

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

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Take Heed How You Hear

While Jesus was teaching His disciples, He said, *“For nothing is secret that will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light. **Therefore take heed how you hear.** For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him”* (Luke 8:17-18). Here, Jesus urged His disciples to “take heed to how you hear.” So with that thought in mind, let’s examine some ways in which we should hear. Starting with, we should...

Hear Attentively.

When Ezra read the Book of the Law of Moses to the children of Israel, it is written that, *“...the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law”* (Nehemiah 8:3). You see, we too need to be attentive when others teach and preach from God’s all inspired word. Why? Well, for our own understanding and benefit, and to make sure that the things that are being taught are in accordance to God’s will.

Hear Reverently.

Reverently is defined as, “something done in a deeply respectful way.” When we come together to worship God, and to hear a portion of His word proclaimed, we should always do so reverently, and we should not only have respect for God, but also for the others who are among us. Therefore, hold onto these words of the inspired Psalmist, *“God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, And to be held in reverence by all those around Him”* (Psalm 89:7).

Hear Honestly.

In the fourth chapter of Mark we read about the parable of the sower, and in this parable Jesus talks about four different types of soil (i.e. heart conditions), which the seed (i.e. the word of God) falls upon. He then explained, *“But these are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirty fold, some sixty, and some a hundred”* (Mark 4:20). You see, those who honestly hear and receive God’s word, and then bear fruit, are those that as Jesus said, “are sown on good ground.”

Hear Inquiringly.

The term inquiringly denotes, “being inquisitive in seeking facts.” We have an example of some who inquiringly heard the preaching of the apostle Paul in Acts 17. Here, we find that the Bereans did not just take Paul’s word for what he was preaching, but as Luke recorded they, *“...received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so”* (Acts 17:11). Therefore, just as the Bereans inquired about Paul’s preaching by searching the Scriptures, we too likewise need to do the same today, and be inquiring hearers.

Hear Eagerly.

Many of us eagerly seek out things that we enjoy, and we need to have the same attitude when it comes to the hearing of God’s word. For in Acts 8 we read where Philip was eager to teach the word of God, and the eunuch was likewise eager to learn, just as Luke writes, *“So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, Do you understand what you are reading? And he said, How can I, unless someone guides me? And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him”* (Acts 8:30-31). May we too, like Philip, and the eunuch, be eager to teach and hear God’s all inspired word.

These are just a few examples to help us take heed to how we hear. Now the question is, how is your hearing?

✍️ Brad Phillips

"THE CHRISTIAN'S RETIREMENT"

Something that impresses me when I read II John and III John is that John had not "retired" from being a Christian (II Jn. 12; III Jn. 13-14)! In both letters, John called himself an "elder" (II Jn. 1; III Jn. 1). In this case, he refers to his advanced age, not that he had oversight over a particular congregation. Therefore, we read about a man, an apostle, someone who has seen Jesus, who has performed miracles, who has endured suffering, and someone who has enjoyed many victories and experienced defeats. He had a life similar to Paul's (II Cor. 11:23-28), and John was not ready to quit yet!

John is an old man, an old Christian, when he writes these letters. Though advanced in years, he is not sitting in an easy chair! He is not grumbling about the young people! Conversely, he is not complaining about his advanced years and saying, "let the young people do it." He has not stopped serving God. Before this man dies, he will have written five books of the New Testament. In addition to this, he was consistently and continually preaching the truth. In two of his letters, he promises to visit the recipients and talk with them "face-to-face." I do not know the miles between them, but I read of a man who writes in concern for souls and then says, "I am ready to do more. I'll be there soon." John did not "retire" from the Lord's service when he reached a certain age!

Since our society considers 65 the "retirement age," I am concerned at how much this mentality has spilled over into the Lord's body. How much work are we letting slip by because those 65 and above might see themselves as retiring, not only from an occupation but also from our work as Christians? I know there are exceptions to what I just wrote. I am thankful for such people and I wish that there were more like them.

More often than not, though, I hear older folks say that they think the "younger ones" ought to "step up" and take on more responsibilities. If this is said with the mindset of furthering the Lord's work, I agree. If this is said because the older ones wish to do less, then I think this is the wrong motivation!

Don't forget that the older men are here for our instruction, and we need to be influenced by them while they are around (Lev. 19:32; Prov. 16:31; I Tim. 5:1; I Pet. 5:5)! John knew he had work to do to the end of his life. May we remember the same thing! Yes, the work of older people will look different than younger folks' work, but I beg the older folks to please not deprive us of your wisdom and experience by "retiring" too soon! It has been said, "When an old man dies, a library burns to the ground." How true! I pray older Christians will give us the benefit of their wisdom and experience while they are still here (Jn. 9:4). All of us need to be faithful to God until we leave this world (I Cor. 15:58)! Then, we can "retire" (Heb. 4:9-11)! I am thankful John didn't retire too soon, aren't you?

✍ Jarrod M. Jacobs

Remember To Mark Your Calender **Our Upcoming Gospel Meeting Is: June 12-17** **Speaker: James Hahn**

Meeting During Regular Service Times On Sunday
Meeting At 7pm Monday-Friday

Plan To Attend Every Service and Bring A Friend!

Belleville church of Christ
5635 S County Rd 200E - Belleville, IN - (317) 539-5258
www.bellevillechurch.net

Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

Evangelist

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