

LEARNING TO LISTEN TO GOD

The Holy Spirit and You #4

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“One day Jesus told a story in the form of a parable to a large crowd that had gathered from many towns to hear him: “A farmer went out to plant his seed. As he scattered it across his field, some seed fell on a footpath, where it was stepped on, and the birds ate it. Other seed fell among rocks. It began to grow, but the plant soon wilted and died for lack of moisture. Other seed fell among thorns that grew up with it and choked out the tender plants. Still other seed fell on fertile soil. This seed grew and produced a crop that was a hundred times as much as had been planted!” When he had said this, he called out, “Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand.” (Luke 8:4–8, NLT)

1. I MUST HAVE AN OPEN MIND TO LISTEN TO GOD.

"The point of an open mind, like having an open mouth, is to close it on something solid." -G. K. Chesterton

“The seeds that fell on the footpath represent those who hear the message, only to have the devil come and take it away from their hearts and prevent them from believing and being saved.” (Luke 8:12, NLT)

“So throw all spoiled virtue and cancerous evil in the garbage. In simple humility, let our gardener, God, landscape you with the Word, making a salvation-garden of your life.” (James 1:21, Message)

2. I MUST TAKE TIME TO LISTEN TO GOD IF I WANT TO GROW.

“Take this simple test: After your next long conversation with someone, estimate what percentage of it you spent talking. Be honest. No, you're already underestimating. How do I know? Because it's more fun to talk than to listen. Talking is like drinking a great Cabernet. Listening is like doing squats ... Listening is like reading a corporate report. Talking is like eating a cinnamon bun.” -Rob Lazebnik

“The seeds on the rocky soil represent those who hear the message and receive it with joy. But since they don’t have deep roots, they believe for a while, then they fall away when they face temptation.” (Luke 8:13, NLT)

“This is not the time to pull away and neglect meeting together, as some have formed the habit of doing, because we need each other! In fact, we should come together even more frequently, eager to encourage and urge each other onward as we anticipate that day dawning.”
(Hebrews 10:25, PT)

3. I MUST REFOCUS MY ATTENTION TO LISTEN TO GOD.

*“Solitude requires you to move past reacting to information created by other people and focus instead on your own thoughts and experiences – wherever you happen to be.” -Cal Newport, *Digital Minimalism: Choosing a Focused Life in a Noisy World**

- 64% of car accidents are caused by distracted driving.
 - The average student can focus on a given task for only 2 minutes.
 - The typical Internet user’s online screen focus lasts for an average of 40 seconds.
 - The average 25 to 34-year-old checks his or her phone 50 times per day.
 - The average 25 to 34-year-old spends 2.5 hours per day on social media, while the average 8 to 18-year-old child spends 9 hours on social media per day.
 - Excessive device usage is leading to decreases in marital and relational satisfaction.
 - Loneliness is an epidemic, with 54% of people saying they always or sometimes feel that no one knows them well.
 - On average, we spend 650 hours per year reading and responding to emails.
 - We touch, swipe and tap our screens an average of 2617 times per day.
- Gabe Lyons*

“Other seed fell among thorns that grew up with it and choked out the tender plants.” (Luke 8:7, NLT)

“And after the earthquake there was a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire there was the sound of a gentle whisper.”
(1 Kings 19:12, NLT)

4. I MUST BE WILLING TO TRUST AND OBEY TO LISTEN TO GOD.

“Purity of heart is to will one thing.” -Soren Kierkegaard

“And the seeds that fell on the good soil represent honest, good-hearted people who hear God’s word, cling to it, and patiently produce a huge harvest.” (Luke 8:15, NLT)

*“Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.”
(Matthew 6:10, KJV 1900)*

GROWTHWORK

1. COMMIT TO A DAILY TIME ALONE WITH GOD.
2. COMMIT TO A SMALL GROUP THIS FALL.
3. COMMIT TO REMOVE DISTRACTIONS THAT ARE CHOKING YOU.
4. COMMIT TO GOD’S WILL BEING DONE IN YOUR LIFE.