

Call to Obedience #374  
 PO Box 299 Kokomo, IN 46903 USA  
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## As They Were Able To Hear

By Pastor Reimar A. C. Schultze

**And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it—Mark 4:33.**

What is your ability to hear? Is it in small measure? Is it in greater measure? Is it in full measure? Jesus spoke to His disciples according to their ability to “hear,” that is according to their ability to understand in the inner man.

**There are two kinds of hearing.** Jesus said concerning the Pharisees: *Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand* (Matt. 13:13). Here Jesus groups the three most important means of perception into a triangle: *seeing, hearing and understanding*. Each one of them is then divided into two different categories: there is physical seeing and there is spiritual seeing; there is physical hearing and spiritual hearing; there is physical understanding and spiritual understanding because there is both a physical and a spiritual body. The physical man is born of woman; the spiritual man is born of God. This is why Jesus said: *That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again* (John 3:6, 7).

We humans communicate with each other physically. We need a physical mouth to speak and a physical ear to hear. But God is a Spirit and He communicates with us spiritually, in the inner man. Seldom does God ever use a physical voice to speak to man. The Pharisees could hear the words of Jesus physically, but they could not hear in their hearts what He meant. Every child of God has the capacity to hear the voice of Jesus in the inner man. As the natural man is born with physical ears for the physical world, so the spiritual man is born with spiritual ears to move about in the spiritual kingdom.

*Hearing* the voice of God is as essential as being *born* of God. Because if we can't hear, we can't follow, and if we don't follow, we can't be His disciples. Jesus said: *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand* (John 10:27, 28).

Notice the sequence here: **it is only as we hear and then follow that we receive eternal life.** The rebirth gets us started toward eternal life. But *following* secures it, and again, following comes by hearing. Jesus wants to guide His children today as He led His children in days of old, at night by a pillar of fire and during the day by a cloud. In those years, there was never a day in which

the children of Israel were in the wrong place. There is never to be a single day in our lives where we are to be in the wrong place, saying the wrong things, having wrong relationships and doing the wrong things. When Jesus came, He came to give us much more than the children of Israel ever had. We are to hear His voice to be His followers. If we don't follow Him, we are none of His.

The apostle Paul makes hearing from God a characteristic of every child of God: *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God* (Rom. 8:14). The Holy Spirit dwelling within us is our pillar of fire by night and our cloud by day. If we do not hear the voice of Jesus, we will miss the still waters, the green pastures, the table He has laid for us, the comfort of His rod and staff. We will miss the anointing oil and our cup will not run over. If we don't live by the voice of our shepherd, we are like sheep lost in the wilderness. We will get tangled up in thorns or be torn apart by wild beasts. Practically speaking, we end up being spiritually famished. We find ourselves going to the wrong college, marrying the wrong spouse, choosing the wrong location for living, being in the wrong church and being out of the will of God over and over again every day. Then we wonder why we are having such a difficult time and why there is no heavenly joy in our hearts.

If we do not hear and follow the voice of Jesus, then we are led by the voices of men, circumstances, desires of the flesh, or by preference, convenience, peer pressure, reason or intuition. God's purpose for every person born into the world was carefully laid out before there were stars in heaven: *For by grace are ye saved through faith...For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk **in them*** (Eph. 2:8, 10).

**We are saved to enter the work that God has pre-planned for us** and we cannot do it unless we learn to hear and follow. We cannot come to these wonderful works by ourselves. We need Jesus to guide us. If we are not led by the Holy Spirit, we are like a ship in the fog without instruments. If we don't learn to hear His voice, we miss everything for which we came to the earth. EVERYTHING! We can do all kinds of religious work, but if it is not at His direction, it will come to nothing. Jesus said: *Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up* (Matt. 15:13). *And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it.* What is the measure of your hearing?

God told Abraham to leave all his kindred behind. What was the measure of Abraham's hearing? Did he hear in small measure or in full measure? Abraham took Lot, his nephew, with him. Lot was a burden to Abraham for the rest of his life. What does it cost us if we don't hear in full measure? When God sent Abraham to possess Canaan, how did Abraham hear that time? When things became difficult, Abraham moved to Egypt only to become an embarrassment to the Egyptian court. Have you ever become an embarrassment because you

could not hear? God promised Abraham a son by Sarah. What was the measure of Abraham's hearing this time? Abraham went to bed with Hagar and we have had problems ever since. But eventually Abraham learned. He went from poor hearing, to good hearing, to excellent hearing. When God asked him to offer his own son as a sacrifice, Abraham had learned to hear in full measure. What all have we gotten ourselves into because we have not heard in full measure? What will our lives show on Judgment Day?

**Hardness of heart hinders us from hearing** and causes dullness of hearing (Heb. 5:11). Jesus said His disciples could not hear and understand the miracle of the loaves because of the hardness of their hearts (Mark 6:52). What causes a hard heart? Paul said that the deceitfulness of sin hardens the heart (Heb. 3:13). We think we can get by with a little bit of sin, especially since we are "spiritually" active. But God is holy... holy, holy, holy. Paul warned that a little leaven leavens the whole lump (1 Cor. 5:6). Any known sin in our lives will prevent us from hearing Jesus. Paul told the Thessalonians that they needed to be sanctified entirely (1 Thes. 5:23). Entire sanctification requires waiting upon God.

**Waiting upon God is the most important activity of the Christian.** It helps him to learn what God wants in his life. It prepares him to hear and follow, for nothing matters but the will of God. As we begin to wait upon God, we learn that we can do absolutely nothing of ourselves. As we come before Him, He reveals to us our hidden sins: our selfishness, pride, jealousy, criticisms, jesting and foolish talking. Any of these will prevent us from hearing the voice of Jesus. If husbands don't love their wives or if wives don't submit to their husbands, their spiritual ears will be deaf. We need to be pure.

But as we wait upon the Lord, He will begin to slay the old man out of us in order to lead us into a life of self-denial. In this process of inner crucifixion, sanctification and soul refining, little by little we begin to hear His voice. Oh, this is most marvelous. One day the Lord will impress upon you to visit someone for prayer, or He may tell you to ask forgiveness from someone whom you have wronged. The day may come when Jesus will direct you how to travel from one place to another. Oh, my friend, wait patiently on the Lord and He will direct your path. Yes, He will! The things that you do and say will begin to have eternity within them. Hallelujah! In time you will move from a small measure of hearing to a great measure of hearing, and then to a full measure of hearing. You will eventually come to the point where you will commune with your Savior throughout the day.

*My sheep hear my voice and they follow me. As many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.* Oh, what would it be like if every church member would live by the voice of Jesus: be at the right place at the right time and have the right words? What would it be like if the Holy Spirit literally led

every church service, directed every activity of every meeting? This is what we are all hungry for. Only by the Holy Spirit can we be fed.

Jesus spoke to them *as they were able to hear it*. What is the measure of your hearing?

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