

Bay City Wesleyan Church
July 23, 2017

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Sunday Morning 07-23-2017

Our Challenge for 2017 is to regularly ask Jesus, "Am I following you?"

When was the last time you asked?

<http://bible.com/events/253153>

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[Image]

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When was the last time you asked?

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I grew up hearing people say they heard the Holy Spirit speak to them.

Mysterious.

Mystical.

Mistaken.

Misrepresented.

Acts 16:6-11 NIV

Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them. From Troas we put out to sea and sailed straight for Samothrace, and the next day we went on to Neapolis.

<http://bible.com/111/act.16.6-11.NIV>

1 Samuel 3:1-10 NIV

The boy Samuel ministered before the Lord under Eli. In those days the word of the Lord was rare; there were not many visions. One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place. The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the house of the Lord, where the ark of God was. Then the Lord called Samuel. Samuel answered, "Here I am." And he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." But Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." So he went and lay down. Again the Lord called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." "My son," Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord: The word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. A third time the Lord called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." Then Eli realized that the Lord was calling the boy. So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

<http://bible.com/111/1sa.3.1-10.NIV>

Sermon in a Sentence

No matter who speaks, it takes time and practice to develop good listening skills.

Ways to learn how to listen

- Surrender Your Will
"Not my will but yours be done."
Or, "King Jesus, I want your will, your way, your time... Your will, your way, your time..."
- Fast and Pray Fasting from food (and to a lesser extent fasting from other things) can help us to break free of the distractions and emotions that can obstruct our ability to hear.
- Give the Spirit permission to speak "Lord, I need to know what you want me to do, and I am listening. Please speak to me through my friends, my reading, my listening, my situation, and my enemies."
- Set regular times to listen silently Make an appointment dedicated to listening to the Spirit – to be still and quiet and simply pray, "What do you want to say to me? What are you doing that you want me to join in with you?"
- Ask and then do something else This is especially good for those of us who like to do things. Ask the Spirit to speak then do something else, like mowing the yard or running errands. Sometimes I find it helpful to sleep on it.

Questions to prevent mistakes

- Does this idea agree with what the Spirit says in the Bible?
- Does this idea match what the Spirit teaches us is right?
- Does this idea match what Jesus is doing in my life and world?
- Does this idea connect with the way the Spirit teaches us to think?