

2 Steps to Improve Your Speed in Listening to God

One Sunday evening, after I had spoken at a church in the morning and then led their prayer meeting in the evening, a gentleman came to me to ask a question. He had seen me respond quickly to God's voice and wanted to know how he could do it as well.

The answer I gave him could help you too, so I thought I would pass it along.

I basically told him he needed to do two things. First, he needed to walk outside his comfort zone more and make some mistakes. Second, because of the first one, he was going to have to walk in a high level of humility.

Let me unpack it a little more. I will add an important bonus at the bottom as well.

1. Make more mistakes. First, my challenge to him was to try and step out of what was easy in listening to God. I enjoyed reading Joshua Foer's *New York Times* best-seller, *Moonwalking with Einstein*. It is about memory and the world memory championships and is not a spiritual book (I have embraced the nerd within). But he shared a principle that fits in this situation.

He describes a place in learning that he called the "OK Plateau." Basically he says *you can get to a place in learning a skill where you feel good enough*. You are not making a lot of mistakes. But at that point the only way to get better was to make more mistakes. By going faster, and therefore making more mistakes, you are actually able to learn more.

The same is true of listening to God. It is one thing to hear God when you have spent hours in His presence. It is another

thing to listen as you are walking in the middle of a crowded grocery store. But in the stretching is new learning.

2. Walk in humility. This leads us to the important second part. We must walk in humility. When I am walking outside of my comfort zone in listening to God I make more mistakes. This means I can't be arrogant. It requires us to say more things like, "I think the Lord is saying this ... I could be wrong ..." *I may even need to clean up some messes along the way.*

Without walking in humility in listening you can produce a lot of damage. Coming at things from a "Thus sayeth the Lord" perspective gives people no out if they are hearing something different or if you make a mistake. We need a lot a grace and mercy for each other as we walk out the adventure of listening to God. That doesn't mean we shouldn't stretch ourselves (we should), but we just need to walk in humility as we do it.

A bonus thought is the encouragement to increase your reading of God's Word and walking it out. It is a fun place to grow. I recently read the excellent book by Rod Loy called *Immediate Obedience*. Loy challenges us to listen to God's Word and immediately obey. The book is full of stories of where that adventure took Him. I dare you to read the Word and obey what God tells you to do. Who knows where it will take us?

But if we are willing to make some mistakes and we are willing to walk with humility, we can experience more of God. As we listen to the whisper of heaven, we enter new zones of spiritual adventure.

I want to go there even more. Do you?

Kevin Senapatiratne is head spiritual pyromaniac for Christ Connection. Kevin speaks around the United States helping Christians find the fun of prayer. He is the author of *Enjoying Prayer*. You can learn more about his ministry at .

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