

Pastor Brian's  
Mid Week Message  
February 24, 2021

**"ARE WE LISTENING"**

*And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!" Luke 9:35*

Prayer is a time of communication and fellowship...communicating and fellowshipping with God through our relationship with Jesus, as He has torn open the curtain that separated us from God's holy presence in His death on Calvary's cross. To do this means spending time in one another's presence, me with the Lord and the Lord with me. I know that God is faithful and at all times is ready and eager to hear from me, but I have to wonder how we're all doing at holding up our end of the line of communication. Right off the bat here I have to confess. I am not a prayer warrior. I know a number of people who truly have that role in the Church through a gift of the Holy Spirit, but it's not one that I have been given, at least not at this point in my life. From the time I was a wee little lad in Sunday School I remember our times of prayer. They were usually very brief. Our prayer leader, teacher, would tell God what we thought of Him, maybe thank Him for sending Jesus, and then tell Him what we wanted. Amen meant that we were on to something else. At home we'd pray the common table prayer (yeah, I grew up Lutheran) before meals, and then say the "Now I lay me down to sleep" at bedtime, and that was our prayer life for the day. Never was I taught, at least from what I remember, that prayer was a two-way street of communication such as we have with everyone else in our lives. We are to intentionally spend time both speaking to and listening to God, not because we have to or are commanded to, but because God invites us to have that ongoing conversation with Him. He invites us into His presence, to come to Him and pour out our heart and soul, and then to stop and take time to quietly listen for His response. From almost the very beginning of the Bible, in Genesis chapter 3 right after Adam and Eve, and all of us who would come after fell into sin, which broke our fellowship with God, God promised to repair and reopen the lines of communication. His plan was to send his Son into the world, to be with us and one of us, in order to atone for all the evil and wrong that we do, and to reconcile us to God through His death and resurrection. All of that has been accomplished. Looking forward to His coming Moses told Isreal that, "*The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me [Moses] from among you, from your fellow Israelites. You must listen to him.*" (Deuteronomy 18:15) God the Father confirms that Jesus is just this prophet, the Ultimate Prophet, as His voice booms from the cloud of glory atop the Mount of Transfiguration. In this age of almost infinite expansion of communication technology the question quickly comes to this, are we listening to Jesus anymore? The devil, our one true enemy, uses the increasing noise of the world to distract us and to try to drown out the voice of God in our lives. We get so busy communicating with others through our phones, tablets and PC's that if we do take time to pray, we're tempted to rush through it because someone might be "liking" our last post on Facebook and we need to know exactly when that happens! Do you want to make Satan really mad? Would you like to frustrate him and fend off his attacks against you? Stand up, sit down, kneel down...assume whatever posture suits the situation...and engage in a conversation with your Savior. The devil has no part in these discussions. He'll make as much noise as he can to distract you, but ask God to give you His Spirit to help tune out that noise. Relationships are formed and grow as we communicate with one another. The same goes for our relationship with Jesus. He graciously listens to us, and then we are to respond in listening to Him and listening to Him is the most worthwhile thing that we can spend time on. I've heard it said a number of times, "God gives us two ears and one mouth, and we should use them proportionally." The truth is God knows what is on our minds, our joys and sorrows, our triumphs and troubles, even before we tell Him about them. Even then He still loves to hear us tell Him. We don't have the benefit of reading God's mind. We need to listen to Him as He speaks through His Word, and then as He speaks by the Spirit to our thoughts and through the words of other Christians. Talk to Him! Listen to Him! A worthwhile endeavor for Lent and all year-round.