

The 2nd Sunday of Easter ~ Sunday, April 8, 2018

“Hearing God ~ Tuning In”

Luke 8:4-15

When God created the world, He _____ it into existence. And throughout Scripture, God _____ to people in different ways.

God delights in _____ Himself to us and He promises to _____ if we call on. As we read in

“Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.” (Jeremiah 33:3)

When we pray, we engage ourselves in _____ with God; and like every conversation, prayer should be a _____ street. In other words, we have to trust that God not only hears us when we pray and promises to respond, but that He also wants to _____ to us.

We can't have a real relationship unless there's _____—unless you talk and listen. And the more we _____ God, the more we'll _____ His voice.

“My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me.” (John 10:27)

We can get so involved in the affairs of this _____ that we either forget to listen and hear Him; or its difficult to _____ His voice from all the other voices vying for our _____.

Even when we seek God diligently, we sometimes find ourselves struggling to _____. We know that we serve a God who speaks to us, and yet we struggle with the fact that we don't hear as _____ as we'd like. Or we think we've heard God's voice and respond to it, only to find out that we were _____.

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

The seed =

The four soils = different conditions of the human _____—different attitudes—that will determine whether or not we _____ God's message clearly.

It's the _____ of the soil that matters—neither the sower nor the seed can change the soil. Similarly, it's the _____ of our heart that will determine how well we hear God's voice and allow it to _____ fruit in our lives

4 SOILS & 4 PRACTICES TO HELP US TUNE IN TO GOD

#1. Cultivate an open _____.

In other words, we've got to _____ to hear from God—we've got to be eager and _____.

One of the reasons for this is they've never been _____ to the possibility of it; they've never been _____ that this is how God rolls. When we don't believe that God speaks to us—when we have a _____ heart—God isn't going to get through.

“Some seed fell on the path and it was trampled on and the birds of the air came and ate it up...Those along the path are like people who hear and then the devil comes along and takes away the word from their hearts so they cannot believe and be saved.” (Luke 8:5; 12)

Footpaths are _____ because of the constant traffic of people walking on them. And they are _____. As a result, seed sown on the footpath can't _____ the hard ground and take _____.

God wants to speak to us, but He doesn't get a chance because our hearts are hardened—we're _____ to listen; we've made up our mind; we've already _____ what we're going to do, so we don't want to hear from Him.

CAUSES OF A NARROW MIND OR CLOSED HEART

- _____. Anytime we fail to seek God's _____, we're basically saying; “I don't need God. I can handle it on my own.”
- _____. Sometimes we harden ourselves to God's voice because we're afraid of what He might _____.
- _____. When we choose to hold onto life's _____, we can close our hearts to God.

It's what we _____ with that hurt that determines whether we become a _____ person or a _____ person. When we become bitter and hold on to our hurts, it only _____ the pain. Instead of running _____ God, we need to run _____ God. Instead of _____ our hearts and minds to Him, we need to _____ Him our hurts.

Do you struggle with pride, fear, or bitterness?

How open is your heart to God?

#2. Allocate _____ to listen.

We've got to make time to hear God—we've got to _____ down, be quiet, and intentionally put it into our _____.

Do we make time for God or does God just get the _____?

“Other seed fell on shallow soil with rock beneath. This seed began to grow but soon withered and died for lack of moisture...Those on the rock are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe it for a while, but in the time of testing, they fall away.” (Luke 8:6; 13)

This soil represents someone with a _____ heart. We hear God and react _____—we get all excited—but it’s only superficial. We don’t give it time to take _____—to sink into our hearts. And so, when the heat is on or when problems come, it withers and falls away. God speaks, we hear, but we don’t do anything about what we’ve heard—we don’t _____. There’s no change or _____.

If we don’t _____ it down, we’ll _____ it. And if we forget it, we can’t _____ on it. And why would God teach us new things if we haven’t put into _____ what He taught us last week?

How deep are your roots? Do you allocate time to listen to Him?

#3. Eliminate the _____.

A lot of times we miss hearing God because our hearts and minds are filled with other things:

“Other seen fell among the thorns which grew up with it and choked the plants... This seed that fell among the thorns stands or represents those who hear the word but as they go on their way they’re choked by life’s worries, riches, and pleasures.” (Luke 8:7; 14)

This third kind of soil represents a _____,distracted heart. The seed sprouts and grows but it’s _____ by the weeds before it can bear fruit.

God has a _____ and _____ for us in every season of our life; however, we’re not going to figure it out if we’re _____.

This also happens when we’re _____ or overly _____. We can’t confuse _____ with _____.

A weed is anything that distracts us from taking _____ to be with God

- _____
- _____
- _____

When we _____ our time with God—when we neglect getting together with other believers for _____, prayer, or study—weeds will grow up

in our lives and choke the _____ life out of us, causing us to loose our joy, _____, and purpose.

What are the weeds in your life? How well do you eliminate distractions?

#4. Be willing to do what God _____.

Often, we want God to talk to us and then we _____ if we’re going to do what He tells us or not. However, God talks to people who decide in _____ that they’re going to do whatever He tells them to do, when He tells them to do it.

This fourth soil represents a _____ heart.

“The seed on the good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart who hear the word of God and retain it and by persevering produce a good crop.” (Luke 8:15)

Retain = _____ it down; they listen to it; they _____ about it; and go over it. The result is a _____ life.

“Don’t just listen to God’s word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.” (James 1:22)

It’s not enough to _____ to God’s voice if we don’t _____ Him—if we’re not willing to _____ Him by putting into _____ everything He tells us.

“To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God; but to others I speak in parables, so that ‘looking they may not perceive, and listening they may not understand.’” (Luke 8:10)

Just because we’re listening to someone, doesn’t mean we’re hearing them. Hearing is more _____ than listening—it’s _____ on the person and what they’re saying, instead of thinking about something else. It’s seeking to _____ their words and not thinking about what we’re going to say next. It’s _____ into our heart and mind the message that’s being shared and allowing it to have it’s full _____.

Do you hear God or are you just listening?

Are you willing to do what He says?

Our lives are often filled with constant _____, influencing how we think and feel. In the midst of all this, _____ voice is one that we need to hear

God is speaking to us this morning. Are you able to tune in?

Can you hear His voice?