak to me through it. At the time I had no idea what He wanted to say to me. I had to stop and listen. I read it many times praying over it, asking Jesus to speak to me. I went for long walks thinking it over and listening to the Holy Spirit. He taught me many things and showed me more about Jesus. I wonder if any of you have that sense of "Yes. Jesus wants to speak to me through this story."

**Does anyone want to share anything about your encounter with this story so far?**

*Imagine you are one of those who drove Jesus away*

This week I want you to think about the story as if you were one of those who drove Jesus away.

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom.

Everyone has come early today to try and get a seat. Look around you. Here are all your friends and family, that you have grown up with and know intimately. This is your synagogue, which your parents helped to build when you were a child. You helped carry the water and mould the mud bricks. You remember the day when the community held the first synagogue service here. You feel secure and at home.

Today there is much excitement because in recent weeks, your school-mate Jesus has become the talk of the town and all the towns round about. He has become a powerful and popular preacher in the district. He is coming home today and everyone wants to hear all His stories. The Rabbi said it wouldn't be appropriate for Jesus to talk about Himself in the service, so He is just reading the lesson. But we are all staying afterwards to hear His stories.

As the familiar service gets underway your mind wanders back to your youth when you and Jesus got up to some fine pranks – you remember the night you secretly got into the Rabbi's house and tied his prayer-tassels into such a terrible knot that he had to go through the service the next day with them all tangled. You got into terrible trouble – not because of the tangles, but because you did it on the Sabbath. You had such a laugh. Your attention comes back as Jesus is asked to read.

*You love the reading*

He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.”

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. “Isn't this Joseph's son?” they asked.

Everyone looks at Joseph, and you feel a certain pride that you were one of Jesus' best childhood friends.

There are smiles on everyone's faces and the service is about to move onto the prayers and the final blessing. But we never get to the prayers. The service ends in utter chaos – worse than that, it ends in a riot! Just as the Rabbi is about to start the prayers, Jesus speaks again.

*Jesus deliberately provokes you*

Jesus said to them, “Surely you will quote this proverb to me: ‘Physician, heal yourself!’ And you will tell me, ‘Do here in your hometown what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.’ Truly I tell you,” he continued, “no prophet is accepted in his hometown. I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. And there were many



in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian.”

You are taken aback at this. For a start, the Rabbi had said that Jesus wasn’t to preach, but only to read the lesson. But what a strange way to carry on. Everyone was happy and smiling until Jesus accused them of being stiff-necked. That’s what the privileged people up in Jerusalem say about us northerners. They are always quoting the prophets at us and telling us how our ancestors filled the land with Baal worshippers. They love telling the stories of Elijah and Elisha, but they never fail to point out that our ancestors rejected their message, and that eventually God sent the Assyrians to make slaves of them. We are stigmatised as stiff-necked people that reject God’s message. And now, here is Jesus, one of our own, quoting Elijah and Elisha at us again! Who does he think he is? Does he think he is better than the rest of us?

*You drive Jesus away*

All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff. But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

You don’t have any idea that God has given your old school friend a message He really wants you to receive; a message to challenge and change you; to bring you into His Kingdom in a new way.

**Imagining yourself to be one of those angry people – what made you so angry?**

**Why did you want to drive Jesus away?**

*Compassion for the angry response*

**How do you respond when you are challenged about what you are doing?**

- Angry
- Irritated
- Defensive
- Listen prayerfully!

We usually challenge-back:

- “Who are you to question what I am doing?”
- “What about this thing in your life?”
- “Why should I listen to you?”
- “What makes you so special that you can challenge me?”
- “If you want me to listen then show me your results.”

**What do you feel when the challenge has been shaken off?**

- I have stood my ground
- I have regained control
- I feel secure again
- I know what I am doing
- This is what people want

**Imagine Jesus walking into your service and challenging what you are doing.**

**What is your response?**

I encourage you to keep reading and meditating on this story and see what Jesus wants to say to you.

Next time we will consider the story from Jesus' perspective.

## **Session 4 - A Disrupting Visit from Jesus**

***Aim:** To become a truly prophetic people who hear and obey our extraordinary Lord.*

Jesus lived according to Kingdom culture and that often clashed with his native culture. We are called to courageously walk in Kingdom culture where it is contrary to our native culture.

In our first session we reminded ourselves that, like Mary, we must listen to Jesus and not just busy ourselves with many distractions like Martha. Likewise discipling others centres on teaching them to listen to, and obey, Jesus. And our mission is to bring people to Jesus so they can find rest for their souls in Him.

We have been looking at Luke 4:14-30 - Jesus visiting his home synagogue after His baptism. We thought about this story from Joseph's point of view and then from the point of view of one of the angry congregation members.

*What is Jesus saying to you?*

**Does anyone want to share anything about your encounter with this story so far?**

**Has this story made you think differently about how you listen to Jesus?**

*Imagine you are Jesus in this story*

This week I want you to think about the story as if you were Jesus.

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him. He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom.

Everyone has come early today to try and get a seat. Look around you. Here are all your friends and family, that you have grown up with and know intimately. As the familiar service gets underway the Holy Spirit starts to speak to you. "These dear people, your friends and family; they do not know the voice of God. They know He used to speak to the prophets, but they have no expectation that God would want to speak to them. They set out years ago to worship me by way of this synagogue service, but for most of them, most of the time, it has become more of a religious duty. It serves well in maintaining the social aspect of the community which I am very glad about. But I have called you to break out of the safety of the congregation and take the Good News of the Kingdom out into the hurting world. So plant the seed of My word into their hearts. And be prepared for a bumpy ride." Your attention comes back as you are asked to read.

*They love the reading*

He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news **to the poor**. He has sent me to proclaim freedom **for the prisoners** and recovery of sight **for the blind**, to set **the oppressed** free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."

All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. "Isn't this Joseph's son?" they asked.

Whilst everyone is smiling and congratulating Joseph on having such a fine son, the Spirit speaks to you again. "They have dismissed the reading as a lovely familiar scripture and have no idea that God is actually announcing its fulfilment. You need to shake them up a bit. Get them to realise you are speaking for Me. Warn them not to dismiss your words simply because you are their friend. Remind them about Elijah and Elisha." So just as the Rabbi is about to start the prayers, you interrupt:

*You deliberately provoke the congregation*

Jesus said to them, "Surely you will quote this proverb to me: 'Physician, heal yourself!' And you will tell me, 'Do here in your hometown

what we have heard that you did in Capernaum.' Truly I tell you," he continued, "no prophet is accepted in his hometown. I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed—only Naaman the Syrian."

All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this.

You see the anger in people's faces and shoot up an arrow prayer, "I don't think they liked that! Instead of making them stop and listen, they are all murmuring and glaring at me." The Spirit answers, "Yes. This happy community need a good shaking to get them to stop thinking about their services and to start thinking about the Kingdom. Many of them have got so much invested in the synagogue that they have not stopped to even consider that I might want to change things. But some will reflect on what has happened today and will seek you out to hear more. But we aren't done yet. I'm going to stir up such an angry outcry that they will not forget this day, and next week's service will be completely taken up with heart-searching about what happened today."

*They drive You away*

They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff. But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

As you walk away you talk to the Father.

**What conversation do you think might have taken place between Jesus and the Father?**

- Father, did I mess that up? Was that what you wanted to happen?
- They have rejected me. What next? – "Over to you, Holy Spirit..."
- Should I go back and try to explain or reason with them?
- Give me the courage to press on. Give them the sight to see the truth.
- They don't know what they are doing. They are rejecting God truth for the lies of their culture.
- Their tradition hardened their hearts.

*Why did Jesus provoke them?*

We need to ask "Why did Jesus deliberately provoke his congregation?" Remember that these were the people He knew and loved the best. We need to look closely at what he read to understand why Jesus provoked them.

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news **to the poor**. He has sent me to proclaim freedom **for the prisoners** and recovery of sight **for the blind**, to set **the oppressed** free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.”

**What is the difference between this announcement and the normal synagogue service?**

- The power and presence of Jesus was not in the normal services.
- The service was to benefit the congregation.
- The poor, the prisoners, the blind and the oppressed were not in the synagogue.
- Jesus was sent to those who didn’t go to church.

**Why do you think Jesus provoked them?**

- They had always had the synagogue services. They never even imagined they should do anything else.
- They had so much invested in the synagogue and the services they were resistant to change.
- They needed to discover, by their angry response, that they were more concerned about their own agenda than what God might want for them.

**How many times do you think you have read this story in your whole life?**

- **How many of those times have you smiled and said, “That’s nice!”**
- **Have you ever thought that Jesus might want to disrupt your life like He did for this synagogue?**

**Have you ever experienced an event that has seriously disrupted your normal church service?**

- Ebola, Covid 19, a storm damaging the building, bulldozers demolishing your church...
- **Did you stop to consider if Jesus had visited you in that event?**
- **What might Jesus be wanting to do or say to you?**

During the next week will you set time aside to pray through all we have been talking about?

- Ask Jesus what He wants to say to you
- What does His announcement in v18 mean for how you conduct your life and ministry?
- What disrupting events have you experienced?

- Is there something Jesus wants to disrupt in your life?
- Is there something Jesus wants to disrupt in your church?
- What are you doing about it?

**Next time...Can we share with each other what we think Jesus is saying to us?**

## **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.