

**DATE: OCTOBER 30, 2011**  
**TITLE: "ARE YOU LISTENING?"**  
**TEXT: I Samuel 3:1-10 & 19-21**  
**SERIES: "MADE FOR MORE" No. 6**

**INTRODUCTION: Are you a good listener? Are you good at listening to God?**

**ILLUSTRATION: Sherri Collins was using sign language to communicate to her husband, "talking" as they normally do. For 42 years, Sherri had not heard a word. But something was different this day. At first, she wasn't sure what was different. But then she realized it. She was hearing something.**

**Born profoundly deaf, she relied on reading lips and sign language to communicate. She graduated from the Illinois School for the Deaf, went on to college, and even got a master's degree. She got married and had a successful career. On that Tuesday, things started to change. She heard something. Sherri suddenly stopped signing to her husband and turned to the audiologist assisting her. "Oh, I can hear him signing," she said. She said, "It's overwhelming, I don't know how to explain it. It's way beyond what I expected." Sherri Collins was hearing for the first time because her new cochlear implants had just been activated. Sherri Collins had been anticipating many things after the procedure, wondering what it would be like to experience the hearing life. Her whole life would be transformed through hearing things she had never heard before. Are you hearing the things God is really saying to you? We are made for more. We are made to hear His life-transforming voice. It is a shift in posture from asking to listening. It is a change from listening to other voices to listening to the voice of God.**

**I. (vs.1-9) BE RESPONSIVE AND LEARN TO RECOGNIZE GOD'S VOICE**

1. Young Samuel was serving before the Lord, under Eli the priest, in the temple, during a season of spiritual famine.
2. Scripture tells us these were days when the word of the Lord was rare for visions or divine or special revelations, as they were not many.
3. There was no acknowledged prophet to speak the word of the Lord at this particular time.
4. Samuel carried out his service willingly and naturally, but without a personal connection between himself and his God or a direct responsibility toward the people as a spiritual leader.
5. Eli the priest, who had failing eyesight, was lying down in his usual place and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was.
6. While lying down, the scripture tells us the Lord called Samuel.

**ILLUSTRATION: (\*CARTOON – second one with words, "Ian! Go to bed!") Deborah Hough tells the story about her 3-year-old son, Ian, who enjoys the Bible story about Samuel hearing God's voice at night. One evening, after reading the story to Ian, she asked him if God had ever spoken to him. "To my surprise," she said, "he answered, 'Yes.'" "What did God say to you?"**

she asked. Ian thought and then said in his deepest voice, "Ian! Go to bed!" She said, "That explained why Ian settles down more quickly when I'm outside his room and tell him to go to bed." (Deborah Hough, Auburn, Wash. Christian Reader, "Lite Fare.")

7. What is God saying to you these days?
8. How do you know it is really God speaking to you?
9. When he heard a voice, Samuel answered, "Here I am," and ran to Eli.
10. Samuel had a responsive and obedient heart.
11. He did not ignore the call or say, "Just a minute."
12. Samuel's willingness to get up three times in the night, apparently without complaint, speaks well for the character of the young priest.
13. The first two times he ran to Eli, Eli said he did not call and sent him back.
14. Samuel was responsive to the call but he did not recognize the caller.

**"Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord: The word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him." (I Samuel 3:7)**

15. Have you learned to recognize God's voice?
16. Samuel knew he was being addressed, but he did not know it was God.
17. He needed to learn how to recognize God's voice.
18. In other words, it's possible for God to speak to someone and for that person to know something is going on, but still, they do not recognize God's voice.
19. Samuel was not familiar with the Lord's voice.

**ILLUSTRATION: (\*Prop - flute) Stephen Macchia tells of the child who was told by his father during a symphony orchestra concert, "Listen for the flutes in this song. Don't they sound beautiful?" The child, unable to distinguish the flutes, looks up at his father with a puzzled look, "What flutes, father?" The child first needs to learn what flutes sound like on their own; separate from the whole orchestra, before he is able to hear them in a symphony. So it is with us as children of God. Unless we take the time to hear His voice in the quiet moments of life, we will not be able to hear Him in the symphony sounds of life.**

20. Each one of us has to learn how to recognize when God is calling and speaking to us and what He is saying to us.
21. It is a myth that God will only speak and give guidance to spiritual giants, for God has a word for all of us if we will be responsive and learn to recognize His voice.
22. There are many voices that speak
23. Voices such as false impressions, desire, personal preference, pleasure, opinions of others, hurts, feelings, and emotions.
24. Each one of us must determine if what we are thinking or feeling is from the Lord or if it is our own voice or another voice.

**ILLUSTRATION: (\*Cartoon second copy- "How about two out of three?") I heard about a young man that prayed to know God's will in deciding who to date. He said, "God, I'll flip a coin. You direct it. Heads it's Patty who is much prettier, and tails, it's Beatrice." He flipped his quarter and looked at it and saw that it was tails. He quickly prayed, "OK, God, how about two out of**

**three?" We so often want God to bless what we want. To fulfill what we desire. We listen for what we want to hear.**

25. Discerning the difference between my will and God's will takes learning to recognize God's will and voice.

26. How do you know it is really God speaking and how do you recognize His voice?

27. To recognize God's voice, we must be responsive to Him as He calls and speaks to us through prayer, worship, the Word and His Spirit.

28. To recognize God's voice, we must come into a relationship with Him, knowing Him personally and intimately, becoming familiar with the His voice.

29. It is not just knowing about God, but really knowing Him personally in His fullness as we seek His face.

**"My heart says of you, 'Seek his face!' Your face, Lord, I will seek." (Psalm 27:8)**

30. Knowing the characteristics of God will help us so we can easily identify that what we hear is coming from His heart.

**ILLUSTRATION: (\*\*Picture of book) - In his book, "Hearing God," Dallas Willard tells the story of Charlie Frank, who raised the elephant, Neeta from birth and trained her as a circus performer. Upon retirement, he gave her to the San Diego Zoo. After they had not seen each other for fifteen years, a television crew filmed their reunion. Frank called Neeta from about a hundred yards away. She came to him immediately and performed her old routines on command. Her past experience gave her the power to recognize his voice. He goes on to say, "Humans don't always do as well as animals in voice recognition.... But humans can learn to recognize God's voice just as they learn to recognize the color red, with its various shades and characteristics, and to distinguish it from blue or yellow. A musician learns by experience to distinguish a minor key from a major one simply by hearing a melody." (Dallas Willard, Hearing God, (InterVarsity Press, 2004), p. 252).**

31. We are called to respond to His call and recognize His voice.

32. The third time Samuel heard the voice and responded, Eli realized that it was the Lord that was calling him.

**"Then Eli realized that the Lord was calling the boy. So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place." (I Samuel 3:8-9)**

33. Eli pointed him to God, for God used Eli to help Samuel recognize and hear the voice of the Lord.

34. He could not tell him what God was saying, he could point him to God.

35. We often look outside of ourselves for answers and direction.

36. We look to friends, circumstances, sermons, books or advisors, all of which can be helpful in pointing us to the place where we hear and recognize God's voice.

37. There is no replacement for personally listening to and hearing the voice of God in our lives.

38. Each of us must be responsive to Him and learn to recognize His voice.

39. In the church, we use the language, "God told me," "God called" or "the Spirit led me."

40. Well, God does speak, call, and lead, but we need to take the responsibility to make sure it truly is the Lord and that we are responding to Him and recognizing His voice.
41. Don't give God credit or blame Him for the things not from Him.
42. As God used Eli to point to Him, God can use others in our lives to point us to God's voice.
43. He has used many others in my life through the years to point me to Him and help me to hear His voice.
44. However, we must make sure it is God's voice we are hearing.

**EXAMPLE: In I Kings, we read about the man of God from Judah who was sent by God to King Jeroboam. When the king offered him food, he said, "I was commanded by the word of the Lord, 'You must not eat bread or drink water or return by the way you came.'" He then left. However, there was a certain old prophet that heard about this and went after him and invited him home to eat. The man said, "I cannot, for God told me not to. "The old prophet answered, 'I too am a prophet, as you are. And an angel said to me by the word of the Lord: 'Bring him back with you to your house so that he may eat bread and drink water.' (But he was lying to him.)"" (I Kings 13:18) The prophet listened to the man instead of God and he was killed by a lion on the road.**

45. Each one of us must be careful to take the voice of God seriously and not let others get in the way of the Lord's word to us or allow the enemy to confuse us.
46. We are responsible to learn to recognize and respond to God's voice.
47. In the changing circumstances and the busyness of life, we must respond and learn to recognize His voice.

**ILLUSTRATION: (\*Picture of telegraph) Back when the telegraph was the fastest method of long-distance communication, a young man applied for a job as a Morse Code operator. Answering an ad in the newspaper, he went to the office address that was listed. When he arrived, he entered a large, busy office filled with noise and clatter, including the sound of the telegraph in the background. A sign on the receptionist's counter instructed job applicants to fill out a form and wait until they were summoned to enter the inner office. The young man filled out his form and sat down with the seven other applicants in the waiting area. After a few minutes, the young man stood up, crossed the room to the door of the inner office, and walked right in. Naturally, the other applicants perked up, wondering what was going on. They muttered among themselves that they hadn't heard any summons yet. They assumed that the young man who went into the office made a mistake and would be disqualified.**

**Within a few minutes, however, the employer escorted the young man out of the office and said to the other applicants, "Gentlemen, thank you very much for coming, but the job has just been filled."**

**The other applicants began grumbling to each other, and one spoke up, saying, "Wait a minute, I don't understand. He was the last to come in, and we never even got a chance to be interviewed. Yet he got the job. That's not fair!"**

The employer said, "I'm sorry, but all the time you've been sitting here, the telegraph has been ticking out the following message in Morse Code: 'If you understand this message, then come right in. The job is yours.' None of you heard it or understood it. This young man did. The job is his."

48. We live in a world that is full of busyness and clutter, like that office.

49. We must learn to recognize His call and voice in the daily activities of our lives and respond.

## II. (vs. 9-10) **BE READY AND AVAILABLE TO HEAR GOD'S VOICE**

**"So Samuel went and lay down in his place." (I Samuel 3:9)**

1. Samuel made himself available to hear the voice of God.
2. He went to his place of rest to listen for God's voice.
3. Prayer is not just me talking with God but it is listening to Him talk.
4. Are you ready and available to really listen to God?

**ILLUSTRATION: (\*Picture of an R.V. – Rialta by Winnebago) During this past summer, we went camping with Sharon's Dad. He was going to drive the R.V. with Sharon to the camp site and Amanda and I were going to follow them in our car. Amanda & I were busy talking and I missed the off-ramp. Some folks feel more comfortable with older technology or ways of doing things, like Sharon's dad, who had walkie talkies for us. I tried to reach them on the walkie talkie, but other people were on the same channel and I could not get through. Sharon thought we had taken the wrong turn, knowing me, and was trying to reach us from her end, as well. She finally called on the cell phone and said to us, "I tried to reach you but could not. I guess you were out of range."**

5. If He has something on His agenda that He wants you to do, can God get through to you?
6. Are you in range in your relationship with God and not distracted by other things and voices?
7. Are you ready and available to listen or do you have so many things on your agenda that you do not have time for His?

**ILLUSTRATION: Through my years of ministry, I have received many calls from people who want to come in to see me. Sometimes they say, "This will only take five or ten minutes." That statement usually means one of two things: either it is going to take longer or they are coming to inform me of something and really don't want a response.**

8. Don't pray with the mindset, "God this will only take a minute, because I just need to tell you what to do or what is going on."
9. Prayer requires a listening heart.
10. We want God to answer our questions.
11. Make the shift from asking God to answer your questions to beginning to ask the questions God is already answering.
12. It is not, "God, speak my language and my agenda," but rather, "God, speak your agenda and your language."
13. We want to tell God what we need, but God wants to speak to us.

14. Spend time with God with a heart to be with Him and hear what God wants to say to you.

15. Your agenda can get in the way of listening to God's agenda.

**Ecclesiastes 5:1 says, "Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do wrong." (Ecclesiastes 5:1)**

16. Can God talk to you about what He wants to tell you or are you just trying to get a quick answer or information?

17. We are quick to talk to the Lord and tell Him what we need and desire but are we slow to really listen.

18. When we are full of other words, we are not available to hear the word of the Lord.

19. We must empty ourselves and make ourselves available to hear the word of the Lord.

**ILLUSTRATION: \*\*"God wants to give us something, but cannot, because our hands are full- there's nowhere for Him to put it." (Unknown)**

20. Do we really want to hear what God is saying, or do we just want God to bless what we have to say and do?

21. Samuel went back to his bed to be ready and available to hear God speak.

**ILLUSTRATION: \*\*Famous German Theologian, martyred during WWII, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in his book, The Cost of Discipleship, noted, "Christians have forgotten the ministry of listening that has been committed to them by the one who is Himself the great listener."**

**(File listening)**

22. Take time to stop and listen for the Lord to speak.

**EXAMPLE: When Paul was on trial before Felix, he witnessed to him. "As Paul discoursed on righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and said, 'That's enough for now! You may leave. When I find it convenient, I will send for you.'" (Acts 24:25)**

23. Fear got in the way of his listening.

24. Fear of changes we may need to make get in the way of listening to God's voice.

25. Fear of what God may ask of us or say to us may get in the way of listening to God's voice.

26. He put it off for a more convenient time.

27. It was interesting that it was not in the busyness of the day that he heard God's voice, but in the stillness of the night.

28. We need to take time to be still before the Lord.

**"Be still, and know that I am God;" (Psalm 46:10)**

**Put in words to chorus**

Be still and know that I am God,

be still and know that I am God,

be still and know that I am God.

I am the Lord that healeth thee,  
I am the Lord that healeth thee,  
I am the Lord that healeth thee.

In thee, O Lord, I put my trust,  
In thee, O Lord, I put my trust,  
In thee, O Lord, I put my trust.

**ILLUSTRATION: (\*\*Can we tape some laughs, noises, etc., and play it)**  
**Sometimes in my office, the noise outside my door can be quite loud and distracting. Pastor Shawn's office is a couple of feet away from mine, just across the hall. Have you ever heard Pastor Shawn's laugh. I have. Many times. It is loud. Kay, my office assistant, though a distance from my office, has a large laugh. Jonalyn is just outside my office. Many times, she is talking with people outside my door. Some of the people who stand there to talk to her, (not you, if you are one of them), can also be loud. Pastor Paul is diagonally across the hall. He talks to people who are not in his office from his office. Loud. Some of the staff and folks around them can get noisy. I tend to need to focus so, since I don't have a "turn off the noise" button, I will turn on the fan in my office to drown out the outside voices so that I am not so distracted.**

29. There are many noises that we must turn off or drown out.

30. We need to turn up the fan of God's love and tune out the other voices.

31. Turn off the sounds of the world and stop and be still.

32. Prayer is one of those times to shut it all off and listen.

33. E-mails, texts, calls, can all grasp at us and rob us of listening.

34. As one person said, the key is not to get God to speak up, but to get the world to shut up.

35. Get with God and shut out the outside voices.

36. Is there anything in your life blocking out the voice of God?

37. Pride, habits, convictions, busyness, friends, hurts of the pasts, fears, failures of the past, tiredness?

38. Get in the position to hear God's voice.

39. He will not force Himself on us but, instead, He will wait for us to be ready and purposefully listening to His leading.

40. Do you need to make a change and do a fast from all the technology and noise of our day so you can be intentional about listening for God's voice?

41. Spend a day with God listening.

42. Turn off the schedule of life and spend a couple of hours with God, listening.

43. Turn off the stuff and spend an hour with God listening.

44. It is a transition from neglecting to listening to God.

**ILLUSTRATION: (\*Picture of Disneyland) I noticed a family vacationing together at Disneyland while we were waiting in lines there this summer, sharp looking parents and two children. The children looked bored and neglected and the parents were on the phone. Though amazing, I saw the same couple many more times, and they were on the phone the whole time,**

**every time I saw them. A day at Disneyland but not a day together.  
Distracted by the noise of other voices.**

45. God wants to sit with us to talk, but the text messages and other voices of our lives can easily distract us.
46. God wants to spend time with us.
47. "Intentionality" means turning off the noises that block out or confuse His voice.
48. Be ready and available at all times, in all places, in all circumstances, to hear His voice.

### **III. (vs.10 & 19-20) BE RECEPTIVE TO RECEIVE AND OBEY GOD'S VOICE**

1. The Lord was faithful to come and speak to Samuel.
2. When the Lord came calling Samuel, Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."
3. Again, the Lord called out Samuel's name twice, imparting a sense of urgency and finality.
4. Samuel's willing response to the Lord would release Israel from the famine of divine revelation.
5. The scripture says, "The Lord came and stood there."
6. The Hebrew word for "stood" typically means "to present oneself before," suggesting that Samuel could see Him as well as hear Him
7. Samuel tuned into the Lord, ready to receive and obey what He was told.

**ILLUSTRATION: It was June 2004 when this church prayed my wife Sharon and I through the major surgery she had in Portland. The surgery and removal of the tumor resulted in complete deafness in one ear. Because she lost the hearing in one ear, she is more intentional about listening. She positions herself in restaurants and other settings, sitting a certain way so she can hear. Sometimes she will move or ask me to move so she can hear better, trying to listen. There are times in conversation where things are missed. I will say something and she does not hear it.**

8. She has learned the importance of intentional turning to and tuning into the person speaking.
9. When Samuel was saying, "I am listening," he was turning his ear to hear.
10. Turn intentionally to the Father so you can hear Him speak.
11. To be all God wants us to be, we must be more intentional about listening to Him.
12. Are there areas where you are deaf to God?
13. Are there areas that you have grown deaf to the voice of God?
14. There are noises in the activities we do.
15. We will listen to God, but if God wants to talk to us about some of the activities we are doing and we don't want to hear Him, we turn a deaf ear.
16. We listen to God about the relationships we want, but if God wants to talk to us about some of the relationships we have and we don't want to talk about them, we turn a deaf ear.

17. We listen to God's voice about the things we like to hear and believe, but we turn a deaf ear when God wants to convict us of something or call on us to make some changes.
18. We will listen to God about some of the things we do, but in the area of some of our behaviors and habits, we say, "God, I can't hear you there."
19. We turn a deaf ear.
20. "God, I am listening, but I am deaf in that ear."
21. Have we tuned Him out in some of the areas of our lives?
22. God wants to speak into our deaf ears.
23. I am concerned that God speaks to us more than we listen.
24. Learn to listen instead of merely asking God to listen when we feel like it.
25. The transformed life is a lifestyle of listening to God.
26. It is a lifestyle of not turning a deaf ear but of receiving and obeying His word.
27. Samuel's listening resulted in hearing what God wanted to say to him.
28. We want to tell God our plans and ask Him to move through our efforts, but after the shift, God says, "I want to be part of what you are up to."
29. Because he was responsive, he received God's plan.
30. Listening is not just listening to God about the things we want to talk about.
31. It is listening to God about the things He wants to talk about.
32. Listen to the things on God's mind and the things on God's heart.
33. It is a shift from what we want to know to what God really wants to tell us.
34. Learn to ask the question God is answering.
35. It is not, "God, what do you want me to do, but God what do you want me to become."
36. God had something for Samuel to do, but He also had something for him to become.
37. To listen to God is say, "God, I want to know what is important to you."
38. Samuel was receptive and received the word from the Lord and obeyed it.
39. Often, we read the Bible like a reference without hearing God's voice about the subjects He wants to talk with us about.
40. It is possible to hear the Word of the Lord and not receive and do the Word of God.

**"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says." (James 1:22)**

41. Samuel received the Word of God and then obeyed it.
42. Once you hear from God, the answer should be "yes."
43. He became the prophet of God he was called to be because with his life. he answered "yes."
44. Through obedience, Samuel became the recognized leader of the religious life of the people.

**"The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of his words fall to the ground." (I Samuel 3:19)**

45. God was faithful to Samuel and Samuel was faithful to God to obey His word.
- ILLUSTRATION: Pastor and author, Erwin McManus, tells a story about his son who, at the age of 5 or 6, begin asking, "What does God's voice sound like?" Later, at a time when he was having trouble at junior high camp, he**

told his dad, yes, he knew God was speaking to him about what he should do. His dad pointed out, "God spoke to you and you were able to recognize him." His dad said, "I will never forget Aaron's dug-in response: 'Well, I'm still not doing what God said.'" Later, he repented and did what God was showing him to do. He refused to turn a deaf ear or develop a hard heart towards the voice of God.

46. Be receptive to receive and obey God's voice.

#### IV. (v.21) BE RESOLVED TO CONTINUALLY LISTEN TO GOD'S VOICE

**"The Lord continued to appear at Shiloh, and there he revealed himself to Samuel through his word." (I Samuel 3:21)**

1. The Lord continued to speak through His Word.
2. The Hebrew word in verse 21 for "word" is one of the key terms of the Old Testament.
3. God's word came with His authority and power behind it, and as a revelation of His will and nature.
4. God continued to speak and to reveal Himself.
5. No longer was the Word of God rare.
6. There is a simplicity in hearing God.
7. Like Samuel, we can discover when He is speaking and know it is Him.
8. The channels of communication are open.
9. God still speaks

**ILLUSTRATION: \*\*Referring to the voice of God, Maz Lucado said, "The One who spoke still speaks. The voice of God is more than past tense; it's present as well."**

10. The voice of God is not silent.
11. God may not speak to you through a burning bush like He did to Moses or through a bright light like He did to Saul, but God still speaks, calls, and guides.
12. God still speaks and guides through His word.

**"For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12)**

13. God speaks through His spirit from within.
14. The transformed life is the life with the Spirit of God.
15. In this shift, you listen with your heart for the still, small voice of God instead of looking for it in the fire, thunder, or wind.
16. God confirms and speaks through His spirit within us.
17. It is not a myth that God guides and speaks through His Spirit.
18. The Holy Spirit never leads us in a direction contrary to the teachings of Scripture.
19. It's a myth that being guided by the Spirit is an optional and private matter.
20. The Spirit was sent by Jesus.
21. In the New Testament, as given in John, we see that God speaks through His Spirit.

**“But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.” (John 16:7)**

22. It caused them sadness and grief that Jesus was leaving, but it was for their good.

23. Jesus is telling them again that He is going away and will not be with them in person but that He would send the Holy Spirit to them.

24. The Holy Spirit, or Counselor, will not come until Jesus has gone, signifying that the disciples needed the spirit, to a certain degree, more than they needed the physical presence of Jesus.

25. Jesus was sending one that is not just with you but one that is in you.

26. Because the Spirit dwells within, God speaks from within, so we must listen to the Spirit within.

27. Ordinary Christian people are no longer utterly dependent on priests and prophets, but on His word and the Spirit of God and the mind of Christ.

28. God speaks from within through His Spirit.

29. The Spirit would assist them in their mission in and to the world.

**“When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment.” (John 16:8)**

30. We need the working of the Holy Spirit.

31. The Spirit can penetrate the heart and bring people face-to face with the truth about themselves and about Jesus.

32. The Holy Spirit will guide us from within into all truth.

**“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. ..” (John 16:13)**

33. The Greek word for “guide” is “hodgeesei” and means literally “to lead or guide along a way or path.”

34. The Holy Spirit is given to Christ’s followers to be a Spiritual Guide.

35. He guides us within as we listen.

**ILLUSTRATION \*“Unless there is within us that which is above us, we shall soon yield to that which is about us.” (P. T. Forsyth)**

36. He is asking you to make a transition in your faith from an eternal voice to an internal voice.

**“Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.” (Galatians 5:25)**

37. Jesus is saying, “I have not left you without a guide.”

38. Listen, for God is speaking.

**ILLUSTRATION: (\*Prop – a pocket watch) In *Directions*, James Hamilton writes: “Before refrigerators, people used ice houses to preserve their food. Ice houses had thick walls, no windows, and a tightly fitted door. In the winter, when streams and lakes were frozen, large blocks of ice were cut, hauled to the ice houses, and covered with sawdust. Often the ice would last well into the summer.”**

**One man lost a valuable pocket watch while working in an ice house. He searched diligently for it, carefully raking through the sawdust, but didn’t find it. His fellow workers also looked, but their efforts, too, proved futile. A**

small boy who heard about the fruitless search slipped into the ice house during the noon hour and soon emerged with the watch. Amazed, the men asked him how he found it.

“I closed the door,” the boy replied, “then I lay down in the sawdust, and kept very still. Soon I heard the watch ticking.”

39. Often the question is not whether God is speaking, but whether we are being still enough, and quiet enough, to hear. (93 fresh III.)

#### **CONCLUSION: ARE YOU LISTENING?**

I. BE RESPONSIVE AND LEARN TO RECOGNIZE GOD’S VOICE

II. (V. 9-10) BE READY AND AVAILABLE TO HEAR GOD’S VOICE

III. (v.10 & 19-20) BE RECEPTIVE TO RECEIVE AND OBEY GOD’S VOICE

IV. (v.21) BE RESOLVED TO CONTINUALLY LISTEN TO GOD’S VOICE

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