

The Hearing Ear - Part 1  
Joseph Herrin (08-05-2012)



Proverbs 20:12

The hearing ear and the seeing eye, Yahweh has made them both.

I have recently shared that Yahweh entrusted me with an abandoned puppy to care for and to raise as my own. Dogs are renowned for their sense of smell. Dogs can detect scents that are undetectable to man. Being the primary sense with which dogs relate to the world around them, it is not surprising that they are born with their sense of smell already functioning, while being both blind and deaf at birth. On average a puppy's eyes will be opened about two weeks after they are born, and their ears will open a week later.

In contrast, humans are born with their eyes and ears already functioning. That does not mean they function perfectly, however. At birth babies see all things in black and white and they can only focus on objects about 8-12 inches away. By the age of four months a baby's vision has developed enough to see things in full color.

The human sense of hearing actually develops before the sense of sight. Perhaps this is due to the darkness inside the womb. There is not a whole lot to view there. However, in the womb there are many sounds, and a baby is able to hear before he is born. The baby has been listening to his mother's heartbeat, and the gurgle of her indoor plumbing. Babies in the womb can hear voices, and many people play music for their pre-born children.

We instinctively recognize the acuity of a newborn baby's sense of hearing. Consider how many times you have heard someone say, "Quiet, or you will wake the baby." We can rouse a puppy with his sense of smell, but newborn babes are startled, or aroused, by their sense of hearing. You can cook cabbage and sauerkraut, or burn the dinner on the stove and the human baby will not notice. However, make a sharp noise and they will be awakened from

a sound sleep.

The natural realm has been designed by our heavenly Father to show us truths about the kingdom of God. All Christians are born with the ability to hear the voice of God. A Christian can also see at birth, but his spiritual vision must grow and develop until he is seeing things as a mature believer.

When Christ spoke of His followers, He specifically made reference to their sense of hearing.

John 10:27

"My sheep *hear* My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me..."

Sheep, like humans, are sound and sight oriented. Their sense of hearing is particularly predominant. I have shared before an illustration I heard years ago that was quite illuminating. A man from a nation where sheep raising is uncommon took a vacation to a locale where it was quite common. One day as he was out for a drive he stopped and got out to admire a pastoral scene. There were hills and lush grass and a small lake before him. As he was admiring the view he saw a shepherd coming down to the water leading a flock of sheep. The shepherd let his sheep drink, and as they were being watered two other shepherds emerged from different places also leading their individual flocks. They all headed down to the water.

The visitor watching this became concerned. He worried that all the sheep would become mixed together into one large flock and he wondered how the shepherds would ever get them separated again. He thought that perhaps the shepherds could tell the sheep apart, even if he could not. Yet, even by identifying their own flocks, this man could only expect it to be a chaotic chore to separate the sheep.

The visitor waited and after the sheep had drank freely he witnessed a marvelous thing. Each one of the shepherds began to walk off in different directions singing as they went. The sheep immediately began to follow the voice of their shepherd. There was no chaos, no confusion. The sheep sorted themselves out quickly as each one followed the voice of their master.

Christ was familiar with shepherding, as were those to whom He spoke. They understood what was indicated when He stated:

John 10:2-5

"But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers."

People of God, it should give us comfort that Christ has declared that those who belong to His flock have the ability to discern His voice. This ability is innate. All who are born of the

Spirit of Christ are able to hear the voice of Yahshua, and to recognize who it is that is speaking. The apostle Paul has written in detail about this ability that belongs to the saints.

I Corinthians 2:11-13

For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may know the things freely given to us by God, which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.

The apostle Paul writes about God's thoughts being conveyed to the saints through spiritual speech and words. Speech and words are things that are heard. Those who belong to Christ have their spiritual sense of hearing active and functioning from the very moment of their Spirit birth.

Christ makes a clear distinction between those who belong to the Father and those who are children of the devil. Yahshua states that those who belong to God the Father hear His voice. Those who belong to the devil cannot hear His voice. They are incapable of doing so.

John 8:43-47

"Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word. You are of your father the devil... He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them, because you are not of God."

It is plain from these words that spiritual hearing is the normal state of those who are God's people. If we belong to Yahweh we should hear His voice and the voice of His Son. This is true of both Jew and Gentile.

John 10:16

"I have other sheep, which are not of this fold (not Jewish); I must bring them also, and *they will hear My voice*; and they will become one flock with one shepherd."

Even as it is the natural state of a human baby to be able to see and hear when they are born, so too is this the proper condition of those who are born of the Spirit of Christ. Nevertheless, we find that there are multitudes that do not hear and who do not see. The saying is true:

Isaiah 42:18-20

Hear, you deaf! And look, you blind, that you may see. Who is blind but My servant, or so deaf as My messenger whom I send? Who is so blind as he that is at peace with Me, or so blind as the servant of Yahweh? You have seen many things, but you do not observe them; Your ears are open, but none hears.

Pay especial attention to the last sentence above. "Your ears are open, but none hears." What this is stating is that there is nothing physically wrong with the sense of hearing, but the people of God are still not receiving the words of Yahweh.

Hearing the voice of God is essential for all who would walk as disciples of Yahshua. Yahweh determined that He would have sons and these sons would live their lives directed and empowered by the indwelling Spirit of Christ. The life of a disciple of Yahshua is a Spirit led life.

Romans 8:14

For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

From the beginning of creation God has been looking for mature sons to come forth after His image, and after His likeness. This thought was expressed in the opening chapter of Genesis.

Genesis 1:26-27

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

We are told that God's original communication with Adam was face to face. In the book of Genesis we read that God came walking in the Garden in the cool of the evening, and that He called out to Adam. Yet God desired a much fuller and intimate form of communication with man. He desired to dwell within man. Man was designed to be a container of the Spirit of God, a temple in which Yahweh's Spirit could dwell.

Adam's communication with God was not unlike the disciples' relationship to Yahshua when He was ministering in bodily form. The disciples walked with Yahshua for three years. They heard His voice and saw His works, yet this was not the ideal relationship between God and man. It was limited in very crucial ways. Yahshua could not be with every disciple at all times. In His earthly body, Yahshua was limited by time and space. But more importantly, in His physical and bodily relationship with the disciples, Yahshua could only relate to them externally. He could not transform them internally. He could not be formed within them. For this reason He spoke the following words:

John 16:5-14

"But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you... I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you."

Yahshua told His disciples that it was to their advantage that He go away in order that the Helper, the Spirit of truth, might be sent to them. The Spirit would dwell within each of them and disclose to them the words of Christ. The Spirit would cause each of them to be born again spiritually, and then the Spirit would brood over this new spiritual man and

labor to bring it to maturity. We have many scriptures that reveal Yahweh's intent that man should be a temple wherein His Spirit should dwell.

I Corinthians 3:16

Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

II Corinthians 6:16

For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people."

Ezekiel 36:27

"I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances."

Romans 8:11

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Yahshua from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Yahshua the Messiah from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

The disciples did not discern how much better it would be for Yahshua to go away. They did not understand the full benefit of the Spirit being given and dwelling within them. It was far better to have the indwelling Spirit of God: the Spirit that never sleeps, that is always present, that would lead them into all truth, that would bring life to their mortal bodies, than it was to have an external Christ that had to relate to man through their flesh.

Many saints today have bought into the false doctrine that says they are to be led by the Scriptures. Those who adopt this view fall into the same errors as the Israelites who were guided by the Law (Torah).

The Law was engraved on stones and recorded by prophets in the numerous books that make up the Old Testament. This caused the Law to be external to man. It had to enter man through his flesh (via his natural senses and the faculties of his Adamic mind). This is problematic, for the flesh is corrupt and wicked and all that passes through it is tainted by the weakness of the flesh.

In contrast, the Spirit of God speaks directly to the inner man, the new creature in Christ, and the communication is pure and undefiled. It is therefore better to have the Spirit dwelling within man and making known to man the mind of the Father, than it is to have an external body of rules that speaks to man's flesh. This is Paul's message in the following verses:

Romans 8:3-4

For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, so that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

From the time of Adam's creation God has desired to dwell within man and to commune with each individual saint. He has yearned for each person to come to Him directly to learn of His ways and His will for them. It was not His desire that men should have some intermediary, such as a priest or prophet, who would declare God's mind to them. Though priests and prophets were ordained for a time, they were to no longer be necessary when mankind should reach maturity. Yahweh has desired to teach each one of His children Himself.

John 6:45

"It is written in the prophets, 'and they shall all be taught of God.'"

I John 2:27

As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him.

Isaiah 30:19-21

O people in Zion, inhabitant in Jerusalem, you will weep no longer. He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you. Although Yahweh has given you bread of privation and water of oppression, He, your Teacher will no longer hide Himself, but your eyes will behold your Teacher. Your ears will hear a word behind you, "This is the way, walk in it," whenever you turn to the right or to the left.

Sadly, Satan has done such a work of obscuring God's design for the saints to be Spirit led that there are groups of believers today that deny that God speaks individually to His sons and daughters. They declare that God quit speaking when the Bible was completely written, and that all that is necessary is to seek the mind and will of God in the pages of scripture. These are blind guides leading the blind. It is a vital necessity that all of God's children should hear the voice of the Spirit within the temple of their body.

Yahshua is the pattern for our own lives as children of God. He was the firstborn among many brethren. His life was a life in the Spirit. He did not begin His ministry until the Spirit descended upon Him, and from that moment forward His life was guided and empowered by the same Spirit. He discerned the mind of the Father by the Spirit. This is also to be our pattern. We are not to be led by the letter of the Law, but by the Spirit that was freely given to us.

II Corinthians 3:6

It is He Who has qualified us, making us to be fit and worthy and sufficient, as ministers and dispensers of a new covenant of salvation through Christ, not ministers of the letter (of legally written code) but of the Spirit; for the code of the Law kills, but the Holy Spirit makes alive.

[Amplified Bible]

We have been given the Spirit so that we might be guided by the Spirit into all truth. The Spirit teaches the saints all things, even the deep things of God. The thoughts of God are made known to the saints by the Spirit. It was in this way that Yahshua performed His

ministry. He was always beholding the Father through the eyes of the Spirit, and He did only those things He saw the Father doing. The very words He spoke were those which the Father gave Him to speak.

John 5:19-20

Therefore Yahshua answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and the Father will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel."

Yahshua demonstrated by His life the way that each of His disciples is also to walk before God. Many saints have noted that Yahshua said, "As the Father has sent Me, so send I you," but they have failed to consider how the Father sent Christ. Did the Father give Yahshua a mandate to go and be the Messiah to humanity, to go and perform miracles and cast out demons and prophesy? No, He did not. The Father determined that Christ should be led of the Spirit in all things. The Son of God was to let the Spirit guide Him into all of His activities and in all of His words.

Some saints mistakenly believe that they are just to go and do the same type of works that Christ did; preach the gospel, cast out demons, heal the sick, make disciples, etc.. They have not discerned that Yahshua did none of these things of His own initiative. He was led of the Spirit in every word, every miracle, every moment of His day. We can see this desire of Yahshua, that all of His disciples be Spirit led, as we look at the scriptures.

John 20:21-22

So Yahshua said to them again, "Peace be with you; *as the Father has sent Me, I also send you.*" And *when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."*

If the disciples did not receive the Holy Spirit, they could not walk as Christ did in this world. For this reason they were strictly commanded to "tarry in Jerusalem until you be endued with power from on high." They had to await the day of Pentecost and the giving of the Spirit. By receiving the Spirit, they were then equipped and empowered to walk in the same manner as their Savior. They would be prepared to walk as Christ walked in this world.

I John 4:17

By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; *because as He is, so also are we in this world.*

Life in Christ is by necessity a life in the Spirit. We are to walk as Yahshua walked, and He was Spirit led from the moment of His baptism at the Jordan River. As soon as the Spirit came upon Him we have these words:

Matthew 3:16-4:1

After being baptized, Yahshua came up immediately from the water; and behold, the

heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." *Then Yahshua was led up by the Spirit* into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

Yahshua could not begin His ministry until He received the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit. As soon as the Spirit came upon Him we see Yahshua being led by the Spirit. This leading continued, and eventually the day would come when the Spirit would lead Him to the cross.

If you have discerned that you too are called to follow in the steps of Christ by living a Spirit directed life, you will understand the vital necessity of hearing God's voice. Without spiritual hearing, how will you ever know the Father's will for you? How will you discover that specific path Yahweh has appointed unto you for your perfecting as a son or daughter?

I want to lay a foundation demonstrating the absolute necessity of Christians hearing the voice of God before advancing on to speak of the causes of spiritual deafness and how to improve one's spiritual hearing. In the next post I will further explain the necessity of hearing the voice of God for yourself if you are to attain to that "perfect" man Yahweh has determined you should arrive at.



The Hearing Ear - Part 2  
Joseph Herrin (08-06-2012)



Proverbs 20:12

The hearing ear and the seeing eye, Yahweh has made them both.

Spiritual hearing is absolutely essential to those who are disciples of Christ. It is impossible to walk as a disciple apart from being led of God's voice. This testimony is seen profusely throughout the New Testament.

John 10:27

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me..."

Romans 8:14

For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

Galatians 5:25

If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

It is significant to note that Paul did not adjure the saints to "walk by the Bible," nor to "walk according to Torah." The most basic premise upon which all Christian life is based is that the saints are indwelt, empowered, and guided by the Spirit of Christ within them.

Philippians 2:13

For it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

From the very beginning of Yahweh calling me into ministry He has stressed this fact. *The only life that is pleasing to Him is a life yielded, submitted, directed, and empowered by His Spirit.* This is a pattern we see in all who are pleasing to the Father.

Yahshua could not begin His ministry until the Holy Spirit came upon Him at His baptism and remained upon Him. From that moment forward Christ was guided by the Spirit in all He said and did.

John 5:19

"Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing..."

As we examine the lives of each of the apostles we find that they embarked upon their ministries in the very same way. They received command from Christ to go and make disciples. However, this work could only begin AFTER Pentecost when the Spirit came upon them.

Luke 24:49

"Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

The Promise spoken of by Christ and His Father was none other than the Holy Spirit who was to indwell mankind. Prior to Pentecost the Spirit had been WITH many men, including the prophets of old, yet He had not yet been given to indwell mankind. Christ was the first to receive the indwelling Spirit. Afterwards, those who were born of the Spirit of Christ became temples of the Holy Spirit as well.

John 14:16-17

"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because *He abides with you and will be in you.*"

These words of Christ were spoken prior to Pentecost. The Spirit was abiding with the disciples. By the power of the Spirit abiding WITH them, Christ had sent out the twelve and the seventy and they were able to cast out demons, heal the sick and perform miracles. Yet they were to experience something far better. The Spirit would indwell them. From their innermost beings would spring up rivers of living water. The very thoughts of God would be revealed in them as they took on substance and became spiritual words communicated to them by the Holy Spirit. Christ's sheep would hear His voice, a voice no longer external to them, but a voice that arose from their innermost being.

Christ and the original twelve apostles were all sent forth in the same way. The Father commissioned them, but they could not begin their ministry until the Spirit came upon them. Later we find that the apostle Paul was also chosen by God to fulfill an apostolic ministry. This same pattern was revealed in His life. All ministry must be initiated by the Spirit and performed in the power of the Spirit.

Acts 13:1-4

Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers: Barnabas, and Simeon who was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. While they were ministering to the Lord and

fasting, *the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."* Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So, *being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus.*

People of God, how different is this experience from that of most ministers today? The majority of men (and women) who enter into ministry pursue it as if it were a career to be chosen at the whim of their own soul. This is presumption, and God will not honor it. One of the prerequisites for ministry is an end of personal initiative. Christ did not come to earth of His own will. The Father initiated His being sent forth.

John 8:42

Yahshua said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for *I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.*"

The twelve apostles did not proceed forth on their own initiative. They were sent by Christ. Paul and Barnabas did not choose to enter into ministry of their own initiative. They too went forth only as the Spirit commanded them to do so.

Many today have adopted the Bible as a substitute for the Spirit. The Bible did not send Christ forth. It was not the Torah that initiated the ministry of the original twelve apostles. It was not the Scriptures that sent forth Paul and Barnabas. In every instance it was the Spirit of God who was the initiator. Each one heard the voice of God and obeyed the heavenly command.

Lest one argue that this is a pattern for apostles or ministers only, I urge you to go back and read the Scriptures already cited in these posts. Christ and the apostles were speaking to all who would be disciples. "All those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God." "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit." "My sheep hear My voice and they follow Me." The life of a disciple of Christ is a life lived in the Spirit, guided by the Spirit, empowered by the Spirit.

The second book the Spirit of Christ directed me to write, and one that I consider the most foundational, is titled *Sabbath*. This book, written over a decade ago, reveals the spiritual substance of all of the types and shadows of Sabbath rest in the Old Testament. Paul summed up the substance of Sabbath rest for the Christian when he wrote the following words:

Hebrews 4:9-10

So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For *the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works*, as God did from His.

On the Sabbath Yahweh ceased working, for all of His works were complete. We are also called to cease from OUR WORKS. We are to do nothing of our own initiative. The Christian is called to cease being led by their own soul and enter into a Spirit directed life. ONLY then can they cease from striving and enter into rest.

This is such a critical matter that Paul said, "Let us FEAR lest, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it" (Hebrews 4:1). One unavoidable truth becomes evident when the Christian discerns the call to cease their own works. They MUST be able to hear God's voice, and they MUST be able to discern the difference from the counsel that arises from their own soul and that which arises from the Spirit of Christ within them.

Understanding the vital need to divide between soul and spirit in order to enter into the substance of Sabbath rest, the apostle Paul concluded his treatise on this subject with the following words.

Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and *piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit*, of both joints and marrow, and *able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart*.

Are you able to discern where your thoughts arise from? Is it your own soul, or the Spirit of Christ that is leading you to pursue a particular career? Is it your soul, or the Spirit that initiated the decision to purchase the home you live in, the car you drive, the clothes you wear, the food you eat? Was it your soul, or the Spirit of Christ that led you to marry the man or woman who is your spouse, to engage in the hobbies or leisure activities that fill your life?

As we go through our lives there are a million decisions we have to make. We will either yield to the will and desire of our own soul, or the will of the Spirit of Christ in all that we say and do. To be led of the soul is the broad path that ends in destruction. "There is a way that seems right unto a man, but the end thereof is death." To be led of the Spirit is the narrow and afflicted path, "and few there be that find it."

I ask you, "How can you know the path of life apart from hearing God's voice? How can you discover the specific walk Yahweh has determined for you unless you are hearing from His Spirit?"

Now we begin to see why so many Christians are dull of hearing. To hear God's voice is to know His will. When Yahweh's will is known the saint must decide to obey, or disobey. The will of God will ALWAYS lead the disciple of Christ to an afflicted path. To hear God's voice is to be led into suffering. Christ gave, and continues to give, only one invitation. "Come, take up your cross, and follow Me."

If you are led by the voice of God, you may hear Christ speak to you as He did to the young man who had much property.

Mark 10:21-22

"One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." But at these words he was saddened, and he went away grieving, for he was one who owned much property.

Have you counted the cost of discipleship and accepted it? Are you willing to give up home, and lands, and possessions, your job, and even your family in order to follow Christ and do His will? Yahshua said the cost is exceedingly high for all who would walk as He walked, becoming His disciples.

Luke 14:33

“So then, none of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his possessions.”

Luke 14:26-27

“If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”

The apostles continued to speak forth this same message.

I Peter 2:21

For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps...

If you and I are to follow “in His steps” we must yield our lives wholly to be guided by the Father into those experiences He has chosen for us. I speak from experience when I say that it is a fearful thing to yield one’s life to the Father. If we say “Father, I will go wherever You direct me, and do whatever You ask me to do,” then the Father may literally ask us to go anywhere and do anything. There are many things our souls do not wish to do. There are many experiences from which our flesh recoils.

For many years I hesitated to embrace the cost of discipleship. I crept up to Christ cautiously. I would ask Him to guide me in decisions that I carefully framed so that nothing too painful or unpleasant would be required of me. My own soul set the criteria. My mind determined how much would be offered to God, and what would be held back. Never did I give the Spirit carte blanche by surrendering myself wholly to the Father’s guidance. Not surprisingly, I did not hear God’s voice very much in those days. Neither will your spiritual sense of hearing function properly as long as you have come short of a complete surrender of your life to Christ.

It is one thing to ask Christ whether you should own a particular house, or rent; whether you should attend a specific university, or work at a trade. It is something altogether different to say, “My life is not my own. You have bought me with a great price. What do you want me to do? Where do you want me to live?”

If you are not willing to hear anything and everything God would speak to you, you will cause yourself to be spiritually deaf to His voice. We will refuse to have those conversations with God that He desires to have.

Most people who are reading my blog have been raised in spiritual Babylon. Yahweh knows that the churches and her ministers in this hour have led His sheep astray. He is patient and merciful, yet He will not diminish the cost of being a disciple of His Son. There is a cross for

you and I to bear. Christ said “no man can be My disciple unless he hates... even his own life.” God will lead us where we would not choose to go ourselves. He will direct us to speak and to act in ways that our soul would not choose.

I believe the chief cause of spiritual deafness among saints is that they have not begun their Christian life by counting the cost of fully yielding their lives to Christ. Failing to begin at this point, the saints have never made the commitment to lay down their lives and take up whatever life Christ would choose for them. It logically follows that those who have not surrendered to follow Christ down an afflicted path will not hear His voice when He would speak to them of that path appointed for them for their perfecting as sons and daughters.

If you would have your spiritual hearing fully opened, you must be willing to hear anything and everything Christ would speak to you. Are you willing? I challenge you to test this matter. Examine your heart. Ask God to reveal if you are holding back in any area.

I know the response my words will be met with, for I know my own shrinking heart. Fear will raise its terrible head, and the passions and desires of the flesh will also make their objections known. Let me comfort you with this truth. Having surrendered to follow Christ wherever He would lead me back in 1999 I have since found that He is very tender and compassionate toward our weaknesses. He will surely make us face the giants that we dread, but He will lead us with wisdom and grace. He will take us through the smaller skirmishes before He leads us to engage in greater combat. He will equip us and fit us for the things He wishes us to do. He will never leave you or I to our own strength, wisdom, or devices. He fully intends to supply everything you will need to walk that path He has appointed to you.

Satan would make the surrender of your life to Christ to appear more dreadful than it actually is. Remember, you are surrendering your life to One who loves you with a perfect love. Yahshua will never choose any course for you that will lead to eternal harm or loss. All is chosen and appointed for the welfare of the sons of God. He has also promised to never leave us or forsake us. I can attest to this truth. In all the afflictions I have passed through, Yahshua has walked through every one of them with me. I have known His precious fellowship in the midst of my suffering.

Let me end this post with a parable. How well would your natural hearing be if you had a fold of flesh that had grown over your ears completely covering them? Everything would be muffled and muted. In the same way, it is the flesh that stands in the way of the Christian's spiritual hearing. We must settle the matter by committing to the crucifixion of our flesh if we are to have our ears opened. As long as there are things that our flesh is preventing us from receiving from the Father, we will remain diminished in our capacity to hear His voice. Make up your mind that you will accept all that the Father may speak to you, choosing to obey before He even discloses what His will is, and you will find that your ears will be opened.

May you be blessed with peace and understanding in these days.

The Hearing Ear - Part 3  
Joseph Herrin (08-07-2012)



Proverbs 20:12

The hearing ear and the seeing eye, Yahweh has made them both.

That there are so many Christians who do not hear the voice of God today reveals that there are fundamental problems among the body of Christ. One has to go back to the root and address the foundational issues that have led to an absence of spiritual hearing rather than trying to treat symptoms.

As the last post in this series pointed out, a great many believers today have skipped over Christ's admonition to count the cost of discipleship before they began self-identifying themselves as His followers. To many people today Christianity means little more than receiving forgiveness for their sins and gaining some assurance that they will go to heaven, rather than hell, when they die. Their main responsibility in their relationship to God is maintaining a confession of belief in Jesus/Yahshua as their Savior, the One who paid the penalty for their sins. Beyond this they usually adopt some moral code that is set forth by their denomination, or church leaders. They may pay tithes to their local church, attend functions at a local fellowship on Sunday and Wednesday. If they are sincere they may seek to share their faith with others, yet all of this falls woefully short of the high calling of God for their lives.

Christ Yahshua did not come merely to pay the penalty of mankind's sin. He came to accomplish the foremost desire of His Father. Since the beginning of this present creation Yahweh has desired to have sons. Nor does He want just any sons. He wants full stature sons in His image and likeness. It was to accomplish this desire of the Father that Christ was sent into the world.

Hebrews 2:10

For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, *in bringing many sons to glory*, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.

Romans 8:29-30

For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, *so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren*; and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

One of the most common titles used in reference to Yahweh is "Father." We use this word so frequently that we have failed to perceive how remarkable it is that the Spirit within us teaches us to cry out "Abba, Father!" To be sons of the living God, the Creator of all things, the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent One whom no man has ever seen, is something that staggers the mind. One day the sons of God will receive heavenly bodies. They will be glorified like unto the firstborn Son of God. Paul declares that Christians will judge angels. The overcoming sons of God will be fully endued with the powers of the age to come.

The apostle John stated:

I John 3:2-3

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

It is not possible for me to cover this subject in depth here. I have written further on the subject in the book *Christ in You - The Hope of Glory*.

[http://www.heart4god.ws/index\\_html\\_files/The%20Hope%20of%20Glory.pdf](http://www.heart4god.ws/index_html_files/The%20Hope%20of%20Glory.pdf)

The apostle John, knowing the purpose of Christ's appearing to man, to bring forth glorified sons in God's image, taught that there was much more to being a Christian than confessing certain things about the Son of God. John said, "everyone who has this hope," the hope of sharing in the glory of Christ in the ages to come, "purifies himself, just as He is pure." Let me ask you, "How pure is Christ?"

The Scriptures state that there is no unrighteousness in Christ. He was tempted in all ways as we are, yet without sinning. To see Christ is to see the Father. This is Yahweh's desire for you and I. When people look at us Yahweh wants them to see His character. He does not want a bunch of people driving around with bumper stickers on their cars that say, "Christians aren't perfect, they're just forgiven." What an abomination. What a tragic distortion and absolute failure to grasp the purpose for which Christ came. It IS the will of God that we come forth in His image and likeness. It IS His will that we be perfect. Christ ended the Sermon on the Mount with the following words:



Matthew 5:48

"Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Christ declared in this same sermon that man must be perfect not only in action, but in thought. It is not enough to abstain from adultery with the wife of one's neighbor, a man must be faithful in his thoughts as well. It is not enough to refrain from committing murder, a man cannot harbor hatred in his heart for another. Love is the sum of the Law. Love does no harm to its neighbor.

When Christ enters into the life of a man or woman at the moment of their spiritual birth, they are unwashed, unsanctified, and fleshly. Their minds have been corrupted by the deceit of sin. Their soul is intrinsically selfish in its desires. There are many enemies dwelling in the land of their flesh; lust, fear, covetousness, anger, selfishness, pride, impatience, perversions, strife, and the list goes on and on. The Spirit birth is merely the beginning of the work of Christ in the life of a man or woman, yet tragically, the church today has made conversion the goal.

When Christ was preparing to return to the Father He gave final instructions to His followers. He did not tell them to make confessors of Christ out of the unwashed masses. He said:

Matthew 28:19-20

"Go therefore and *make disciples* of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, *teaching them to observe all that I commanded you*; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

In the previous post we looked at some of the requirements of becoming a disciple. Christ stated that no man could be His disciple unless He forsook all possessions and all relationships in this earth. Everything has to be secondary to one's commitment to Christ. A man cannot be a disciple unless He hates his own life. Is it not obvious that the church is NOT making disciples today. Those who are brought into the church in great numbers are told that they may keep their lives. They are even assured that Yahweh wishes to satisfy every material desire in their covetous hearts. This is the message of prosperity proclaimed today.

Christ said that no man could be His disciple unless they took up THEIR cross daily and followed Him. Christ came to transform men from fleshly, selfish, sin enslaved creatures into spiritual, selfless, sons of God who share the Father's righteousness and holiness.

This brings us to a critical point. God alone sees all that needs to be transformed in the lives of His sons and daughters. He sees the strongholds, the giants, the idols that exist in your life and mine. He alone can devise a path for us to walk that will lead us to discover and confront each of these enemies in the land of our flesh that we might rise up in spirit and crucify the flesh.

The first duty of a disciple of Christ is to yield their life to follow Yahshua wherever He would lead them. They are to count their old self-directed life as loss. They are to take up

their cross and begin to follow the Shepherd of their soul wherever He would lead them. Christ will lead every son and daughter down an afflicted path. This path is perfectly designed to expose the sin in our flesh. At each new discovery we are encouraged to mortify the flesh and put on the new man formed in Christ's image.

Only by embracing a life of surrender to Christ will any man or woman arrive at that spiritual maturity seen in the life of God's firstborn Son. This truth is revealed in the following encounter between a young man and Christ.

Matthew 19:16-21

Someone came to Yahshua with this question: "Teacher, what good deed must I do to have eternal life?" "Why ask me about what is good?" Yahshua replied. "There is only One who is good. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments." "Which ones?" the man asked. And Yahshua replied: "'You must not murder. You must not commit adultery. You must not steal. You must not testify falsely. Honor your father and mother. Love your neighbor as yourself.'" "I've obeyed all these commandments," the young man replied. "What else must I do?" Yahshua told him, "*If you want to be perfect*, go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

The six highlighted words in the passage above reveal the true goal of discipleship and the purpose for which Christ came. The Son of God came to make men perfect as their heavenly Father is perfect. A person can conform to a moral code and be considered good in the eyes of other men, but to attain to the desire of the Father the saint must set their aim much higher. Conformity to Yahweh, and to the life of His Son, must become the goal of their life.

We are told that Yahshua loved this young man who came up to Him. He was an earnest and sincere young man. He truly wanted to enter into that divine life that comes from God the Father. This young man was moral. He was courteous. He honored his father and mother. He did not mistreat others. If he appeared in any church throughout America today he would be considered a model Christian.

Hear my words. This young man was NOT a disciple of Christ. He was unwilling to forsake all and to accept whatever life Christ chose for him. This young man's soul was attached to a materially comfortable life. He went away grieved when he heard Christ declare what would be required for him to be "perfect."

People of God, Christ came to make men perfect. He came to destroy the works of the devil and to transform darkened humanity into light. You do not become light by confessing Christ. You are not spiritually mature at the moment of your spiritual birth. You have only entered by the gate when you are born again and confess Yahshua as the atoning sacrifice for your sins. At the moment of conversion there is set before you a path that must be walked.

Matthew 7:13-14

"Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and *the way*

*is afflicted that leads to life, and there are few who find it. ”*

You cannot remain on the broad path that the soul of man chooses and arrive at “life.” You must walk the path God has chosen for you. You must accept the invitation that Christ set before the rich, young ruler. Dispossess yourself of all you have, surrender all to Christ to be disposed of as He directs. “The come, and follow Me.”

Discipleship is embraced by following Christ. I do not mean that you are to embrace doctrines relating to the person of Christ. You must adopt Christ as your head, permitting Him to rule in place of your own soul. When the book of Revelations speaks of the overcomers in Christ being “beheaded” (Revelation 20:4), it is not speaking of literal decapitation. Revelations is a book where truths are conveyed through types and symbols. It is a book of parables. Those who have been beheaded are those who have removed their own head that they might take Christ as head of their lives.

I Corinthians 11:3

But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man...

While Christ was in bodily form He could lead a small number of disciples about. When He ascended He sent forth His Spirit. The Spirit of Christ is now engaged in directing the lives of a great many disciples from locations all around the world. You cannot walk as a disciple unless you hear the voice of God. You must understand that the essence of discipleship is to go wherever Christ’s Spirit directs you, and to do whatever the Spirit instructs you to do.

The Spirit will guide each son and daughter of God down a path perfectly designed for their spiritual maturation. If they will follow this path, crucifying the flesh and letting the life of Christ be manifest in them, at the end of the journey they will find that Christ has been formed in them.

We can only make the transformation from fleshly beings to spiritual as we are placed in situations where our character is tried. We must be brought into a variety of circumstances where the natural man will automatically respond with lust, fear, anger, and a host of other unrighteous thoughts and actions. In each instance our Father, by His Holy Spirit, urges us to arise as spiritual beings in His own image and put down the flesh in order to manifest the glory of God’s character within us.

It is a Spirit directed life you have been called unto. Those who accept Christ’s invitation, having counted the cost, will hear the voice of their Shepherd as He leads forth His flocks.

It may not be obvious to some why a message on hearing God’s voice is focusing so much on the subject of surrender to the will of God. The reason for this emphasis is to get the saints aligned with God that they might hear the conversation of His choosing. James wrote that the saints were praying amiss for their hearts were self-seeking.

James 4:3-4

You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with

God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

There are followers of prosperity preachers by the millions. Those who are influenced by Joel Osteen, T.D. Jakes, Creflo Dollar, Joyce Meyers, et al, are establishing the ground rules for communication with God. They come to God and ask Him to bless them, to deliver them from poverty, from sickness, from trials and distress. They ask God to enrich them that they might be comfortable and have excess to share with others. They wish to serve God and mammon, but Christ said that it is impossible to serve both. The disciples of Christ must choose whether they will pursue the life of their soul's desires, or the will and pleasure of God.

If you have adopted the mind of Christ, you will not be presumptuous in setting the ground rules for conversation. You will acknowledge Christ as head and let Him guide you. Your attitude will be "Speak Lord, your servant is listening."

It is essential that the saints settle this matter of surrender of their lives to Christ's direction if they are to have their ears fully opened. Consciously, or unconsciously, many believers have placed filters over their ears. They will not permit God to speak to them in certain areas. They do not wish to hear God instruct them to do things their soul despises. Their ears are only opened to hear him answer them according to the desires of their own hearts.

If you are having trouble discerning the voice of Christ I would encourage you to consider whether you have ever embraced the surrender of your life to Him. Many Christians maintain the rule over their own lives. As they follow the course their own soul has determined they come to God from time to time and ask Him for guidance and counsel. They are often perplexed when they are unable to discern clearly God's voice. They have not perceived that God wants to be the One leading.

Quite often when faced with decisions we will ask God to affirm our way. We will say "Father, should I take door number 1, or door number 2?" God is silent, for He has not chosen either one. He would say to us, "Lay down your life and follow My Son." When we accept the invitation to follow Christ, then we will hear His voice and know the way in which we should go.

Thirteen years ago I was confronted by these truths. The Spirit brought me to face them and make a decision to surrender to Him, or to continue to hold portions of my life back in reserve. I was pressed greatly by the Spirit, and Yahweh prevailed in my life. I surrendered to embrace the path He had chosen for my life.

He has shown me that He has been leading a small group of sons from among the nations to experience the afflicted path ahead of their brothers and sisters. Like Joseph of old, these ones have been rejected by brothers and sold into a life of humble servitude. They have been experiencing humility, lack, reproach, fears, and many such things while their brothers have been living self-directed lives of comfort and prosperity.

A day came, however, when famine forced Joseph's brothers to turn down the same path that he had traveled before them. Yahweh is at this time fashioning events in this world

which will make it impossible for His elect to remain living the comfortable lives their own souls have chosen for them. World events, and crises, will compel them to take a path they would not freely choose themselves.

I have been testifying for a number of years that judgment is coming to the nations. The financial systems will collapse, society will descend into chaos, and there will be great unrest. Great oppression is coming against those who belong to Christ. Yahweh has been testifying that America will fall. In 2007 and 2008 Miss USA fell on stage at the Miss Universe pageant. This began the collapse of America's vaunted financial system, ending generations of increasing ease and prosperity.

In the past few days I have had about half a dozen readers of this blog send me links to a similar testimony that occurred at the Olympics in London this week. I am encouraged that so many are discerning these parables for themselves. During the medal ceremony for women's tennis as the national anthem for America was being played, the U.S. flag came loose and fell to the ground.



The Fall is Near



Just like the Miss Universe pageant, the nations of the world were gathered together before an international audience. Once more a symbol of America fell to the ground. To make the event all the more poignant, Yahweh had the flag fall at the precise moment during the playing of the anthem when the words "our flag was still there" would have just been spoken.

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I have shared recently of those preparations the Father has led me to make in preparation for a coming day of dislocation. He had me purchase a trailer to pull behind my bus, to stock it with grains and legumes, and to purchase a grain mill. There have been other things I have been led to do as well. I did not do these things of my own initiative. It was the Spirit who directed me to do so.

It is now nearing the end of the summer and as we head into the Fall, I anticipate that things will begin shaking among the nations. Yahweh will be rattling the cages of many of His people. He will seek to induce them to let go of the false Christian lifestyle they have adopted and enter into a life of true discipleship. A remnant will surrender to be led of the Spirit. These ones will hear God's voice and begin to follow Christ as sheep who follow a shepherd.

You do not have to wait until things fall apart to embrace a Spirit led life of discipleship. You are invited to count the cost of surrendering all to Christ now. You will surely be given great grace for having done so.

Will you enter these days of trouble with a hearing ear? It will be perilous to be spiritually deaf in an hour when following God's Spirit closely will mean the difference between life and death.

The Hearing Ear - Part 4  
Joseph Herrin (08-09-2012)



Proverbs 20:12

The hearing ear and the seeing eye, Yahweh has made them both.

Suppose you have a very good friend that you wish to meet with to share some very intimate and important matters. What type of environment would you choose to meet at? Would you arrange to meet at the food court at the largest shopping mall in town where people are constantly streaming by, where dozens of conversations are being held, and distractions are everywhere about you?

Suppose you were at home watching a television program and your spouse came in with a very serious expression upon their face and said they needed to speak with you. Would you not turn off the television, give instructions to your children to not interrupt you, and give your undivided attention to your spouse?

If we truly want to HEAR someone, we must provide an environment that is conducive to listening.

In the gospels we read accounts of Christ driving the merchants and moneychangers out of the Temple. Every event of Christ's life serves as a spiritual parable. When the Bible states of the Messiah that "zeal for My Father's house has consumed Me," we should not assume that it was a building of stone and wood that had arrested the interest of the Son of God. The Temple in Jerusalem built by Herod was merely a symbol of the true temple in which Yahweh dwells, a temple built of living stones. The people of God are that temple. You and I are the dwelling in which the Spirit of Yahweh abides.

I Corinthians 3:16-17

Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.

Yahshua declared that the Temple was designed to be a house of prayer. It was to be a place where men and women could enter into quiet communion with the Spirit of God.

Matthew 21:13

And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer'..."

It is not the physical building in Jerusalem of which Christ spoke. That building served only as a type and symbol of the true house of God.

II Corinthians 6:16

For *you* are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people."

You and I have been created to be houses of prayer. Our souls are to be quiet. places of solace in the midst of a hectic world that has gone mad in the pursuit of trade and commerce. Satan has made it his chief work to defile the sanctuaries of God through an overabundance of trade in the things of the world. The prophet Ezekiel wrote of the fall of Lucifer, the covering cherub, from his place in the heavens.

Ezekiel 28:18

"By the multitude of your iniquities, in the unrighteousness of your trade, you profaned your sanctuaries."

NAS

Ezekiel 28:18

Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick...

KJV

Satan continues this defiling work to this very day. He is very effective at causing the people of God to focus an inordinate amount of their time, thought, and energy on trafficking and trading in this world. Day after day the saints' minds are focused upon their next acquisition, on how to generate enough income to pay for all of the material things their souls lust after. Satan floods the world with advertisements, commercials, and promotions of the next great thing, seeking to persuade men and women that they must have some trinket or treasure of this fallen world.

Consider the daily life of the typical Christian. Many get out of bed in the morning with just enough time to shower, get dressed, grab a quick breakfast, and then head out the door to work. Neglected is time spent in the presence of the Father. The best, most productive hours of their day is given to this world system. They spend themselves in labor for an earthly employer that provides them a paycheck so they can purchase those things that their



neighbors have.

At the end of the work day the Christian will return home to take care of family responsibilities, or to meet with friends, or to engage in the endless activities that their church sets before them. Some may remain home, and turn on the television as soon as they get off work, leaving the television playing until it is time to go to bed.

Day after day Christians fill their lives with idle pursuits and vain activities. They have embraced the rat race of mankind, deceived by Satan and preachers of prosperity that this is what life is all about. In the process they have failed to safeguard the temple of their body as a quiet sanctuary and a house of prayer. They have fallen from their chief calling in life to commune daily with the Father.

It is with purposeful illustration that Yahshua manifested great zeal in driving the merchants and moneychangers out of the Temple. As individuals, the saints of God have invited the spirit of merchandising into their lives. They have embraced the love of money and all it can buy. Multitudes are trying to serve both God and mammon. Consequently, the still, small voice of the Spirit of God has been drowned out by the incessant noise that arises from trafficking in the things of the world.

Few Christians have discerned how radically different the life of Christ and those who would be His disciples are from the pattern of this fallen world. The character of Christ is contentment. The disciple is content with whatever shelter, food, and life experiences the Father chooses for them. In contrast, the worldly man or woman approaches God with a shopping list of all the things they would like God to provide for them. The worldly man or woman has a great many desires and expectations. They want a certain type of home to live in. They desire nice furnishings to fill it with. They want various features in a car. They expect to have a nice set of appliances, and beyond this they want many of the entertainment products offered by this world; televisions, stereos, computers, game consoles, board games, sporting goods, smart phones, and all the must have gadgetry and conveniences that are continuously set before the public mind.

If a Christian were to take inventory of their home and the possessions in it, it would become quickly apparent that most have departed from the attitude described by Paul when he wrote, "having food and covering, with these we will be content." Christian's lives today are full of clutter. The noise of trafficking in the world, and the constant energy devoted to pay for everything, to maintain a comfortable life with many entertainments, has led to the profaning of their sanctuary. The still, small voice of God is drowned out by the constant drone of worldly pursuit.

In 1999 the Father led me to a radical departure from that life I had formerly known. My life prior to 1999 was similar to most American Christians. I was the fat, materially satisfied, possession driven Christian. Although I was very active in my church, even serving as a minister, my life was not one of quietness. I hit the ground running in the morning, and in the evening, if I was not engaged in some church event or social activity, I was on the computer, or watching television. I was employed as a computer professional. I made a good salary, and as my income increased so did my possessions, my level of debt, and the

time I spent taking care of all that I owned.

No one in the church ever censured me for living such an encumbered and busy life. No one ever cautioned me that I was too much involved with the world and the pursuit of it. My life was no different from every other believer I knew. Yet, it was far from the pattern shown forth in the life of Christ and that of His disciples.

When the Spirit brought me to surrender the life I had chosen for myself, and to embrace whatever He would choose for me, the first thing He did was perform a major house cleaning. He stripped me of a lifetime of accumulated possessions. It was a difficult process not only for me, but for my wife and children. They too had grown accustomed to a worldly life, focused on material things.

Yahweh had us surrender, or sell most of the possessions we had. House, furnishings, entertainment items, a second vehicle, appliances, games, knickknacks, and many vain acquisitions were stripped away. When the process was complete Yahweh had reduced the possessions of our family of four to a 20 year old 28 foot long motor home and what would comfortably fit in it, towing a small car behind.

An amazing thing happened along with this tremendous reduction in possessions. As a family we were brought closer together (literally). Being in closer proximity to one another encouraged more personal interaction. We also all discovered that we had more free time. There was no longer as much time required to clean rooms, mow the yard, perform upkeep to the house, etc.. I found that I had a lot more time to commune with the Father. I was enabled to spend hours a day speaking with God, reading His word, and listening to His voice. I became more contemplative, more meditative, for the trafficking in the things of the world had been brought to an end. Christ had come in with a whip made of cords and cleansed the temple once again.

That was 13 years ago. To this day I have continued to be content with whatever living arrangement the Father chooses for me. I have not gone back to a pursuit of the world or the things in it. I have been content with far fewer possessions than I used to have. My life is simpler, quieter, and the voice of God is much easier to hear.

I John 2:15-17

Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever.

I ask you, does your life differ significantly from that of the members of the society around you? Or are you pursuing the same possessions, engaged in similar activities and entertainments? Did things radically change in your life when you became a Christian? The apostle Paul stated:

Romans 12:2

And do not be conformed to this world...

The church today is by and large conformed to the world. They are pursuing material possessions to the same extent. Entertainment is given just as much time in the life of the Christian as the non-Christian. The soul continues to be the source of direction. These things should not be. It is little wonder that the voice of God is heard so seldom among the Christians of this hour.

The following words of the apostle have never been more urgent:

I Corinthians 7:29-31

But this I say, brethren, the time has been shortened, so that from now on those who have wives should be as though they had none; and those who weep, as though they did not weep; and those who rejoice, as though they did not rejoice; and those who buy, as though they did not possess; and those who use the world, as though they did not make full use of it; for the form of this world is passing away.

What will become of those saints who remain conformed to this world system? When the Son of God appears they will not be ready. They will be pursuing the things of a fallen world.

Luke 17:26-30

“And just as it happened in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: they were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. It was the same as happened in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building; but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. It will be just the same on the day that the Son of Man is revealed.”

Busyness, an engagement with this world system and a pursuit of personal happiness and satisfaction, will render Christians deaf to the voice of God. The signs are around us indicating that the appearing of Christ draws nigh. The earth is about to pass through the birthpangs and great tribulation. Hearing the voice of God will be absolutely essential in order to walk victoriously in this hour and not suffer great spiritual loss.

If you would be ready for that hour, if you would hear the voice of God resonating clearly in your ears, then you must cleanse your temple of the spirit of merchandising. You must bring an end to trafficking in the things of this world.

I challenge you to read the following account from the gospels from the perspective of seeing the Temple as your own life. If Christ approached you today would He find a house of prayer, or a noisy center of worldly traffic?

John 2:14-16

And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables; and to those who were selling the doves He said,

"Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a place of business."

Simplify your life. Surrender your possessions to Christ to be disposed of as He directs. Don't be conformed to this world. Put on the mind of Christ. Be content with whatever the Father chooses for you. I am confident that you will find that the life and path Yahweh will choose for you will afford you much more time to commune with Him. He will permit you to have a contemplative, meditative life.

Start your day with the Father. Give the best of your strength and energy to Him. Remember the lesson of the manna. The manna had to be gathered early before the Sun grew hot, or it would evaporate. So too must we seek God early.

Psalms 5:3

In the morning, O Yahweh, You will hear my voice; In the morning I will order my prayer to You and eagerly watch.

If you have over committed yourself to labor for the things of this world, if you are engaged too much in entertainments, then you will surely find that you are staying up late, and rising in the morning with inadequate time and energy to seek the Father. As a disciple of Christ you are called to live a radically different life from that of the world around you. Let the worldly give their energy to a pursuit of the world and all that is in it. Let your pursuit be God. If you make Him your pursuit you will surely find Him.

Jeremiah 29:13-14

"You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the Yahweh.

The Hearing Ear - Part 5  
Joseph Herrin (08-10-2012)



Proverbs 20:12

The hearing ear and the seeing eye, Yahweh has made them both.

This teaching on spiritual hearing would not be complete apart from an examination of the following words of Yahshua the Messiah. As He was speaking to His disciples, He stated:

Luke 8:18

"So take care *how you listen*; for whoever has, to him more shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him."

Yahshua is clearly speaking about the subject this series has been addressing. He enjoins the disciples to "*take care*," or "*be careful*" HOW they listen. He follows this admonition by saying "for whoever has, to him more shall be given." We should ask, "whoever has what?" The subject is the ability to hear, so one obvious meaning is that those who have the ability to hear can increase their hearing if they listen properly. Similarly, Yahshua states, "and whoever does not have (spiritual hearing), even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him."

The verse above from Luke's gospel comes at the end of a parable explained by Yahshua to His disciples. It is a very important parable to pay heed to as one seeks to understand the subject of spiritual hearing. Let us therefore look at this passage in its entirety. I am going to insert some comments to draw your attention to certain points.

Luke 8:4-18

When a large crowd was coming together, and those from the various cities were journeying to Him, He spoke by way of a parable: "The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he

sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled under foot and the birds of the air ate it up. Other seed fell on rocky soil, and as soon as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. Other seed fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew up with it and choked it out. Other seed fell into the good soil, and grew up, and produced a crop a hundred times as great." *As He said these things, He would call out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."* (Is this not a remarkable detail to be inserted here? This is a highly unusual manner of story telling. Can you picture Christ speaking to the multitudes and stopping periodically to cry out, "*He who has ears to hear, let him hear*"? Spiritual hearing is certainly on the Lord's mind.)

His disciples began questioning Him as to what this parable meant. And He said, "*To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, (When Yahshua states "To YOU it has been granted..." He is indicating that it is the disciples of Christ who are granted understanding. Disciples are given a hearing ear. Let us therefore remember that the qualifications of discipleship include surrendering all earthly possessions and relationships to Christ. The cost includes taking up YOUR cross and following Yahshua down an afflicted path that is specifically designed for your perfecting as a son or daughter. The few who have counted the cost of discipleship and accept it are the ones who are granted understanding of the mysteries of the kingdom of God.)*

but to the rest it is in parables, so that SEEING THEY MAY NOT SEE, AND HEARING THEY MAY NOT UNDERSTAND. (Is this not the condition of most people in the church today? The majority of Christians are apostate [divorced from truth]. Their ears are opened, but they do not hear. Most Christians today observe parables all around them in their lives, in the news, in the Scriptures, but they fail to perceive the heavenly message contained therein. They do not hear the voice of God speaking to them .)

Now the parable is this: the seed is *the word* of God. (Note that a word is something spoken. It enters by the ear, hence Christ is repeatedly stopping to cry out, "*He who has ears to hear, let him hear.*") Those beside the road are *those who have heard*; then *the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart*, (Christ's explanation reveals that the substance and understanding of His parable is about spiritual hearing and how it is lost.) so that they will not believe and be saved. Those on the rocky soil are those who, *when they hear*, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away. The seed which fell among the thorns, these are the *ones who have heard*, and as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the seed in the good soil, these are the *ones who have heard the word* in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance. (Yahshua has now described four categories of men and women. Only the last is set forward as a positive example. The vast majority of those hearing Christ's voice do not profit from having done so. Their spiritual hearing *is unfruitful*. This is made plain by the usage of agricultural terms and examples. Seeds are sown to bear fruit. Christ speaks to us that we might bear spiritual fruit. Most Christians are not careful to hear Christ's words in a manner that will result in spiritual fruit. They therefore are in danger of losing that sense of hearing they had been given.)

Now no one after lighting a lamp covers it over with a container, or puts it under a bed; but

he puts it on a lampstand, so that those who come in may see the light. For nothing is hidden that will not become evident, nor anything secret that will not be known and come to light. *So take care how you listen; for whoever has, to him more shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him.*"

We can now define what Yahshua intended when He stated "take care HOW you listen."

### Those Beside the Road

The seed (word of Christ) that falls upon those people pictured as soil beside the road doesn't even begin to make progress in bringing forth fruit. The devil comes and snatches the seed away before it germinates. Roads are highly trafficked areas. The ground beside a road is highly compacted from all the traffic. Due to trampling, there is also little ground cover. The grass has been killed, and other plants as well. This causes whatever seed that falls beside the road to lie exposed on top of the hard soil for an extended period of time where the birds can easily see it. The seed is plucked up before it can bear fruit.

There are many Christians today who dwell right beside the highways of commerce and pleasure in this world. They are constantly exposed to the traffic of this world. They are buffeted by worldly messages through television, magazines, books, radio, movies, the Internet, video games, music, and worldly conversation on the job, at school, or at play. They are rendered insensitive to the voice of God. Their ears are attuned to the range of sounds and speech that emanate from lower, earthly realms. Being carnally minded, spiritual speech cannot penetrate the exterior of their lives.

### The Rocky Soil

Christ says of this group of people, "Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and *in time of temptation* fall away." Matthew's gospel brings out another characteristic of this group.

#### Matthew 13:20-21

"The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and *when affliction or persecution arises* because of the word, immediately he falls away."

These are what one might call "fair weather saints." Among them are multitudes who have embraced the prosperity gospel. These are joyous, and enthusiastic, for they are anticipating that being a Christian will result in material blessing, health, and favor. These ones have not counted the cost of discipleship. Bearing a cross and walking an afflicted path is not what they signed up for. When temptation, affliction, or persecution arise, these ones will fall away.

These ones have not benefitted by hearing the words of Christ. They were not open to hear

ALL that Yahshua would speak to them. The preaching of the disciple's cross is foolishness to them. They want a gospel message that promises smooth sailing and an unobstructed passage. These do not bear the fruit the Father is seeking.

### The Thorny Ground

Of this group the Savior declared:

“these are the ones who have heard, and as they go on their way *they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to maturity.*”

Do not these words describe multitudes of Christians today? Many seem to have begun with sincere gratitude for Christ's sacrifice. They express a desire to be found pleasing to Him. Yet they never seem to make progress in spiritual things. They are still wrestling with the same besetting sins ten, twenty, or thirty years after they believed. They have made little progress in ruling over sexual desires, in overcoming anger. They are allured by a desire for riches, and the daily grind of paying bills, going to work, raising a family, taking care of a home, etc., etc., have choked out that spiritual progress they could have made. These are like the Corinthian believers whom the apostle Paul chided.

### I Corinthians 3:1-3

And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?

They are like the Hebrew believers whom Paul also reprimanded.

### Hebrews 5:12-14

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature...

In these passages Paul is comparing spiritual words to food. There are many saints who cannot seem to get off the bottle (or the breast). They are able to tolerate only milk. They are not exercising themselves unto godliness. They are not taking up their cross, enduring hardship, overcoming temptations, and passing victoriously through trials whereby they might grow strong and increase in knowledge and conformity to Christ.

### The Good Soil

“But the seed in the good soil, *these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance.*”

Note the characteristics of these men and women. They have honest and good hearts. They persevere, holding tightly to that which has been delivered to them. Much could be written



about these traits, but suffice it to say that these are ones who are willing to receive ALL that Christ would speak to them. It is spiritually dishonest to pick out from the Bible just those verses that appeal to one's soul. Many prove that they do not have 'good' hearts as they approach the Scriptures with a bias, wanting to hear only that there is blessing, and ease and uninterrupted comfort ahead of them. These unfaithful ones reject, stop their ears and close their eyes, to any Scripture or word from God that would exhort them to lay aside their love of the world and embrace the cross of Christ.

There is a remnant, however, who will respond as Peter when the flesh is offended and the way is difficult. When Yahshua asked His core group of disciples if they wanted to leave like so many others were, Peter stated, "Where else shall we go? You alone have the words of eternal life." This is an honest heart. It is a heart that wants to be a partaker of the divine life of Yahweh, and will continue on even when the going is unpleasant.

When Christ said, "Take care HOW you listen," He was handing His disciples the key to increase their spiritual hearing. If you have been faithful with those things Christ has already spoken to you, He will give you more. The surest way in which to improve your spiritual hearing is to obey promptly that which Christ has spoken to you.

The opposite is also true. The sure road to spiritual deafness is to fail to obey that which Christ has spoken to you. If you have not obeyed His voice when He spoke to you about some matter, why should He continue to speak?

If your heart convicts you that there is something Christ revealed to be His will, but you have shrank back from doing it, or have delayed, letting His words slip away, repent. Repent quickly. Confess your failure to the Lord and set your heart to obedience. As you prove yourself a doer of the word of Christ, your spiritual sense of hearing will improve.

I believe that much of the difficulty among Christians in hearing the voice of God is traceable back to this issue. Suppose Yahweh told you to quit smoking, or to break off a relationship of which He did not approve, or to not go into debt to purchase some item that your soul coveted, but you disobeyed. Now you come to Him day after day asking Him to speak to you, but you have left undone that which He has commanded. Is it not just and right for the Lord to remain silent until you repent and perform that which He required?

We cannot say that we have taken care in how we have listened if Christ has spoken and we have not been moved to obedience by His words. We stand in danger of losing that which we do have. Our sense of hearing can grow dull, and continued disobedience can result in deafness.

Do you want a sharp and keen sense of hearing? Then obey the voice of God quickly when it comes to you. If anything is left undone, recommit yourself to fulfilling the word of God. Those who are faithful in the little given to them will receive more. This principle is true in regard to our spiritual senses.

The Hearing Ear - Part 6  
Joseph Herrin (08-11-2012)



Proverbs 20:12

The hearing ear and the seeing eye, Yahweh has made them both.

Let us suppose that a child of God has acknowledged the cost of Christian discipleship and they have accepted it. They have surrendered their life to be led of the Spirit wherever He would guide them, and to do whatever He would ask them to do. This same one has responded in obedience to the things Christ has commanded them to do. They have not shrank back from costly obedience, and have denied their own desires that they might do the will of Christ.

There will be times when such ones will find that Yahweh is silent in their lives. They may find themselves in some difficulty, or distress, they may be facing some decision that needs to be made quickly, yet despite all their prayers the heavens remain silent.

It is not uncommon for a Christian who is leading a surrendered life to find themselves in such a quandary. There are times when one will be pursuing fervently obedience to Christ and yet they find that everything seems to be falling apart around them. Their mind may be in perplexity, not understanding why things are occurring for they cannot identify any overt sin, their heart does not convict them of having gone astray in any matter of obedience.

Consider the plight of the disciples as they were crossing the Sea of Galilee at night in a boat and a tremendous storm arose. On this particular occasion Yahshua was with them in the boat, but He was sleeping. As they labored to cross the sea a fierce storm arose so that they feared they would be swamped, yet still Christ slept.

Have you had occasions in your life when some storm was brewing in your home, at your place of employment, in your health, your finances, or some other area, and it seemed God was sleeping? No matter how hard you labored to stay afloat in the midst of the storm it seemed as if you were all alone. You knew God was present, but He was doing nothing to deliver you. At such times Yahweh is testing our faith.

I can remember many occasions, following my surrender in 1999 to follow the Lord wherever He directed, when I was faced with a great trial of faith. I had a wife, and two children, and we were often in some peril. If God did not come through we would surely suffer harm, or loss. Yet Yahweh delayed.

I was very much a man of prayer in those days. I clung desperately to the hem of Christ's garment. I would daily beseech Him to send forth deliverance, provision, or to give some added assurance of His direction for our lives. Yahshua was truly faithful, for He did not permit us to perish. However, He was not always timely according to my expectation. There were many times when He let our bills get behind.

I remember one day when an employee of the electric utility showed up to disconnect our power. I was three weeks late in paying the bill. Every day this matter weighed upon my mind and I sought the Father for His provision. I was working a part time job as a college instructor and I received a paycheck once a month. As days turned into weeks, I had no money to pay the bill and the Spirit restrained me from seeking additional employment. I prayed for God to intervene, to manifest His provision, or to keep the lights on by some means. Finally, there was only one more day until I would be paid and I thought Yahweh had spared us by causing the power company to overlook the fact that we were behind in payment. Yet, that very day a man showed up to cut off the power.

Not knowing what else to do, I walked outside to speak to the man. I explained that I would be paid the next day and would go immediately and pay the bill. I was shown grace as the man said that since he had never been to my house before for non-payment he would not turn the power off that day. The next day the bill was paid. All through this trial the Lord was silent. He spoke nothing to me. He sent no additional provision. He provided me no assurances that all would be okay.

Yet, as I considered my situation I knew that I was walking the path Yahweh had appointed to me. I had not deviated from His will. I had been careful in my expenditures, and daily I was seeking to walk in obedience to Him. I also knew that it was NOT His will that I announce to others that I had a need, and it was His Spirit that forbid me to seek additional work to earn more money.

Why would Yahweh reward my obedience with such trials and difficulties, for they were frequent and unrelenting? Added to my burden was the criticism of family, friends and even Christians who viewed my life and condemned me. They would urge me to follow common sense and go find a better job and earn more money. Yet, Yahweh had only temporarily granted me part-time employment. Soon He would require me to lay even this aside and to trust Him once more for all the needs of my family.

I often felt like I was hanging on a cross as those around me were hurling reproaches and insults. How I longed to come down off the cross. I knew I could choose to do so, but it would be an act of disobedience. It was a fear of God and a deep desire to not fall short of His will that kept me walking that path appointed to me. I also bore the burden of knowing that my actions and choices would affect my wife and children. I wanted to provide them an example of one who would endure suffering and not shrink back from the afflicted path. I feared lest my own disobedience in abandoning the afflicted path should lead to the same action in their lives. That was a burden of guilt I did not wish to bear.

Hebrews 10:36-39

For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: "For yet a little while, and He who is coming will come and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone shrinks back, My soul has no pleasure in him." But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul.

Yes, we have need of endurance. "For yet a little while" Yahweh will test us and try us. He may be silent as we endure many trials and face numerous decisions. If we know we are following the path He has appointed to us, then there is no need for Him to tell us again that this is the way. We should not expect that obedience will result in calm winds and smooth seas. Yahweh must perfect our faith and test our hearts to see if we will remain faithful to do that which He has commanded.

I thought much on these matters when this walk was new to me. I wanted to understand my way, and also to encourage others who were facing similar trials. During one particular season of waiting on God when many threats and pressures were weighing hard on me I wrote the following article.

Waiting, the Ultimate Test!  
Joseph Herrin (6-5-2000)

This test has been the most excruciating of all. I have been tempted repeatedly to throw in the towel. At times, only a tremendous fear of missing the will of God and being disqualified to be a partaker of the things reserved for overcomers has kept me to the course. As one of God's prophetesses has recently stated, "Only those who finish the course receive the prize. Don't quit half way through the race."

The test I am speaking of is waiting. I am now in the eighth month of waiting. The trial has been severe because God has selected a path for me that would bring me into opposition with all around me. Christian brothers and sisters have judged me to be in great disobedience. I have been characterized as arrogant and prideful and wicked. My own family has judged me to be deluded and some have even questioned whether or not I was ever truly saved.

Does this worry you? Do you wonder why so many would judge a Christian brother to be in such gross disobedience? Are you affected by the preponderance of negative opinion? Certainly so many could not be wrong, could they?

Consider Joshua and Caleb returning with 10 other spies to look over the land of their promised inheritance. The land was a veritable fortress. There were walled cities and warriors of great size in the land. Joshua and Caleb did not deny this. They believed, however, that their God was bigger than these obstacles and that the giants before them would simply become their prey.

Not so, the other 10 spies. They judged by appearance. They looked at themselves and were made weak. In their own strength they perceived that they would fail and their own strength was all they had. They had not learned how to exhibit confidence in an almighty God. The rest of Israel gave way to the same fears.

Some have estimated that Israel consisted of nearly 3 million people at this time. Joshua and Caleb stood against the opinion of 3 million of their brothers and sisters. What arrogance, what pride for these two to believe that they were right when so many said that they were dead wrong. In fact, those who said they were wrong wished them to be dead. It is recorded that they spoke of stoning them. I have been stoned with the rocks of accusation and insult. It hurts. Some of the bruises don't go away very quickly. Some are deep bruises.

Consider David when he was yet a youth. He is sent to the site of battle to carry food to his brothers and to bring back news of their welfare to his father. He finds all of the army of Israel hiding behind rocks as the champion of the Philistines comes out daily to challenge and taunt them. David hears that King Saul has offered a reward to any Israelite warrior who will challenge Goliath and slay him. He even has offered one of his daughters as part of the reward. David hears of this and is incredulous.

David is not intimidated. He hears the taunt of Goliath and is filled with indignation. "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine who defies the armies of the LIVING GOD?" David cannot believe that such a reward has been offered to kill him. This idolater has defied the true God. His protection has been removed. He will become a prey to a warrior of the true and living God.

David's oldest brother Eliab overhears David as he talks to the soldiers about the reward offered to kill Goliath. David's words are bold and Eliab becomes angry. Eliab felt justified to hide behind the rocks every day. Goliath is huge. David's fearless words sting and Eliab begins to accuse David of evil.

1 Samuel 17:28

Now Eliab his oldest brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger burned against David and he said, "Why have you come down? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your insolence and the wickedness of your heart; for you have come down in order to see the battle."

After all, who did David think he was. The entire army of Israel was cowed before Goliath. David was surely just exhibiting arrogance and pride. He was deluded to think that he could slay Goliath. He was but a youth. The opinion of all Israel was against him. Why did he think he was right?

No, being in the minority doesn't mean you are in the right, but being in the majority doesn't either. One must look at the issues involved. One must see what emotions and physical and spiritual forces are shaping opinion. Fear and a desire for self-preservation were very evident in the majority in both cases mentioned. Courage and confidence in God was present in the minority.

What do you suppose the percentages are today? Do the majority of Christians express confidence in God? Are they stepping courageously out in faith, entrusting themselves to an almighty and loving God? No, most are rather choosing to play it safe. They are given to pursuing the "prudent" path. What then do you suppose their response will be to a brother or sister who wants to face the giant?

It is hard, however, to face such opposition from brothers and sisters and family over a prolonged period of time. It wears at one. It is easy to give into despair when you have taken a stand that requires courage and confidence and then God delays in bringing about your vindication. Even Abraham had difficulty in waiting. At times it seems that desperation assails you. It is best not to make decisions in these moments. Stand firm. Wait. The answer is coming.

Isaiah 40:31

Yet those who wait for the LORD will gain new strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles, they will run and not get tired, they will walk and not become weary.

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, give me the strength to endure the test. Give me the fortitude to finish the race. Though I stumble, give me the courage and resolve to get up again and return to the race. Consider my frame, that I am but dust. However, I desire to be courageous dust. I desire to be bold dust. I desire to be dust that brings glory to You. Breathe Your breath upon me and cause me to stand. Cause your resurrection life to renew me and bring forth fresh vitality. My eyes are upon You, Father. You are my shield and my buckler. You are my strong tower and my fortress. Cover me over with the pinions of your wings. Hide me from the power of the evil one. Do not let my enemies triumph over me. My eyes are on You. My eyes are on You. Lift up my head once more and set my feet upon the solid Rock.

Amen

[End Article]

During this same season of testing I published yet another article based upon the lessons the Father was teaching me.

### **The Untimeliness of God**

Joseph Herrin (6-7-2000)

It has been prophesied by some in recent days that the Father is preparing a group of His children to be able to walk in tremendous callings in the days ahead. This group will be a type of firstfruits. It was common in the land of Judah and Israel for the people to plant an early crop of barley, only to plow it under when it began to reach maturity. This sacrificial crop enriched the soil, preparing the way for an even greater wheat harvest which would follow.

I believe the group God is raising up at this time corresponds to the barley crop. God will use them to prepare the way for a tremendous wheat harvest which will follow. As ministers of God, they will devote themselves to the Lord's purposes in them of ushering in the great last days harvest and in bringing forth beauty in the Bride of Christ.

Part of the preparation of this group is removing all religious thought and reasoning from them. These false thoughts born of man's reasoning and fleshly desire will be replaced with the true knowledge of God. One particular tenet of religious thought that the Father is revealing in my life, and I believe in the lives of many others, is that God's will can be recognized by timeliness and sufficiency of His provision. We are taught that if God's provision for us comes through for us in a timely manner, then it is proof of His will. If His provision tarries past some immovable physical deadline, it is proof that He would have the need met in some other fashion.

My particular crucible of testing involves trusting God for financial resources. Nearly eight months ago God told me to leave my job as a PC Coordinator with a local hospital. He indicated at the time that He would take me into a new realm of ministry involving writing, speaking and whatever else He would bring to me. God confirmed this direction in my life many times over. It was a tremendous step of faith for me, so I asked Him to confirm His will many times. This He very graciously did. After a point, though, He quit reassuring me and left me to exercise faith in the path He had set before me.

During this time I have had no regular financial support. I am not a paid staff member of any church. Being 39 years old, I am much too young to collect retirement. To add to the trial, I am married and have two children, ages 10 and 12, who rely upon my provision for them. My wife does not work outside the home, rather she finds her employment in home schooling our children and fulfilling the other responsibilities of being a wife and a mother.

As I said, it was eight months ago that I left my job at the Father's leading, and during this time we have not lacked for food, clothing, transportation, shelter, or any other basic need of life. However, God's provision has not always been timely. On occasion my home mortgage and other bills have been in serious arrears before God's provision was manifested. At one point my mortgage payment was 3 months delinquent and I received a notice of pending foreclosure proceedings before God's provision was manifested.

The testimony of nearly one and all, both within the church and without, is that if God had truly led me to walk as I am, His provision would be both timely and amply sufficient. Indeed, many of the churches I have been in have taught that one of the primary ways to discern God's will in the life of the believer is to see if His provision is manifested in a timely and sufficient manner. Is this religious thinking, or does it reflect the true knowledge of God and His dealings with mankind?

It would certainly be nice if this were true. It would mean that those who are walking in obedience to God will never know lack, nor will they ever have to wait an undue amount of time to see God fulfill His word to them. Unfortunately, for those who wish this to be true, the Bible reveals that this is not the case.

One of the clearest examples in scripture is Abraham. God gave him a promise of a son. Abraham waited and waited. He knew at some point that he would pass a line of physical possibility. At some point his body would grow old and no longer be capable of reproduction. Abraham and Sarah waited as long as they could. The deadline was at hand. Sarah, being the dutiful wife, finally suggested that Abraham do something she really wished he would never have to do. Sarah was cutting her own throat. She was suggesting that her husband have a child by another woman. Physically, she could see no other way. Isn't God a timely God? Wouldn't He fulfill His promise to her husband while he was still capable of having children? This must be the only way.

Of course we know the story. Abraham listened to Sarah and had a child by her handmaiden. God then appeared to Abraham again and told him that this child was not the promised one. Whoops! If this wasn't the promised one, where would he arise from. Abraham was now past the point of having children, and so was Sarah.

Romans 4:19

And without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about a hundred years old, and the deadness of Sarah's womb...

God was very untimely (according to man's expectation) in fulfilling His promise to Abraham and Sarah. Something must have clicked in Abraham's thinking at this time. He realized he and Sarah were too old to have children, but God was still saying they would. God must not have been limited to perform His word within a time frame of physical possibility. It must have occurred to Abraham that God's word can be accomplished past what we would consider a point of no return.

This sort of messes up the nice religious theory that God's will can be recognized by its timeliness. The scriptures also show that God's will cannot be recognized by its sufficiency. Paul said:

Philippians 4:10-12

But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned before, but you lacked opportunity. Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need.

Paul said that he at times knew humble or lean times. He experienced going hungry and suffering need. Those who support the theory that provision indicates whether one is in God's will would have to conclude that Paul was outside of the will of God. "Why Paul, don't you know that if you were really doing what God called you to do that God's provision would be present in your life?"

Those who preach a prosperity gospel have somehow overlooked much of the testimony of scripture. We don't like to wait upon God. We don't like to think that at some point we might endure lack or hunger. It is easier on our flesh to teach that God will always bless us with an on-time abundance of the things we need. By teaching this we are justified to go out and obtain what we need after our own fashion when we perceive that God hasn't met our need, or satisfied our longing, to the degree, or with the expedience we expected.



We may ask, “What could it hurt to try to help God out some if we perceive a real need and God’s provision is absent?” The account of King Saul’s failure to wait for God’s provision should provide us reason to hesitate to “help God out.” The story of King Saul’s failure to wait upon God is familiar to most saints. I have heard it frequently taught on. I think most saints are much too hard on Saul. I know few who would not cave in to the same pressure.

Saul’s son Jonathan had just gone and raided a Philistine garrison and had achieved a decent victory. This angered the Philistines. They called their whole army together. Their numbers were tremendous. “Now the Philistines assembled to fight with Israel, 30,000 chariots and 6,000 horsemen, and people like the sand which is on the seashore in abundance...” (1 Samuel 13:5).

How many people did Saul have. We are told that there were 2,000 men with Saul and 1,000 with Jonathan. King Saul was vastly outnumbered. The people with him saw this and it is said that those following him “trembled.” They were scared to death. Things then began to deteriorate. Saul’s army began to slip off and disappear.

#### 1 Samuel 13:6-7

When the men of Israel saw that their situation was critical and that their army was hard pressed, they hid in caves and thickets, among the rocks, and in pits and cisterns. Some Hebrews even crossed the Jordan to the land of Gad and Gilead. Saul remained at Gilgal, and all the troops with him were quaking with fear.

Now, it is bad enough to be outnumbered and to have the numbers get worse and worse (it got to the point that Saul only had 600 men left, 4 out of 5 of his soldiers deserted), but to have the ones who remained “quaking with fear” made it even worse. Who was there to encourage and embolden Saul? Who was there to tell him to stand fast and trust in the Lord? Few of God’s saints today have ever been put in such dire straits.

Saul rightly knew that only God could deliver Israel in such a situation. It was customary to entreat the Lord’s favor before entering a battle. The king, however, was not to offer the burnt offering. It was pre-arranged that the prophet Samuel would show up and make the offering and entreat the Lord’s favor. Saul waited seven days, the days agreed upon for Samuel to arrive. When Samuel didn’t show up on time, Saul could endure the wait no longer.

It must be said that it was a tremendous test for Saul to wait even seven days. Each day he received reports of more Philistines gathering and more of his army fleeing. Saul was surrounded by terrified men. A seven day wait had to have been agonizing, but Saul waited these seven days. However, Saul had a point past which he could wait no longer. His endurance had limits to it.

#### 1 Samuel 13:11-12

Saul replied, "When I saw that the men were scattering, and that you did not come at the set time, and that the Philistines were assembling at Micmash, I thought, 'Now the Philistines will come down against me at Gilgal, and I have not sought the LORD's favor.' So I felt compelled to offer the burnt offering."

In actuality, Saul seems to have done the prudent thing. Certainly, he felt justified in his own eyes. Things started out bad and they were falling apart. In very little time Saul anticipated having no men left at all. The Philistines could come against him at any moment. In offering up the burnt offering he was seeking the Lord's favor. There was only one thing wrong, Saul was not permitted to perform the sacrifice.

It is apparent here that in God's sight, the end does not justify the means. Samuel told Saul,

I Samuel 13:13-14

"You acted foolishly," Samuel said. "You have not kept the command the LORD your God gave you; if you had, he would have established your kingdom over Israel for all time. But now your kingdom will not endure; the LORD has sought out a man after his own heart and appointed him leader of his people, because you have not kept the LORD's command."

It is interesting to note that if Samuel had shown up at the appointed time that Saul would have appeared to be the most godly of men. He had faithfully waited seven days under the most trying conditions when all were deserting him. How many of us appear godly when God is on time? How many of us look like heroes when God meets us according to our expectation? But what if God's answer is delayed; what will be revealed to be in our heart? Will we also feel "compelled" to do that which we know in our heart is wrong? Selah.

Prayer:

Father, give your servants the strength and confidence in you to wait upon your provision. Keep us from presumption. Father, protect us from the terror that comes upon us suddenly. May we not be moved, but may we find peace attending our way as we fix our eyes upon you.

Father, instruct us that we might acquire the same peace that Your Son had, sleeping in the bow of the boat while the storm raged and others' hearts were filled with fear. As the popular song of one of your handmaidens says, "You have been my Lord and Savior; won't you be my Prince of Peace."

Father, we ask for your peace that we might persevere in the storms and trials of life. Out of our confidence in You, may we be preserved in the day of testing.

Amen

[End Article]

Brothers and sisters, there are times when our spiritual hearing is functioning quite well, but God is not answering our urgent pleas and petitions. Yet, if we will quiet our souls, in the silence we will learn much. Yahweh will instruct us in His ways and we will come to discern the purpose of our trials.

There are times when Yahweh does not speak to us when matters are urgent. This is often for the perfecting of our faith. Do not permit yourself to be driven into some hasty action by the pressures exerted upon your soul. Do not choose a course different from that which Yahweh has set you on. In a little while He will come. We need not be upbraided as Peter was when his faith fled away as he looked at the wind and the waves about him.

Matthew 14:31

"You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

Our faith is precious to the Father and He will surely try it. In the silence let us stand firm in faith and not shrink back.