

2020- Embracing a New Vision
Fatherhood- Week #11
Small Group Notes
June 18 and 21

Main Point: Embracing a new vision in our lives means that we listen to God as He provides direction and protection, especially for fathers!

Introduction:

When is the last time that you heard from your spouse, a friend, or boss, “I have told you that before...”? What were the consequences for not listening?

What are the qualities of someone that you would say is a good listener? What are the qualities of someone that is a bad listener?

How can being around a bad listener impact you personally?

Before the session, read the passages, Genesis 12:1-4 and Genesis 22:1-5. Underline the phrases that said “The Lord said” and then circle Abraham’s response.

Today we are going to discuss what it means for us to learn to listen to the voice of God.

Discuss:

1. Great listeners realize confession brings clarity.

- Read Isaiah 59:1-2.
- Silence from God is a form of judgment.
- Sin is the leading cause of static in our lives.

Explain: Isaiah 59 looks at the state of Judah and how the people struggled to trust and hope in the Lord. Isaiah spoke to them about their sins, transgressions, and iniquities which kept them from hearing and seeing God as the one who could redeem them. These characteristics contrasted the powerless idols that tempted Israel (44:6-23).

If we don’t listen to God, we can be like the Israelites and replace it with false voices.

What are some false voices in our culture today that people can listen to before listening to God?

What are ways that static can begin to be removed? (reading God’s Word, spending time in prayer, sharing our faith) Why does this take daily discipline? How have you been doing in these areas?

For fathers: What are things that can bring static in our lives that impact how we hear from God clearly? What is your current static?

2. Great listeners turn down the volume in their lives.

- Read Mark 1:35. Great listeners learn to turn in early and late.

Explain: Jesus' time alone with God also provided Him the opportunity to rest. As we walk with God, part of that walking involves resting. But we can only truly enter into that state of Sabbath rest through faith, trusting in God's finished work on our behalf. When we do, we will remember that because of Jesus, there is nothing else we have to do.

When it comes to your day-to-day mission as a disciple of Christ, how much of a priority is time alone with God?

What is the greatest obstacle you face in your devotional life?

In each of the times that you see in the gospels that Jesus went away to pray, it is followed by a crisis. How does Jesus' example of praying before a crisis occurs impact how you prioritize prayer in your life?

For fathers: what are ways that we can become lazy in our devotion life? How can that impact our wives or children?

3. Great listeners learn to look for a verse, not just listen for a voice.

- Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 and 1 Samuel 3:3.
- Often the reason that we don't hear God speak is because He already has.
- God speaks through His Word, the promptings of the Holy Spirit, Godly friends, and difficult circumstances.

Explain: Paul's words to Timothy are reminders of the sufficiency of Scripture alone as it is God's revelation of Himself and His purposes. Samuel's example shows us that he desired to be in the right place physically, emotionally, and spiritually to hear from God.

Since Scripture comes from God Himself, what then does it mean that God's Word is to be the ultimate authority in our lives?

What are the ways that you can hear from God by being in a small group? How can you share this with others that are not in groups?

For fathers: Share about a time that you faced a difficult decision and went to God's Word for the answer before anything else. What impact did it make?

4. Great listeners learn to put their “yes” on the table.

- Read 1 John 5:1-5.
- If we aren't willing to obey, I am not sure God is obligated to speak.

Explain: John makes the connection of being a child of God, loving God, hearing from God, and obeying His commands, all of which reflect putting our “yes” on the table with the correct motives and purpose.

What has been preventing you from putting your yes on the table? What has the Lord shown you today about those obstacles in your life right now? What needs to change?

If Jesus is Lord of our lives, then that means He is in complete control. Why then does struggling to listen to God through His Word and in prayer reflect a lordship issue more than anything else?

For fathers: How can you surrender your schedule and priorities to God to reflect a new vision?

Do:

As you evaluate your day, what can you conclude are your main priorities? Starting tomorrow, what needs to change about your daily routine in order to help you prioritize your relationship with God?

Is there anything you are saying “yes” to right now out of a lack of faith or an effort to prove your value and worth? What is it?

What is one practical way you can help your family learn to prioritize time in prayer and rest with God? What do you hope will happen as a result?