

Hearing: The First Step In God's Plan Of Salvation

Compiled by Paul R. Blake

Introduction:

- A. The term "hear" has many different uses:
 1. The audition of sounds - Acts 9:7; John 12:27-28
 2. To perceive by ear what is announced in one's presence - Acts 22:9
 3. To get by hearing, to learn from the mouth of a teacher - Matt 10:27
 4. To find out, to learn by the hearing of others - Matt. 11:2
 5. To listen to, hear attentively - Luke 19:47-48
 6. To comprehend, to understand - Mark 4:33
 7. To yield to, to hear and obey, to heed one - Acts 3:22-23
- B. Hearing that is attentive, understood, and obeyed
 1. Hearing with the intention to heed

I. WHAT IS IT THAT ONE MUST HEAR?

- A. The Word of the Lord
 1. Isa. 49:1-3; Heb. 4:12; Eph 6:17
 2. Rev. 1:16, 2:12, 16, 19:15, 21
 3. Some things bear listening to because of their content. The word of Christ will have profound impact on the listener, removing shells of pretense, hypocrisy and self-deceit.

II. WHY MUST ONE LISTEN?

- A. God requires it - Matt. 17:5
- B. Eternity depends on it - John 12:48
- C. Salvation begins with it - Rom. 10:8-18
- D. Security comes from it - Heb. 3:5-13
 1. Ignorance of the law is no excuse, whether one was not informed, miss-informed, or refused to be informed
 2. We live in the litigious world of warning labels because we want no harm to come to ourselves. Why do some refuse to hear the most important warning of all?

III. HOW MUST ONE LISTEN?

- A. "Listen to me" means "do what I am telling you." Hearing means heeding.
 1. Scriptural listening requires action
 2. Matt. 7:21-28; James 1:21-25; Acts 10:22, 33
 3. Luke 8:16-18 - How is the word of God coming to your mind? Through your hearers or your heeders?
 4. 1Tim. 4:15-16 - How you hear can determine not only your own eternal destiny, but also that of others.

IV. WHAT ARE SOME HINDRANCES TO HEARING?

- A. Willful ignorance
 1. The Jews failed to hear out of ignorance - Rom 10:1-3; Acts 3:14-17

2. Their ignorance was not God's fault
 - a. God had committed to them the oracles, the law and the prophets - Rom 3:1-2
 - b. God gave them the law to bring them to Christ - Rom 10:4; Gal 3:24
 - c. The prophets they bore witness of the Christ - Acts 10:43; 26:22-23
 - d. Yet with all this, they ignorantly rejected Christ - Acts 13:27-30
3. Man's ignorance today is not God's fault
 - a. God has seen to it that the Word has been preached to all the world - Acts 8:26-29; 10:9-16, 28-29, 33; 16:9-10; Rom 15:19-21; Col 1:23
 - b. God has seen that all things necessary for man's salvation were recorded - 2Tim 3:16-17; Jude 3
- B. To prove or protect a theory
 1. Some fail to hear God's Word because they have a theory to prove.
 2. Unless one loves the truth, he can and will be deceived - 2Thes. 2:10-12
 3. We must hunger and thirst after righteousness - Matt 5:6
- C. Prejudice
 1. Religious prejudice closes many ears to the Word of God. "My mind is made up! Don't confuse me with the facts."
 2. Naaman was prejudiced - 2Kings 5:9-11
 3. The Jews to whom Stephen preached were prejudiced - Acts 7:54-58
 4. Jews who heard Paul in Jerusalem were prejudiced - Acts 22:17-23
- D. Believing there is time to change later
 1. The Bible warns us about waiting till tomorrow - Prov 27:1; James 4:13-14
 2. Would you hear God's word if you knew death was one hour away?
 3. The question is how do you know it isn't?

V. WHEN WE LISTEN, WHAT WILL WE HEAR?

- A. That responsible beings who have sinned are under condemnation unless they hear and obey God's Word - Rom. 8:1-4; 2Thes. 1:7-8
- B. Christ's invitation, His plea for man to be saved - Matt. 11:28-30
- C. God's plan of salvation - Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:3-5
- D. God's approved manner of Life - Titus 2:11-12
- E. The call to duty - Matt 9:37; John 4:35, 15:2, 8; 1Cor. 15:58; Phil. 2:12
- F. The promises to the faithful and the warnings to the disobedient - Rom. 2:6-10; Rev. 2:10