

Your Matt. 13:9 Secret to Listening Well

"Honey, are you going to answer him?"

"What are you talking about?" I asked my husband. "No one asked me anything."

"Elijah just asked you a question, and you completely ignored him."

"I didn't hear him say a word."

Did he really ask me something? How did I not hear him?

"I'm so sorry, sweetheart. Mommy has a lot on her mind."

Have you ever been surrounded by a room full of people, and yet you felt alone? That's a rotten feeling, but perhaps a worse feeling is talking to someone you love and realizing they aren't listening to a word you're saying.

My husband and I have learned the hard way not to have serious talks late at night. Most days, if something was on my mind, not only would it take all day to muster the courage to share my heart about it with my husband (especially if I was upset with him), but bedtime was the only time we had alone. In typical fashion, I had to share every detail just to get to the point, and it never failed that Frank would dose off before I ever made it there.

The next morning, I'd wake up feeling resentful, and—even though it was due to my own long-windedness—unheard. Like most of our false internal dialogues go, I felt unimportant. Now I'd been guilty of making my son feel unimportant, and sadly, that wasn't the first time.

How can we be so present, and yet not be present at all?

In Scripture, Jesus spoke to the multitudes in parables because even in seeing, the people didn't see and in hearing they didn't hear or understand (Matt. 13:13). In the Psalms, David earnestly asks God to hear him. In its Hebrew origin, "hear" means "to pay attention and respond." One of the most precious promises we have from God is that He hears us and He responds.

He pays attention to his children.

My son was calling for me, but I simply wasn't paying attention. I don't want to be like the disciples who, in hearing, never heard. When my children call out "Mommy!" I want to give them my full attention, just as my Father in heaven gives us His. Don't you?

"Whoever has ears to hear, let him hear" (Matt. 13:9). {eoa}

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