

Sermon Topic: "Blessed are those who hear the Word of God" by Mr Choe Peng Sum (Laity Sunday)
Sermon Text: Luke 11:28

A. Is there such a thing as hearing the Word of God?

- The Word of God is often referred to as something to be read or studied, but it is not so commonly referred as something to be heard. However there are many verses in the Bible that talk about hearing the voice, or the Word of God.
- The title of the sermon comes from Luke 11:28. Context: In the preceding verses, Jesus had been teaching the crowds after casting out a demon. Amidst His teaching, a woman in the crowd called out and said "Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you" (v27). Jesus proceeded to reply in v28 that "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it."
- Jesus said this to convey that the words He is speaking comes from hearing the Father speaking, and keeping it in His heart and obeying it.
- There are many passages in the Bible on hearing the Word of God.

1. In the Old Testament:

- Exo 15:26 - He said, "If you will diligently listen to the voice of the Lord your God, and do which is right in his eyes, and give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the Lord, your healer." Context: These words were spoken to the Israelites following the miraculous parting of the sea to deliver them from the Egyptians, and after the miraculous provision of drinking water at Marah.
- God was revealing Himself to the Israelites. He wanted them to hear His voice, to obey Him and to know that He is their protector and their healer, but only when they know who He is, and when they listen to Him.
- However, just 2 chapters later in Exodus 17, the Israelites again grumbled about the lack of water at Massah and Meribah. They did not listen to the Lord, but hardened their hearts, as Psa 95:8 reports.
- Jesus often ended His parables by saying "Whoever has ears, let him hear". This refrain is also recorded in the letters to the 7 churches in the book of Revelations. What does this phrase mean? It means to give ear to His commandments. We have a choice to listen, or to shut Him off. We can quench the Holy Spirit, or we can grieve Him. If we do not want any words from Him, He won't push His way into our lives. However, if we give ear to Him, we will know who He is as He reveals Himself in His word.
- Moses understood this and wanted the presence of God. Exo 33:15-16 – "If your presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here..." Because Moses really wanted the presence of God, the Lord "made known His ways to Moses, His deeds to the people of Israel" (Psa 103:7)
- Moses wanted to speak to God, and God spoke to Him. "When Moses entered the Tent of Meeting to speak with the Lord, he heard the voice speaking to him from between the two

cherubim above the atonement cover on the ark of the covenant law. In this way the Lord spoke to him” (Num 7:89)

- There are many verses in the Pentateuch like Deut 28:1-2, that that that “if you faithfully obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, if you obey the voice of the Lord your God”.
- We must obey, but before we obey we must listen. How do we obey without listening?

2. What about the New Testament? And does God still speak in the 21st century?

- John 10:3-4 – “The sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out...His sheep follow him because they know his voice.”
- We are all a special people. The Holy Spirit resides in us when we accept the Lord as our Savior. That’s how we get our prompting. That’s how He leads us. John 16:13 says that “when the spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; He will speak only what He hears, and He will tell you what is yet to come”. What an exciting and powerful relationship this is, to be able to listen to the Lord and follow Him!
- John 10:27 – “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.” God knows us, even the numbers of hairs on our heads. We are not alone. He has a purpose for where He has placed us.
- Paul recounts in Acts 22:14 that upon receiving his sight, Ananias told him “The God of our fathers appointed you to know his will, to see the Righteous One and to hear a voice from His mouth” God appointed Paul to know His Will, to see Jesus, and to hear a voice from the Lord. Before being a witness for Christ, Paul had to know God, he had to hear God.
- We need to spend time with God to hear the voice of God. Matt 4:4 - “It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God’”
- Paul continues to say in Rom 10:17 – “faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ”. Our faith will arise from hearing His voice.
- However, God’s voice may be soft and we may miss it amidst our busy lives.

B. We need to turn our ears to God’s voice

1 Kings 19:11-12 - The Lord said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.” Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. 12 After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a low whisper”

- It is almost as if the passage was emphasising that the Lord was not in the wind, nor the earthquake, nor the fire. Instead, voice of the Lord came in the form of a whisper.
- If the voice of the Lord comes in a whisper, do we stop enough in our busy lives to be able to hear it?

Jesus himself did that – He made time to hear the Word of God. Even Jesus spent time with God.

- Mark 1:35 – “Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed”
- We need to be still and know that He is God – Psalm 46:10 - “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”
- Psa 1:2-3: “but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law he meditates day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither - whatever they do prospers” The Holy Spirit will never contradict the Bible. He inspired the Bible. When we meditate on the Word and when we hear his voice, we know that it is aligned to His word, and we know He is speaking to us.
- When Moses died, the Lord spoke to Joshua and these were some of His first words to Him: Josh 1:8 – “This book of law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it”
- Prov 4:20 – “My son, be attentive to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Spend unhurried time with the Lord, with inclined ears.

C. Application

- 1) Will you spend time, meditate, listen and journal as part of your habit of growth?
- 2) How will you incline your ears to hear His voice and seek His wisdom this week?