

“Jesus’ Claim: People who belong to God listen to Me”

If you could listen to just ONE t.v. show, radio program, or media source, what one and only one show would you listen to? ESPN? The Cartoon Network? The Wheel of Fortune?

Today’s message is designed to get you thinking about life’s most important listening opportunity.

A. Jesus was sent here by God.

John 8:42-47 (NLT)

⁴² Jesus told them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, because I have come to you from God. I am not here on my own, but he sent me.

ALERT: Not everyone is a “child of God.”

Romans 8:14-17, For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.

¹⁵ So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God’s Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, “Abba, Father.” ¹⁶ For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God’s children. ¹⁷ And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God’s glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.

B. You have to hear Jesus before you understand Him.

ILLY: Ear muffles prevent understanding. We’re BORN with these on our spirits. We are spiritually deaf until we agree that Jesus was sent here by God.

John 8:43, Why can’t you understand what I am saying? It’s because you can’t even hear me!

You’re witnessing to a friend about Jesus, or having a spiritual discussion; and it seems they just don’t get it, they’re not understanding you. They CAN’T understand spiritual things until and unless they accept that Jesus was sent here by God.

So, the question isn't "Honey, won't you come to church with me today?" it's "Honey, do you see that Jesus was sent here by God and that we must listen to Him?"

C. The devil: father of lies.

The devil is a thieving, murdering liar who is opposed to the truth and eager to destroy you and everything you care about!

John 8:44, For you are the children of your father the devil, and you love to do the evil things he does. He was a murderer from the beginning. He has always hated the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies.

If people understood the nature of the devil, of course they'd reject him. But, as the Father of Lies, the devil lures people to his authority with deception and false promises.

The antidote for the devil is "the truth ... the person of Jesus."

ILLY: During memorial day weekend we think of the sacrifice that has been paid by our soldiers throughout our history. If people are to die in battle, we want the battle to be just and the cause to be true! Nobody wants to die for a lie.

D. Acting "naturally" leads to unbelief.

Pray to God to act super-naturally in your life and the lives of those you love! Why? Because Jesus says, left to our own we'll drift to unbelief:

John 8:45, So when I tell the truth, you just naturally don't believe me!

E. "Actions speak as loudly as words."

VIDEO: The Marine Corp motto is "Semper Fidelis," it means "always faithful."

The Marine Corp talks about "tradition" and "pride." They use three words to explain their tradition and pride: Honor, Courage, and Commitment.

HONOR: A code of personal integrity, honor guides those who do the right thing when no one is looking. It is not only a duty, but also a distinction, as those who possess honor are held in honor. It's found in one's beliefs, but exhibited through

one's actions. Marines are held to the highest of standards, ethically and morally. Marines are expected to act responsibly in a manner befitting the title they've earned.

What can you personally do to help people see the truth? Live honorably, as Jesus did.

John 8:46, Which of you can truthfully accuse me of sin? And since I am telling you the truth, why don't you believe me?

You want to live so well that your actions speak as loudly as your words about Jesus.

F. Listening = belonging.

John 8:47, Anyone who belongs to God listens gladly to the words of God. But you don't listen because you don't belong to God."

That's pretty clear. Belonging to God and listening to Him go hand in hand. They go together like peanut butter and jelly!

When I LISTEN to God I'm getting the encouragement and information I need to succeed.

When I BELONG to God I'm getting the protection and confidence I need move ahead.

A closing prayer ... "Dear God, unstop our ears so we can hear You clearly through Your Son, Jesus. We believe that You sent Him here for us. You gave Him the words to say. He lived out those words perfectly to inspire us to belong to You. Oh God, help us belong, help us listen! In Jesus' name, amen."