

## Hard of Hearing

I have a friend who has been a musician for many years. Unfortunately, the beautiful music he has made for worship, weddings, and funerals has affected his hearing. He is such a kindhearted man, so I feel awkward when I occasionally need to shout at him in order to be heard. (Masks are not helping me in this regard.)

I sometimes wonder what it must be like for God as He tries to get our attention. Jesus said on more than one occasion, "Whoever has ears, let them hear." (Was He speaking to me? Is He speaking to you?)

During this Lenten season our 40-day devotional challenge has been the "Being Challenge." Each week we are invited to reflect on a keystone habit of Jesus and how well we imitate Jesus in that area of our lives. In particular, the second, third, and fourth keystone habits of Jesus really relate to having ears to hear. (It's like Jesus is on His cell phone saying, "Can you hear me now? What about now? Can you hear me now?")

**Study Scripture** | God has so clearly spoken through His Word. In a world filled with so many mixed messages (as well as mixed-up and destructive messages), I truly need to hear His voice, soak in His grace, and get to know Him more and more—my Savior and my God.

**Prioritize Prayer** | God is never hard of hearing when we are speaking. More than we can even imagine, He is laser-focused on every word...and even when words fail us, His Spirit can supply "wordless groans" as He Himself intercedes for us (really take a moment to read Romans 8:26-27 and give a little thought to that!). And when we make time to pray, I believe we also begin listening more and more to the whispers of the Spirit. *(By the way, if you're keeping up with the Being Challenge—or catching up with it—this week is all about prayer. Today you should be around Day 22. Just pick up there if you don't know where to begin or where you last left off!)*

**Seek Solitude** | This one keystone habit might possibly be the most challenging for many in our world today. "We can get so busy, so preoccupied, that we don't take time to be quiet and connect with God. The habit of seeking solitude gives us opportunities to simply be in relationship with God" (Being Challenge, p. 44-45). And maybe this is the heart of the BEING Challenge. How do we relate to and just enjoy being in the presence of God, the God who loves us, the God who sent His Son to be with us in time so that we would be with Him for all eternity? Can we make time and space for that?

You see the thread there that runs through each of those, right? Know this: None of this is about checking the box or scratching these things off our list. It is all about a relationship, graciously initiated by our God, made possible through the forgiveness won for us by Jesus, a relationship that is alive and empowered by the Spirit of the Living God that dwells within us.

*The Lord loves you—He is crazy about you—and He wants to keep you close. Can you hear Him now?*

~ Pastor Ken | Senior Pastor

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