

God Is Listening: Are You Calling

Mark Beaird

Text: Selected

In the small country church in which I came to Christ there was a song I remember them singing during the altar services in which we prayed for long periods of time. It was a song to encourage us to keep praying and to be specific about what we wanted. They would sing over and over again...

“Call Him up, Call Him up,
tell him what you want
Call Him up, Call Him up
tell him what you want
Jesus on the main line now!

Nowadays things are a bit different for some. On Oct. 22, 2000, the Houston Chronicle, ran an article noting that, “If you want to make certain your prayers get to God, visit www.newprayer.com. At least that’s what the creators of this Web site are claiming. Crandall Stone, at the age of forty-nine, set up the Web site in 1999 after a night of sipping brandy and philosophizing with some friends in Vermont. The engineer and freelance consultant from Cambridge, Massachusetts, chipped in with his friends to build a \$20,000 radio-wave-transmitting Web site. Believing that God was out there somewhere, they consulted with NASA scientists to determine where the Big Bang originated. Upon their discovery that a star cluster called M13 was the oldest known part of the universe, they aimed the Web site antennas to that location. Now, they transmit about fifty thousand prayers a week from people all around the world. Of the free service, Stone says, “It appears that most people take our service seriously and that a large number are gratified by the results.” No doubt, the omnipresence of God exists in M13, but he’s also available to receive prayers in the convenience of a contrite heart. -Houston Chronicle, Oct. 22, 2000, p. 2E ***Just a note: The website is no longer available. But God is!***

Times of trouble and distress have cause people to do some strange things and to wonder if God is listening and, if so, how best to get in touch with Him. ***There is no need to wonder...***

The truth found in God’s Word tells us that God is listening and he hears. These are just a few examples....

- **God will hear the cry of a child (Genesis 21:17-18).**

In the story of Hagar and her son, Abraham had sent them away and they sat in the desert with no food or water, weeping in despair. But the scriptures say that, “God heard the boy crying, and the angel of God called to Hagar from heaven and said to her, "What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid; God has heard the boy crying as he lies there. Lift the boy up and take him by the hand, for I will make him into a great nation." Genesis 21:17-18 NIV

- **God will hear the cry of a broken wife (1 Samuel 1:1-20).** *The story of Hannah...*

Verse 10, "In bitterness of soul Hannah wept much and prayed to the LORD... *So much so that Eli the priest thought she was drunk...* Verse 15, "Not so, my lord," Hannah replied, "I am a woman who is deeply troubled. I have not been drinking wine or beer; I was pouring out my soul to the LORD. Do not take your servant for a wicked woman; I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief." Eli answered, "Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him."

- **God will hear the cry of a troubled man (Psalms 116:1-2).**

The Psalmist wrote, "I love the LORD, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy. Because he turned his ear to me, I will call on him as long as I live.

- **God will hear the cry of an oppressed people (Exodus 2:23, 24).**

During Israel's bondage the Bible says, "During that long period, the king of Egypt died. The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God. God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob. So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them." Exodus 2:23-25 NIV

- **God listened to the voice of his beloved son (John 11:41-42).**

When He raised Lazarus from the dead...

So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me."

What is special about the fact that God listens?

I. When God Listens, It Shows That He Wants to Be Involved In Our Lives.

A. Have you ever wondered why an all-knowing God wants us to tell Him what we need?

B. Have you wondered why a God who knows the very "thoughts and intents of our hearts wants us to talk to him?

II. When God Listens, It Shows Me That God Recognizes Our Need for His Attention.

A. When we know he listens, we know we matter.

B. When we know He listens, we know that we are not alone.

III. When God Listens, It Reveals How Much He Loves Us and Cares Enough To Listen.

A pastor was using a children's sermon to teach the little boys and girls about prayer. He focused their attention on Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane and helped them see how he talked with God when he had a problem. The pastor then noted that when we have a problem we can talk with our parents, grandparents, friends, or the pastor. He sought to transition toward a more direct look at God's role in prayer by asking, "Is there someone I haven't named who will listen to our problems?" He got a surprising answer when a little boy shouted, "A lawyer?" -Christian Reader, Sept./Oct. 1999, p. 10

A. He listens because He loves us.

B. He listens because prayer is a significant act of our relationship with Him.

Conclusion

Max Lucado has shared the story of a dying man who knew the vitality of prayer. A few days before his death, a minister visited with him in the hospital. Next to the man's bed was an empty chair so the minister asked if somebody had recently been by to visit. The old man smiled and gave this answer, "I place Jesus on that chair and I talk to him." He went on to explain, "Years ago a friend told me that prayer was as simple as talking to a good friend. So every day I pull up a chair, invite Jesus to sit, and we have a good talk."

Several days later the man died. His daughter had been sitting with him but slipped out for a few hours because he seemed to be resting so peacefully. When she returned to the room, she found him dead. **Strangely, though, his head was not resting on the pillow, but on an empty chair beside his bed.** When she related this unusual scene to the minister he not only understood its meaning, but also gained a greater understanding of prayer. -The Applause of Heaven, Max Lucado, 1996, p. 20-21

Reference

Wakefield, Norm Dr. (2002). *Between the Words: The art of perceptive listening*. Grand Rapids, MI. Revell Books.