



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC How You Hear (Luke 8:18)

SPEAKER Ps Ng Hua Ken

THEME Take Heed

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MESSAGE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This sermon prompts all BTCians to take time to seek God and hear His voice. Ps Hua Ken reminded us that sometimes the problem we face in hearing God lies with us and not God. We need to learn to decipher God's voice from all the distractions and busyness we face in life. In addition, we need to learn to listen well to one another.

ROADMAP TO HEARING GOD

Learning to hear God is a skill that all of us as children of God can develop. We can develop this skill of hearing intentionally when we set our hearts to be attuned and focused on the voice and heartbeat of God through reading His Word and spending time with Him. Ps Hua Ken also reminded us that it is the privilege of every child of God to hear Him personally. God is interested in our lives and wants to guide and speak to us personally through every stage of our lives.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HEARING WELL

To build a strong relationship with God, we need to train our ears to hear Him well. In the eyes of God, learning to listen well is important. The Word of God is compared to a light or candle (Luke 8:16) that is placed in a position where it can be seen. The reason is because the Word of God reveals everything; nothing can be hidden from God. He sent His Word in the form of Jesus as the Light of the World to expose the darkness in our hearts and lives. Secrecy from God is not possible. Eventually, the secrets of our hearts will be brought to light. Ps Hua Ken also highlighted a spiritual principle which is that the more we listen to God's Word, the more we will receive His Word. Conversely, the less we hear, the more we will lose it. Therefore, we must take heed on how we hear so that we will hear God's Word with discernment and be able to apply it in our lives.

HEARING GOD

Young Samuel (1 Sam 3:1-10) in the Old Testament displayed a good posture of hearing God. He was born during a time when the Word of God which was spoken through prophets was rare and the children of Israel were not hearing and obeying God's Word. Hence, they were in

disarray. In 1 Samuel 3, God called out to Samuel in the middle of the night three times and three times Samuel mistook the voice of God for Eli's voice. Eventually, Eli knew that God was speaking to Samuel and taught Samuel how to listen to God's voice.

This incident showed the strong relationship between Eli and Samuel. Samuel was always submissive to the leader whom God had placed in his life, even to the point of personal inconvenience and discomfort i.e. responding in the late of the night. Samuel's relationship with God was also shown through his response to God's voice when he said, "Speak, for your servant hears." He was attentive, ready to take note of God's Word and execute the instructions he received from God. Let us reflect if we have the same attitude as Samuel when we hear God's voice. We need to have humility (Ps 25:9), faith (Heb 11:6), a strong desire for God (Pro 8:17) and a clean heart (Ps 66:18).

LISTENING TO EACH OTHER

Besides listening to God, we must also learn to listen to each other. We are encouraged to be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger (James 1:19). James wrote to the Jewish believers of his time as problems were arising in the Christian community because they were not listening to one another. We are reminded to listen well by following the four steps found below:

1. Listen attentively (Prov 7:24)
2. Listen to understand and accept (Prov 24:3)
3. Ask clarifying questions and draw conclusions
4. Pay attention to the content and not the tone of voice

We need to be aware that there are also barriers to hearing God's voice for our lives. Sin (disobedience to God), pride (thinking we know everything), unbelief (the lack of faith in God's Word) and presumption (preconceived ideas of God) prevent us from listening to God's voice.

CONCLUSION

Listening to God is a personal encounter that will change and transform us. Let us therefore not grow weary in eagerly and seriously seeking to hear His voice and obey all that He will tell us through His Word. We are reminded again that as children of God, we should lay hold of the privilege of listening to God's voice and develop a strong relationship with Him.

QUESTIONS

1. The purpose of hearing God's Word is so that we can obey. The more we hear, the more we receive. We need to listen with discernment and put into practice what we hear or God's Word would be lost to us.

A. Share an occasion where you heard and obeyed the Word of God.

B. What are some barriers which prevent us from hearing God's Word well?

2. Samuel's story about mistaking God's voice for Eli's is a good reminder of the importance of our posture if we want to listen to God. PS Hua Ken pointed out four points – humility, faith, a strong desire and a clean heart. Which of these is God nudging you to grow in?

3. Besides listening to God, we are also encouraged to listen well to each other. Four steps of listening well were suggested. Reflect and share one step in the four steps which you feel that you can improve on.