

# How to Live 4 of 12

## *Listening Attitude*

#0254

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—1964

*Ministry of Healing*, page 509, the next to the last paragraph, the first sentence: What is Jesus doing? He's sending messages. What is that word before sending? "Ever" What does that mean? All the time. Heaven's radio station never signs off:

"Christ is ever sending messages..." *Ministry of Healing*, page 509.

Is that the end of the sentence? What does it say?

"...to those who listen for His voice" *Ibid.*

So we want to listen, don't we?

Turn to 1 Samuel 3. I received a new blessing in studying the first part of this chapter in preparation for this class. It's an old familiar story of the boy Samuel, dedicated to the Lord, living there in the sanctuary with Eli, the aged priest. And in this experience, we see Samuel sleeping, and he hears somebody calling, "Samuel." Who does He think it is? Eli. And notice the habit of obedience. At once he responds. He's glad. But what does Eli say? "No, I didn't call you. You can go lie down again."

But again he hears that voice, "Samuel." What does he do? Comes again. "Here I am." And again, he goes back. And the third time, he hears the voice. What does Eli tell him this time? As we would say, Eli begins to catch on. He knows what is happening. What does he tell Samuel? "Go, lie down again, and if He calls again," do what?

"...it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shall say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant hears. So Samuel went and lay down in his place. And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant hears" 1 Samuel 3:9–10.

I was pondering, why didn't the Lord, the first time He called him, just go ahead and tell him what He had to tell him? Did Samuel hear that voice calling, "Samuel?" Yes, he waited until that mind was ready. And the way to get it ready was to get its attention and to get its response. And so with you and me, my dear friends, God waits until we open the windows of the soul heavenward. And one of the great purposes of prayer is to get us in the attitude of listening.

Do you suppose Samuel listened quite intently that fourth time? And oh, how interested he must have become by this time to know what this was, what it meant, what the message was. It was building up, you see. And so as we come to God in prayer we want to pray Samuel's prayer, "Speak, LORD; for thy servant hears."

Now, will you take your hymnals and turn to 329, not to sing, but I want you to notice something. There's some beautiful poetry in this book as well as beautiful harmonies. And here is something that catches the spirit of Samuel's response:

Speak, Lord, in the stillness,  
While I wait on Thee;  
Hushed my heart to listen  
In expectancy.

Speak, O blessed Master,  
In this quiet hour;  
Let me see Thy face, Lord,  
Feel Thy touch of power.

Every stanza is beautiful. You will want to go through it at your leisure.

I want to come back to something I gave you in an earlier lesson. And that is that God has made us individuals. And you won't have an experience just like Samuel. You won't have one like me, and I won't have one like you. But you can have one that fits you better than Samuel's experience would fit you.

What is speech for? It's to convey a message. God may use the eardrum, or He may bypass the eardrum. We do not hear with the ear. We hear deep in the brain. That's where the message gets through. This (the ear) is just a medium. God can use the ear. He did on this particular night with Samuel. But he can get to your mind whether you had an ear or not, can't He? Yes, and we must not shut up God to certain avenues and say it must come through the written word or it must come through some voice we hear, or it must come in some other way. God has many ways to reach us. But if we really want His guidance and if we really want to know His will, His promise is sure.

I wish you'd turn in *Ministry of Healing* to 511 again. We've noticed this before:

"Cultivate the habit of..."

What?

"...talking with the Saviour when you are alone, when you are walking, and when you are busy with your daily labor"  
*Ministry of Healing*, pages 510–511.

Suppose that you were walking from here to the hollow. Suppose you are all alone. And just as you get partway on your walk, Someone joins you, and you recognize Him as Jesus. Wouldn't that be a thrill? Would you say something? I imagine you would. But tell me something else, somewhere along the way before long, would you stop talking and start listening? Would you? Cultivate this habit when you're walking, and also when you're on your knees in prayer.

Most of us are more or less familiar with public prayer in church and family prayer around the family altar and perhaps group prayer in a little prayer band. And usually in those prayer experiences the individual who's praying begins. He addresses the Lord and carries right on through for a moment or two and concludes the prayer and that's it. And we get up from our knees. This is usually the way it ought to be in public prayer.

In contrast to all that, when we are praying alone with God, whether it be on our knees in the closet or out under a tree or walking by the way, we want to cultivate this habit of talking while He listens, and then listening while He talks. Thus prayer can be to us a communion in which our thought is expressed to God, and His thought is expressed to us.

Now, one of the ways that, that can be, and one of the important things in making this real is to take the Bible with us into the experience of secret prayer. There by your bed or out under the tree, wherever it is that you're alone with God, let God speak to you through this Book. Do you remember that statement we had the very first afternoon? Let's see if we can pick it up again—*Ministry of Healing*, page 122, the second paragraph. What are the Scriptures? What does it say?

"The Scriptures are to be received as God's word to us, not written merely, but..."

What?

"...spoken" *Ministry of Healing*, page 122.

In the Bible, God is not merely writing to me. He is what? Speaking to me. Only the Holy Spirit can take these words penned 2,000 years ago and make them come alive in my life today.

[An inaudible question is asked.]

A very good question, Betty Rae. How do we know what to read at a certain time? Thank you for these practical questions. And here again, and my answer is not to be evasive, it's to be accurate, God has many ways of leading different individuals, and He has different ways of leading the same individual at different times.

Let me illustrate it. There are some people that get a great blessing out of reading the Bible through and they know already what they're going to read tomorrow morning, for they know where they left off today. This is good.

Now, it just doesn't happen that, that fits my personality. I don't know yet, what I'm going to read tomorrow morning. Some people would say that's haphazard; it might be for some people. But again and again, the dear Lord has given me a blessing.

Let me give you an illustration. Turn over to 1 Thessalonians 1. Just yesterday, I got a wonderful blessing from a verse here that, however much I may have read it before it never spoke to me until yesterday morning. Oh, what a blessing God gave to me in this verse yesterday morning:

“For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance...” 1 Thessalonians 1:5.

And as those words spoke to me, as Christ used them from the page to reach my heart, I responded and said, “Oh, Lord, make that so in our class this afternoon.” And I believe He did yesterday afternoon. I believe He is again today. Our Gospel is to be not in word only, but in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. Another translation that I looked up says certainty. I'm so glad for that.

To me, each day is a fresh adventure.

Here's another thing that I rejoice in. You know whether I eat apples or oranges or bananas or peaches or pears or prunes or dates or raisins or figs, I know I'm going to get something good, and it'll fill my bloodstream with glucose to give me the energy to do my work, right?

(Another question was asked.) Quite often, I have certain things that I need to study in order to either meet some problem in my life or to help me meet the problems of somebody else. And that helps me decide. But sometimes I just visit with the Lord and ask Him to direct me to something. I don't worry whether it's the right thing or not. I can strike in any place and know I'm going to get something good. But, I watch again and again as He directs me to something, not always in the same way.

I'll tell you another way I get help in finding something; when I'm looking for something else. Sometimes when I am looking in the Bible for a text, and I think, "Where is that text?" It's over in Isaiah, but I will look and look through Isaiah. But on my way to finding that verse, I pick up some other things. You see? The same in looking up in the *Testimonies*. I think there are many different ways. And God may have a pattern in leading you to find something in His Bible or the Spirit of Prophecy different from anything that I have mentioned at all.

Now, another thing that when I was a young person helped me a lot was the morning watch plan. I used to enjoy looking up that text each morning and sometimes memorizing it.

Another thing that helped me and I had this experience when I was a teenager: I got interested in memorizing certain chapters in John—John 14, 15, 16, and 17. I took a verse or two or three to memorize day by day. That I have enjoyed very much. In later years I haven't been able to do that so much because I have had to be studying a number of varied things. But I recommend that to you, to take a certain chapter, some Psalm, or some beautiful passage like those chapters in John, and memorize verse by verse.

But now watch! You can read without doing what we're studying this afternoon. You can memorize without doing what we're studying this afternoon. What I'm talking about is with the open Bible, down on your knees, talk to God about what you're reading and let Him speak to you through those words. And if you'd like a reference on that, you'll find it in *Volume 5*:

“Everyone must now search the Bible for himself upon his knees before God, with the humble, teachable heart of a child, if he would know what the Lord requires of him”  
*Testimonies for the Church, Volume 5, page 214.*

Now, do you see there is something more to this than merely sitting in an easy chair reading like we might read the newspaper or a good book?

And don't misunderstand me. I'm not seeking for a moment to teach you that you must never read the Bible sitting in a chair, nothing like that. What I'm saying is that no matter how much we read the Bible sitting in a chair, we need to let God speak to us, and we speak with Him while we're down on our knees with the open Book.

Not only the Bible, but you take a book like *Desire of Ages*. We're told to meditate on the life of Christ, especially the closing scenes. If you want something wonderful, take that chapter on Calvary, open it and ask God to speak to you and then begin reading:

“That he might sanctify the people with his own blood;”  
Christ ‘suffered without the gate” *Desire of Ages*,  
page 741.

It quotes that verse from the last chapter of Hebrews, that Jesus suffered without the gate that He might sanctify the people with His own blood. Read a sentence or two, then close your eyes and try to think of it. Then let God speak to you anything He wants to in the stillness. Then open your eyes and let Him speak to you through the printed page.

This is so much more than just kneeling down and rattling off, “Lord, bless the missionaries in the foreign lands, and bless the colporteurs, and bless my father and my mother and my brother and my sister, and the people I'm studying with, and help me to be a good boy, and so forth.” You know?

Now, don't misunderstand me. There's nothing wrong with everything I said there. But you see this is something more, don't you?

Not only are we to let the Lord speak to us through these pages, but we are to present His promises that we find in the books in prayer. Take this as an example: *Child Guidance*, page 499. Now here's a statement, a promise that Jesus is giving us and the prophet is quoting it in this statement:

"If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. When you pray, present this promise" *Child Guidance*, page 499.

Now, you'll find that here in John 15:7:

"If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" John 15:7.

There you have it. Now, how wonderful it is to take that very promise to the Lord and say, "All right, Lord, I'm willing to abide in You. I want to abide in you, and I want Your words to abide in me. Now hear my prayer. Here is Your promise. I claim it." Do you see what I mean?

God has given us in these promises, notes to be cashed, checks to be turned in at the bank of Heaven. And God will honor His own word. This is another reason we use the Bible in prayer.

Now back to *Ministry of Healing*, page 122, the next paragraph:

"So with all the promises of God's word. In them, He is speaking to us individually, speaking as directly as if we could listen to His voice. It is in these promises that Christ communicates to us His grace and power. They are leaves from that tree which is 'for the healing of the nations'" *Ministry of Healing*, page 122.

Now notice how it is that God communicates to us His power? Through the promises. Then on our knees, we take these promises and we present them to God. Here they are represented as leaves from what tree? The tree of life. And it says they are for what? The healing of the nations.

But listen. Suppose we are literally sick, and we could literally get hold of those literal leaves. What would we have to do with them? Eat them. Chew them up, right? And this is what we do in prayer, down on our knees. We take that promise, and we look at it. We look at the conditions. We dissect it, as it were. We think about it. We meditate upon it. We talk to God about it, and we claim it. We swallow it. We assimilate it. It becomes a part of us. And what does this say? In these promises, He does what? He communicates to us His what? Grace and

power. Do you want more power? Well, here it is, in prayer, on your knees, claiming the promises of God.

Now, notice God wants us to fill our minds with these promises, so if we're walking along and we don't happen to have our Bible with us, we can have the same experiences with these promises that are already stored away in these brain cells. At night, if I can't sleep I don't want to turn on the light and wake myself up more. I don't want to reach for a book. Some people do that. Well, we're individuals. I'm just telling you my experience. But friends, I thank God, it's no credit to me, but glory be to His holy name, I have thousands of Bible texts stored in up here and I can draw on them.

Well, you all can have the same. There was a time when I only knew one verse. Then I knew 2 and 3 and 4. Begin where you are, and start using these Bible texts. And so on your knees with the open Bible or walking along the trail repeating texts that you've already learned, through these promises God is doing what? Speaking to you and communicating what? His grace and power. Isn't this wonderful? Oh, I thank the Lord for it.

I'd like to just turn this into a little experience meeting now. I was just thrilled as I heard different ones of you come up and tell me what you found in the book of nature an hour ago.

This week I've been leading you into an experimental knowledge of prayer. Some of you have had experiences along this line for years. Some of you may be taking your first step this week in really learning to pray. Whatever it is, I want to invite you to come up here and speak so that all can see and hear you. And just tell your experience. If God has been giving you an experience in learning more about how to pray, tell us what He has taught you. It isn't a matter of remembering something I say. It's a matter of testifying what God has taught. And as you're thinking about it, turn to *Ministry of Healing*, page 100. This is the frosting on the cake. What's that little verse down in the fifth line? What is it?

"...ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God."  
Isaiah 43:12.

"Our confession of His faithfulness is Heaven's chosen agency for revealing Christ to the world. We are to acknowledge His grace as made known through the holy men of old; but that which will be most effectual is..."

What?

"...the testimony of..."

What?

"...our own experience. We are witnesses for God as we reveal in ourselves the working of a power that is divine.

Every individual has a life distinct from all others, and an experience differing essentially from theirs”  
*Ibid.*, page 100.

Listen. Is there anybody in this room that has an experience like yours? Is there? No, all right. Next sentence, all together:

“God desires that our praise shall ascend to Him, marked with our own individuality” *Ibid.*

All right, come. In your way, tell what God has been teaching about how to pray and how to get answers to your prayers.

[A testimony service follows.]

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