

HOW HEAR WE? (Acts 2:1-8)

I. Jesus placed great importance on hearing.

- A. On at least three occasions recorded for us Jesus used the words "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."
 - 1. Matthew 11:15;
 - 2. Mark 4:9;
 - 3. Luke 14:35.
- B. Jesus wanted the people to hear what he was saying and process it to understand what He was saying.
 - 1. From this we see that simply hearing the words of Jesus was not all that He intended.
 - 2. From hearing His words, He wanted lives and understandings to be changed.
- C. Without proper hearing there cannot be proper comprehension.
- D. Jesus said something similar to each of the congregations He addressed in the book of Revelation: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."
 - 1. Jesus was telling them, "Pay attention to what the Spirit just revealed unto you from Me."
 - 2. A definite premium is placed on proper hearing by Jesus.
- E. We are going to be judged by His words one day (John 12:48).
 - 1. We are tested on what teachers tell us in school and our performances at work are judged by what we hear from our superiors and how well we perform in accordance with their words.
 - 2. We are going to be judged on how well we performed in accordance with the words of Jesus so we must make sure we place an emphasis on proper hearing of His word.

II. Not all will hear the words of the gospel.

- A. Jesus knew this would be the case when He sent the disciples out to preach (Matthew 10:14).
 - 1. The word hearing, as we have noticed, is more than just hearing the sounds of the words of the speaker.
 - 2. It also carries the idea of acceptance of the words that are heard.
- B. The importance of hearing is found in the consequences attached to not hearing.
 - 1. Those that heard the words but would not accept them would place themselves in a situation that was less tolerable to God than the people of Sodom and Gomorrha (Matthew 10:15).
 - 2. As wicked as these two cities were, God is going to be angrier with those that hear and reject His word.
- C. We still see a definite premium placed on hearing.

- D. It was the case at the stoning of Stephen that the ones to whom he was speaking are said to have “stopped their ears” (Acts 7:57).
1. They literally put their hands over their ears so as not to hear anymore of the truths that Stephen was preaching.
 2. They would not accept the words spoken by Stephen, thus finding themselves unworthy of the message.
- E. All of this was prophesied by the great prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 6:9-10).
1. If proper hearing had taken place, the Jews could have understood God’s word and been saved.
 2. Sadly, the vast majority refused to hear.
 3. Jesus and Paul both used this passage and applied it to the Jews to whom they were speaking (Matthew 13:15; Acts 28:27).
- F. We need more people who are like the Thessalonians were when they heard the word of God (1 Thessalonians 2:13).
- G. In order for salvation to take place, proper hearing must first occur.
1. If there is no hearing, there can be no believing (Romans 10:17).
 2. If there is no belief, only damnation awaits (Mark 16:16).
- H. When one’s soul is in the balances, this should solidify in our minds the premium placed on hearing God’s word.

III. **Some ways people hear today.**

- A. Some people simply refuse to hear God’s word.
1. Many people walking around on the earth have shut their ears to the truths of the Bible.
 2. They are content to live selfishly and for the moment.
 3. Whatever morsel of personal pleasure can be gotten now is grabbed and consumed on their lusts.
 4. They are oblivious to their spiritual state.
 5. This is found in the growing number of what statisticians call the “unchurched,” of which number there is a steady increase in recent years.
- B. There are those that hear through filters.
1. They filter God’s word through their denominational prejudices or the filter of their own conscience.
 2. Every passage they read is filtered through the false doctrines they have been taught or how they feel about things in their own mind.
 3. Those moved by denominationalism filter everything through their “grace” or “faith only” doctrines they have been taught.
 4. Those guided by conscience filter the commands of the gospel through their “I’m a good person” filter tricking themselves into thinking they are saved.

5. The scripture comes into their ears but passes through whatever filters they have placed and cannot change their hearts because they will not remove those filters.

C. The only way to have proper hearing is to go to God's word with an open ear, free of any filters, listening for what God has commanded.

1. Again, the Thessalonians were commended for the way they heard and believed the word that was from God.

2. Proper hearing took place with them and allowed for them to be saved.

D. Instead of passing God's word through a filter, we need to pass the words we are told and hear through the filter of God's word.

1. It is the standard by which we will be judged so we must make sure the things we are hearing and believing are in line with it, not it in line with what we are hearing.

2. If what is heard does not pass properly through the filter of God's word, we must reject it and stay with the Bible.