

What Happens When You Listen to God

True friends are hard to come by. Ron and Jackie Hill are those kinds of friends. While we only go out with them about once a year, it feels as if we have just seen them the week before. We know that if we needed them, all we would have to do is call, and they would drop everything to help.

Once they shared a heartwarming story about their daughter Sarah. Sarah is a behavioral therapist who specializes in working with autistic children. She has a heart for these special kids. At one time she found herself with only 20 hours of work a week. Finances were tough.

Wisely, she began to seek the Lord, and boldly asked Him for more hours. As she prayed, she heard the Lord say, "Volunteer." She prayed some more. Again she was impressed in her spirit with the simple word *volunteer*. Sarah honestly admitted that she responded out loud with, "Have you lost your mind, God? I don't have enough gas to even get back and forth to work. How am I going to be able to drive somewhere to volunteer?" And as God so often does, He merely repeated, "Volunteer." Obediently, albeit a bit reluctantly, she obeyed.

Sarah was attending a very large church, and asked to volunteer as a Sunday school teacher for autistic children. With her credentials she was welcomed with open arms. Shortly after that, the therapist group she works with let her know that they had a client for her. When she went to meet them she immediately fell in love with the family. As they talked, the parents shared that they needed her help on Sundays. Her heart sank. Sadly, she explained that she could not help them because of her commitment to the church.

They explained that their need was for someone to help them so

that *they* could go to church. When she asked them where they attended, it was the same church where she volunteered. These godly parents wanted someone to take their autistic child to the very Sunday school class that she was helping in. In other words, they were now going to *pay her* to do what she had *volunteered* to do at the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

God never speaks to us in startling ways, but often in ways that are easy to misunderstand. Elijah desperately needed to hear from the Lord. Standing in a cave on a mountain, “a great strong wind was rending the mountains and breaking in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a *sound of a gentle blowing*” (1 Kings 19:11-12, emphasis added, NASB). And in the gentle wind Elijah heard the voice of the Lord.

In each of our lives, the Lord usually speaks to us in a still small voice. And like the young boy, Samuel, we must learn to respond with “Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening” (1 Sam. 3:9). Nothing comes into our lives without God Himself speaking into the situation. Too often, our spirits are so overwhelmed with the circumstances we find ourselves in, that we forget to say, “Speak, Lord.”

This week in your walk with Christ, when you find yourself not sure which way to turn, practice saying out loud, “Speak, Lord.” As you learn to take this vital step in your deepening relationship with the Father, remember to *listen and obey*. His answer may not make total sense. But if you ask for His guidance, He promises to answer.

God usually doesn’t shout. Most often, you will sense a gentle blowing. And in that warm wind of your spirit, you will find the voice of God. As you listen, your spiritual ears will grow more and more acute, and like Jesus did, you will learn to hear God’s voice all the time. I promise.

PRAYER POWER FOR THE WEEK OF 12/30/13

As we approach a new year this week, take some time to reflect on your spiritual walk, realign your priorities to always seek God first before undertaking any new endeavor, and listen to His still small voice. Thank Him that He orders your steps and has the perfect plan for you. Ask Him to direct you in setting some goals for the New Year and bringing you the divine connections you need to accomplish His plans for you. Continue to pray for Israel to fulfill God's purposes in this season. Remember those persecuted for righteousness sake and ask the Lord for a global harvest of souls and for revival to ignite and spread throughout our own nation. Join those who are heeding God's Word in humility to turn from their wicked ways, and seek His face. He has promised to heal our land if we do so. 2 Chron 7:14; 1 Kings 19:11-12; 1 Sam. 3:9.