

Listening Prayer - *Is it Biblical*

Jesus prayed to the Father

And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me:

nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. (*Matthew 26:39*)

Jesus did not pray outside Gods' will even though He knew God would give it to Him

Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? (*Matthew 26:53*)

Jesus gave us an example not for repetition but what was appropriate to include

⁹After this manner therefore pray ye:

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

¹⁰Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

¹¹Give us this day our daily bread.

¹²And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

¹³And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. (*Matthew 6:9-13*)

After the inspired Word was finished, God speaks to us through his Word

¹God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

²Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

³Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:

⁴Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. (*Hebrews 1:1-4*)

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (*John 1:14*)

And then there is the OVERLOOKED PROPHECY for the END TIME that is often misused

Be still, and know that I am God:

I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. (*Psalms 46:10*)

Pastor Tom, in one of his messages, said that if we asked God to protect us when we were going to do something that God in His Word had warned us not to; He would not because we made our choice. Pastor Tom also said that whenever we ask God for an answer to something that He has already dealt with in His Word, He will be silent; any answer we do receive will likely not be from God.

Sometimes the **Lord** is silent;

And the child Samuel ministered unto the **LORD** before Eli. And the **word of the LORD** was precious in those days;

there was no open vision. (*1 Samuel 3:1*)

⁶And when Saul inquired of the **LORD**, the **LORD** answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.

⁷Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a **familiar spirit**, that I may go to her, and inquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold, there is a woman that hath a **familiar spirit** at Endor. (*1 Samuel 28:6-7*)

¹⁰There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch.

¹¹Or a charmer, or a consulter with **familiar spirits**, or a wizard, or a **necromancer**.

¹²For all that do these things are an abomination unto the **LORD**:

and because of these abominations the **LORD thy God** doth drive them out from before thee.

(*Deuteronomy 18:10-12*)

A man also or woman that hath a **familiar spirit**, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them. (*Leviticus 20:27*)

Familiar Spirit - formerly, a demon or an evil spirit believed to act as an intimate servant
- the art of **revealing future events** by means of alleged communication with the dead

Let no man deceive you by any means:

for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, (*2 Thessalonians 2:3a*)

And the soul that turneth after such as have **familiar spirits**, and after wizards, to go a whoring after them, **I will even set my face against** that soul, and will cut him off from among his people. (*Leviticus 20:6*)

Listening prayer is a form of contemplative prayer which emphasizes listening to God for Christian living and effective ministry. Listening prayer is contemplative because it fosters laying aside thoughts, words and emotions, and opening the mind and heart of the whole being to God who is the ultimate reality. Listening prayer also goes beyond contemplative prayer and personal integration of self by having as its goal listening for **guidance, direction, answers and insight** often within active ministry beyond oneself.

Richard Foster

When engaging in contemplative prayer, Richard Foster offers advice about how to **discern who might communicate** in the stillness. He said:

Learning to distinguish the voice of God . . . from just human voices within us . . . comes in much the same way that we learn any other voice. Satan pushes and condemns. God draws and encourages. And we can know the difference.

Though there could be others, Richard Foster admits to cacophony of possible voices that might speak: *first*, **human voices within and without** (a source that could involve hearing oneself speak, in which case, contemplators would be listening to themselves); *second*, **Satan's voice**; and *third*, **God's voice**.

In order to determine **whose voice might be speaking**, Foster provides criteria. If the **voice is positive and reaffirming**, then the voice is God's. If however the **voice is that of a bully** who "pushes and condemns," then the voice must be that of Satan.

For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. (*Matthew 24:24*)

LISTEN

vs.

HEAR

- Listen** -
1. to make a conscious effort to hear
 2. to give heed; take advice

The Greek equivalent to the word **listen** is found only **once** in the New Testament. (Acts 2:14)

- Hear** -
1. to perceive (sounds) by the ear
 2. to listen to and consider

The difference between **hear** and **listen** is ones input (**the conscious effort**)

So then **faith** cometh by **hearing**, and **hearing** by the **word of God**. (*Romans 10:17*)

Jesus emphasized the importance of the **Word** in **His** rebuke of **Satan**; **He** said "**It is written**"

Jesus says;

²⁸Come unto **me**, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and **I** will give you rest.

²⁹Take **my** yoke upon you, and **learn** of **me**;

for **I** am meek and lowly in heart:

and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

³⁰For **my** yoke is easy, and **my** burden is light. (*Matthew 11:28-30*)

The Word says;

Study to shew thyself approved unto **God**, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing** the **word of truth**. (*2 Timothy 2:15*)

Jesus says that if you know Him you will hear him;

²⁷**My** sheep **hear** **my** voice, and **I** know them, and they follow **me**:

²⁸And **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*)

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Samuel did not have to **listen** for **God**; but since he did not know **Him** he did not **hear Him**

⁷Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him.

⁸And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the LORD had called the child.

⁹Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down:

and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD;

for thy servant **heareth**. So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

¹⁰And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak;

for thy servant **heareth**. (*1 Samuel 3:7-10*)