

“Do You Need A Spiritual Hearing Aid?”

Luke 9: 28-36

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I know what was said, I wish I knew how it was said. I think the way it was said would give us as much insight into its meaning as the words themselves. I am referring to Luke 9:35, “This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.”

These words were spoken by God while Jesus and three of his disciples were on a prayer retreat. Peter, James and John had fallen asleep but were awakened by bright lights and the appearance of two men from the past, Moses and Elijah. We commonly refer to this as the Transfiguration of Jesus.

After Peter made a comment about building three shelters for Jesus and his guests, a cloud enveloped them and a voice came from that cloud which said, “This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him.”

Again, I wonder how these words were uttered. Were they spoken out of frustration, pride or love? Perhaps they were spoken out of all three. Let me explain.

**These words could have been spoken out of frustration.** It was evident that some people were not listening to Jesus. What Isaiah said was happening in his generation was true for Jesus’ generation. People were hearing but not hearing.

Many religious leaders were not listening to Jesus. Their minds were closed to a fresh word from the Lord. They felt they knew who God was and what He expected of people and did not need this homeless, penniless Galilean carpenter confusing them or their followers.

I don’t think Simon Peter was listening to Jesus because he did not like what Jesus was saying, especially when Jesus talked about being a “suffering servant” and dying. How could Jesus combat evil by dying? How could he lead a revolution by leaving? When Peter heard Jesus say things that made no sense or he disagreed with, he argued with Jesus or tuned him out. Maybe that was one reason Moses and Elijah showed up that night. They were the only ones who would listen to Jesus talk about his impending crucifixion without arguing or ignoring him.

We always said that my Grandmother Browning was not hard of hearing, she merely had selective hearing. There were times when you could get in her face and scream and she would have this confused look on her face. There were other times when you could be in another room talking and she would make a comment on what you said. We came to believe that she would listen to what she wanted to hear and tune out everything else. That’s a luxury of living to be 96, I guess.

I think that was what Peter and others were doing. When they heard Jesus say something they liked, they embraced him. When he said things they did not agree with, they quit listening and started talking.

Are we guilty of the same behavior? Absolutely. Is there a person here who can read the Sermon on the Mount without saying, “Yes, but...?”

Does this mean we should not make comments about Jesus’ teaching or listen only to Jesus? No. Dialogue is healthy and getting others’ opinions can be helpful. However, we must be careful not to drown out Jesus’ words with our own or consider

anyone's counsel higher than our Lord's. "This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to **him.**"

**Maybe these words were spoken out of great pride.** Perhaps they were the words of a proud father who was commending his son to the world. Could this have been God's way of saying, "Listen to Jesus because he is my son! Furthermore, he is a good man who has been close to me all his life. He has been attentive, obedient and faithful. He has prepared himself well to be my spokesman. I am pleased with him and eager for you to listen to him." I think so. I can see this slant on this verse.

During the Presidential Campaign of 2000, Barbara Walters interviewed Former President Bush. One question she asked was, "Do you think your son is ready to lead this country?" As you would expect, he beamed, and if I remember correctly, said, "Yes. Certainly. I have all the confidence in the world in him. He has a lot to say that the American people need to hear and I hope they will listen to him and his ideas."

I think this may have been God's message to the world on the Mount of Transfiguration. A proud father was validating his son's right to speak and need to be heard. Jesus was no ordinary man. He was God's Son chosen for this honor and responsibility. It was time for him to speak and for the people to listen.

**Finally, these words could have been spoken out of love and compassion.** It was not only Jesus that God loved, but also the people Jesus would address. God knew that people were confused and lost like sheep without a shepherd. He knew they needed help in order to know how to arrange values and priorities, how to handle conflict and temptation, how to deal with problems and challenges, how to respond to enemies, how to relate to Him, how to handle disappointment and failure, how to earn and manage money, how to parent children and how to prepare to die.

He wanted to provide that help and did through the gift of Jesus. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" John 3:16. God gave the world more than a sacrificial lamb. He also gave the world a master teacher and wonderful role model.

**Life begins by listening to Jesus. So, how do you do that?** You study his words. Go to the Gospels and read what he said. Then spend time in prayer asking him what those words mean for you in your situation. Allow the Living Word to shed light on the written words. He will and you will be better because you have listened.