

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Hearing God

(Jerry Fite)

Relationships are affected by how well we listen to one another. If we are not listening to what a person says, we are not respecting the person talking, and he definitely feels the momentary disrespect. “You are not listening to what I just said!” How can this fact manifest good will between two individuals, and enrich a relationship?

The most important relationship we can have is our relationship with God. It begins with “hearing”. When Moses introduces the “one God” to a new generation of Israelites and commands them to “love Jehovah”, he prefaces his words with the command to “Hear, O Israel...” (Deuteronomy 6:4). God wants a relationship characterized by love. How would we know this? By first hearing Him reveal his will for us to love Him is how.

Listening to what God is saying is the first level of hearing. There were those in Jesus’ day manifesting attentive hearing. “...for the people all hung upon him listening.” (Luke 19:48). Jesus had the constant and undivid-

ed attention of the people. So much so that his enemies could not find a convenient time to destroy Him.

A second level of hearing is more than just listening to what one is saying, but absorbing what is said with deep understanding. Solomon desired this type of heart. Solomon prayed, “Give thy servant therefore an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this thy great people” (I Kings 3:9)? The Hebrew word translated “understanding” is literally a “hearing of judgment” heart. God granted Solomon’s prayer by giving him a “wise and understanding heart” to “discern justice” for the people of God (I Kings 3:11-12).

Solomon not only heard God’s message of what is just and right, but was able to drive it home with wise insight in human nature. He solved the problem of discerning which mother is the true mother of a baby, by taking a sword to divide the baby equally between two quarrelling mothers.

True love which is willing to sacrifice for the well-being of another comes shining forth from the true mother who is willing to save the baby’s life instead of having her way (I Kings 3:23-27). The people saw “the wisdom of God was in him, to do justice” (I Kings 3:28). Solomon was not only hearing God’s judgment but was applying it wisely with a deep understanding.

A most important level of hearing is obeying God. We are not to look into God’s word and merely hear, but we are to be “a doer that worketh” (James 1:25). God spoke from heaven with “hear ye him” to those beholding Jesus’ transfiguration (Matthew 17:5). The kind of hearing that Jesus describes as wise is more than merely listening to Jesus’ words. The truly wise man not only “hears the words” of Jesus but he also “does them” (Matthew 7:24).

God not only wants us to be attentive to His voice; but He wants us to absorb it with wise insight, and obedient action in our lives. Truly hear Him !