

## **Silence and Solitude**

### Part 4: Listening Prayer

#### **Weekly Practice**

Before you start each day:

1. Put away your phone or any other distractions, settle into your time/place, and get comfortable.
2. Begin with a breathing prayer.
  - If you need a refresher on breathing prayer, go back and re-read Week 1's practice.
3. Spend a few minutes "abiding in the vine."
4. Begin each time by praying something along these lines to "clear the room" of any demonic presences or voices: *"In the name of King Jesus, who has all authority in Heaven and Earth, I command all demonic beings to leave this space and never return. In the name of Jesus, any voices of the enemy or any voices that are not of God must be silent. Jesus, just as you have said, 'My sheep listen my voice and follow me.' So now I only want to hear your voice, so please speak to me."*
5. Then do each day's exercise.

*Disclaimer: The following four exercises should each take you about 15-20 minutes to work through. Read through them quickly as a group to prep for the coming week of listening to God.*

#### **Day 1: Receiving Forgiveness**

- Often times it is difficult to hear God's voice because we are unwilling to forgive like our Father does. If you are not in agreement with what your Father says about you as a forgiven and cleansed child of God, then it is difficult to hear His voice. So we want to begin with listening prayer about the Father's forgiveness and ourselves.
- Ask, "Father, is there anything from my recent or distant past that I don't believe I am forgiven for?" Wait and listen. Does anything come to mind? If so, continue:
- "Father, your Scriptures say, 'If I confess my sin, you are faithful and just, and will forgive me of my sin and cleanse me of all unrighteousness' (1 John 1:9). So I agree with you that this sin is wrong and I receive your forgiveness and cleansing. Would you show me now an image of what it looks like for that sin to

be taken away once and for all?” It may be helpful to imagine the cross, bring the sin to Jesus, and let him take it.

- Oftentimes these things we have been holding onto take up space and God wants to fill that space with gifts of His love. Ask the Father for an image of what He wants to fill that space with.
- Thank him for what he has shown in this time and you may want journal anything that stands out.

## **Day 2: Forgiving Others**

- Another hinderance to hearing God’s voice and having intimacy with the Father is withholding forgiveness from someone who has hurt you. Remember that forgiveness is releasing the person from the debt they owe you. It is acknowledging that they can never repay what they took from you so you release them to the Father. When we refuse to forgive someone we are actually bound and connected to them. Your good Father invites you to be free from them through forgiveness.
- Simply ask the Father to bring to mind anyone you need to forgive? When someone comes to mind pray you can pray the following:
- “In the name of Jesus I release \_\_\_\_\_ in forgiveness for doing \_\_\_\_\_ to me. In the name of Jesus, I ask that you would bless \_\_\_\_\_ and restore my heart towards them.”
- Now you may want to ask the Father to give you a picture or image of what it looks like to be free from this person in forgiveness.
- Thank God for what he has done and journal whatever stands out to you.

## **Day 3: Hearing Your True Identity**

- One of the most incredible parts of listening prayer can be hearing God’s true name and identity for you. So many of us hear and believe lies about who we are. God wants to show you those lies and replace them with his truth about you.
- As with the other days, begin with finding your quiet space and clearing the room of all demonic beings and voices.
- Then ask the Father, “What are the false names or identities that I have heard and believed about myself?” Listen and feel free write them down as they come.
- Now ask God, “Father, what is the true name that you call me?” There may be one clear name, or several. Write them down. Then ask, “Father, what do you want me to know about this?” Wait. Listen.
- Agree with Him that those false names and identities are dead and gone. Give thanks for the true name He has given! Journal whatever stands out to you.

## Day 4: Listening For Others

- Oftentimes in listening prayer God often brings another person to mind that He wants to speak to you about. Ask the Father to bring to mind someone he wants to speak to you about. Maybe it is someone in your community or relational circle who you know who is in a difficult spot in life. Or maybe it's a word for your church.
- Ask the Father to bring a person to mind. Then ask the Father what he wants you to know about them- what does He want to say to them. Listen. As things come to mind you may want to write them down. Ask Him, "Is there anything else?" Wait. Listen.
- Give thanks to the Father for what he has said and shown you. Would it be helpful to share with this person or the church?