

# Listen to Your Father

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Thanks, everyone. Good morning and welcome to SBC. For those of you who are fairly new here, just visiting, I'm the Associate Pastor Dave Nannery, getting to enjoy the opportunity to bring God's Word to you this morning as our lead pastor, BK, is on a well-deserved, well-needed break with his wife. So we're looking forward to welcoming them back, but I'm eager to bring God's word for you today. So what I want to do is start out with prayer and asking his help, asking his mercy as we hear from him. Our Father, we are grateful that we are not wandering through this world without your voice. You have not been silent. You have spoken to us, and we confess that we have not been attentive to your Word. And so, Lord, I know that even now, if anyone here is like me, we have a tendency sometimes to let our minds wander. We have a tendency sometimes to lose track. We have a tendency sometimes to close our ears to the message. I pray, Lord, will you give us eyes to see, ears to hear, a heart to understand, the wisdom, the encouragement, the admonition that you have for us this morning. Lord, strengthen us. May your Spirit work to give us a supernatural ability to hear your Word and to connect it with the real circumstances, the real relationships in our life.

Strengthen, encourage us for this task this morning, we pray. Amen. Okay. How many of you, when you were young, had a listening problem?

Oh, is this more common than I thought? Okay. How many of you, according to your parents, had a listening problem? Quite a few, eh? Oh, man. I was just thinking about that this morning.

A couple days ago, a few of us were watching a movie, *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*, in which the main character tends to, just in the middle of conversations, just to drift off into a fantasy world where crazy, wild things happen in his imagination. And, you know, it was kind of funny because several of us said, this is very relatable. It's, you know, if you were to ask my parents, hey, did Dave have a listening problem when he was younger? They say, well, for the most part, he listened. But sometimes he would get so engrossed in a book or so engrossed in his thoughts that he would not hear what is going on. Anybody else like that just get just so fixated? I once got so fixated on a book I was reading that I was sitting waiting for a flight in the airport near my gate, and I didn't hear the PA going, calling, literally calling my name that I, that the flight was about to take off.

And I missed the flight because I was so locked into the book I was reading. Ever since then, I have a new policy. I set a timer on my watch to go off just in case something like that happens again. So I've got to actually get a timer that says, listen up, listen up. You need to listen.

[ 3 : 2 2 ] I need to be told to listen. I need to remind myself to listen. I want to tell you that those of you who are parents today might be tempted to think that your children don't listen to you, that they're like that all the time. Your children do hear more than you think. They hear more than you think. And those of you who are grown up, you know this. The words that you heard from your parents, even when they didn't think you were listening, they tend to stick with you. For better or for worse, those words tend to stick with you. And on Father's Day of all days, we can certainly acknowledge that there's a real impact that the words of fathers can have on their children. And the Apostle Paul, he talks about that very thing because he, according to him, became a father. He became a father to the church in Thessalonica. So even if you do not have biological children of your own, you can become a mother.

You can become a father to the people that God has put around you who need a father, who need a mother. And to this church in 1 Thessalonians chapter 2, he says, You know how, like a father with his children, we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

So the words that we receive, the words from our mothers and the words from our fathers, those words shape us for better or for worse.

What words are you going to receive? What words have you received? Would you become the man or the woman that God made you to be?

Then you need good words from a good father. You need to listen to your father. And if you are a Christian, then God, your father, has good words for you.

[ 5 : 25 ] The Apostle Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians chapter 2, as it is written, What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him.

These things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. And so God, the Holy Spirit, he has prepared good words for you.

And we find some of those good words in the book of Proverbs. That's where I want to start, is in the book of Proverbs. Proverbs was written for young people who need help, who need good words.

If you were launched into the world without directions, without a roadmap, if you are making your way through a world that is increasingly uncertain and unstable, if you are left disoriented and unsure what you are here on earth to do, if you are wondering how you can know who you can really trust, if the message that you grew up with was figure it out on your own, then your father has words of wisdom for you.

In Proverbs 2, verses 1 through 5, here's what the wise father tells his son. My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding, yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God.

[ 7 : 30 ] If you are a Christian, then you have a wise father, a father who speaks to you words of wisdom. And he has more words for you still.

If you find that it can be very hard to tell right from wrong in this messy world, if you've learned that you don't always know how to do what's good, if you lack the courage to stick with good thoughts and words and actions, if the message you grew up with is you can't do anything right, then your father has words of righteousness for you.

In verses 6 through 9, the wise father tells his son, For the Lord gives wisdom. From his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

He stores up sound wisdom for the upright. He is a shield to those who walk in integrity, guarding the paths of justice and watching over the way of his saints.

Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity, every good path. If you are a Christian, then you have a righteous father who speaks to you these words of righteousness.

[ 8 : 56 ] But maybe you tell yourself, those words aren't from me. I have to hide away. I'm dirty. I'm gross inside. I belong in the gutter.

Maybe you tell yourself, no, no, no, I have to cover up. If everyone saw through me, they would realize what a fake I am. Maybe you tell yourself, no one wants me around.

I will always be an outsider forever. Maybe you tell yourself, I will always be ashamed. Then your father has words of honor for you.

In Proverbs 4, verses 7 through 9, the wise father says these things to his son. The beginning of wisdom is this. Get wisdom.

And whatever you get, get insight. Prize her highly. And she will exalt you. She will honor you if you embrace her.

[ 9 : 56 ] She will place on your head a graceful garland. She will bestow on you a beautiful crown. If you are a Christian, then you have a righteous father who speaks to you words of honor.

But maybe you would object. You don't understand. My life is an absolute mess. Maybe you would tell me, there's no more hope. I am what I am.

It's too late to change. Maybe you would say, what good is there for me? Maybe you would say, I'm better off dead.

Then your father has words of life for you. In verses 20 through 22, the wise father tells his son, my son, be attentive to my words.

Incline your ear to my sayings. Let them not escape from your sight. Keep them within your heart. For they are life to those who find them and healing to all their flesh.

[ 11 : 11 ] If you are a Christian, then you have a righteous father who speaks to you words of life. Would you lay claim to all these words?

Would you listen to your father? If you would listen to your father, you must listen to his son. You must listen to his son because your father's final word is his son. Your father's final word to you is his son.

Will you listen to his son? Will you listen to Jesus Christ as your savior, as your Lord? Those words are for those who hear and respond to Jesus Christ.

During his earthly ministry, Jesus at one point took three of his disciples up a high mountain and there he revealed who he really is.

[12:16] Not only fully man, but fully God in all of his glory. The glory was revealed and we read that he was transfigured before them.

His clothes became radiant, intensely white, as no one on earth could bleach them. And then we read in Mark chapter 9, verse 7. A cloud overshadowed them and a voice came out of the cloud. This is my beloved son. Listen to him. Listen to him. Would you lay claim to your father's words? Would they be your own? Do you want to hear these words of wisdom and righteousness? Do you want to hear these words of honor and life? Day after day after day, you cannot hear your father's voice unless you listen to the son he loves.

Why? Why can't we just set aside Jesus as sometimes helpful, sometimes useful?

[13:29] And then just get the words of encouragement from our father and the words of life from our father. Why must we listen and pay attention to the son and accept him as not only our savior, but as our Lord?

We read why in Hebrews chapter 1, verses 1 to 3. There we are told, long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets.

But in these last days, he has spoken to us by his son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature. And he upholds the universe by the word of his power.

The son is just like the father. In every way that the father is God, the son is God too.

[14:38] If you want to know what God is like, you must look at the son. If you want to know the heart of God for you, you must pay attention to the son.

If you want to know what God has said, you must listen to his son. You must listen to the son first. You must listen to the son persistently.

Consistently. So let me throw this out. Who are you listening to first? Who are you listening to first? When you get up in the morning, whose voice do you hear first?

Whose voice do you seek out first? What words do you read first? Do you first pull out the phone next to your bed and look for words?

Do you turn on the TV and listen for words? Do you seek out words of righteousness, words of life, words of wisdom?

[15:53] Who are you listening to first when you have a problem in life and you don't know what to do? when you are overwhelmed? Do you call a parent or a friend or a pastor for help?

Do you Google it? Do you look it up in a book? Who are you listening to first when you are discouraged or guilty or ashamed?

Do you listen first to that inner critic that's always there in your head? Do you ask your spouse or a friend to console you? Is that where you go first?

So many of us, our minds are like a room that are filled with voices. We have the own voice, your own voices that are running around inside your head. You also seek out the voices of those who are dearest to us.

We seek out the voices of people who have power and influence. We seek out the voices of media and entertainment and it's like we have this loud and raucous dinner party running around inside our head.

[16:59] Imagine that you had a, imagine that you threw a dinner party and there were a lot of guests there, a lot of voices. You were struggling to keep track of them all. It was noisy. And imagine at your dinner party we're the queen and you didn't even know it for the first hour because you were so busy listening to the other voices that you did not hear her voice.

the most important voice of all. Who do you listen to first? The Son of God. Listen to Him.

The prophets who spoke about Him, who laid out the history of Israel, the ones who spoke in a way that led us right to the Son, listen to them.

The apostles who wrote about Jesus Christ, our Lord, who spoke of Him, who spoke of what life is like now that Christ has come. Listen to them.

That is why God gave us the words of the Bible. We listen to this first. There is much, there are many words in this world that are helpful, that we find necessary.

[ 18 : 17 ] But this is where we go first. because scriptures speak all about that final word, the Son of God.

Who are you listening to first? And who are you listening to persistently? What are your habits of listening?

Where do you keep going back when you want words of wisdom and righteousness, words of honor, words of life? Where is the well that you just keep drawing from persistently, day in, day out? In Hebrews chapter 2, verses 1 to 3, we read, we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.

For since the message declared by angels proved to be reliable, and every transgression or disobedience received a just retribution, salvation, how shall we escape if we neglect such a great salvation?

[ 19 : 22 ] It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard. He says to us, we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.

We like to think that we are powerful cruise liners able to charge a will through the great raging seas. No, you're in a canoe.

You're going to drift away unless you listen. This is what your Father's words do for you.

They anchor you. They keep you from drifting away. We must listen to the Son. We must listen to those who heard what He said.

If you are not returning persistently to the Scriptures that speak of God's Son, then you are not paying attention to the Son. God's Word. There are many ways to listen to God's Word, to learn God's Word.

[ 20 : 39 ] When folks want to know how to do that, I say, well, let's start with this. Let's start with consistent attendance on Sunday morning, consistently hearing His Word read, hearing it preached. Join a growth group where God's Word is consistently, people consistently study and interpret and hear God's Word together.

start with consistent time on your own, reading or memorizing the Bible. You don't have to be 100% every single day, but develop habits, patterns of consistency, that this is where you go first, and this is where you go repeatedly.

Who are you listening to persistently? Will you listen to your Father's Word? In 1 Corinthians chapter 1, this is what we are told about the Son of God.

Because of Him, because of God, you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, so that, as it is written, let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.

The Bible does not call us away from honoring ourselves, from seeking honor. It tells us that the way you find honor in life is not by boasting in yourself and your own wisdom, your own intelligence, your own achievements, but by boasting that you belong, body and soul, in life and death, to Jesus Christ, our Lord.

[ 22 : 15 ] Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord. It is by putting our faith in the one that the world says you cannot boast in him. he is crucified. He was at best a pretty good teacher, maybe.

Son of God, no way. But you boast because he is not only crucified, he is risen again, ascended into heaven, seated at the right hand of God.

Boast in the Lord. It is by putting our faith in him, it is by listening to him, that we can finally hear the father's words of wisdom and righteousness, words of honor and life.

These words that we find in scripture. If you are not boasting in the Lord, you have not put your faith in Jesus and said he is my savior, he is my Lord, these words will seem dry and dead to you.

Some of you, that is the way the Bible feels to you, dry and dead. because you are not listening to the son. But if you listen, the words will come alive.

[ 23 : 29 ] What do you suppose will happen if you listen to your father? Here is what is going to happen. Your father's word makes you new. Your father's word makes you new. In 1 Peter 1 verses 3 through 5, Peter tells us, he praises God, he says, blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

this is what your father's words do for you. They make you new. Perhaps you would object, that's not for me.

I've gone too far for God's mercy to reach. But we read here, it is according to his great mercy, not according to how bad you've gotten.

Our sins they are many, his mercy is more. Perhaps he would object, that's not for me. I'm too old to change. This is how I've always been.

[ 25 : 00 ] But he has caused us to be born again. Born again. Coming alive like the green leaves of spring after a long winter.

perhaps he would object. I am what I am. I'm stuck with this personality, I'm stuck with these habits, and with this empty future.

That's all there is. But there is a resurrection to come, a living hope, because Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

And as it is for him, so it is for you. where Jesus went, you go to, if you follow him. Perhaps you would object.

That's not my life. In my life, everything falls apart. In my life, whatever is good will just fade away. All good things come to an end.

[ 26 : 05 ] life. But you have an inheritance that is imperishable, imperishable, cannot perish, undefiled, can't be spoiled, unfading, won't fade away, kept in heaven for you.

Perhaps you would object. That sounds nice, but I know I'm not going to be able to keep going like that. If anyone's going to lose their faith, if anyone in the world, it's going to be me.

But if you listen to your father's words, it is you, the listener, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time by God's power, not yours.

Your father's word makes you new. God's God, how does he do it? How does he do it? It is his son who has done it.

His son has paid the price. His son has paid the price that has set you free from the powerful enslaving messages, messages maybe that were spoken to you by your family, by your school, by your friends, by your culture, by Satan himself.

[ 27 : 41 ] Powerful enslaving messages that now you have taken to heart and now you are preaching to yourself again and again and again and maybe you don't even realize it.

In 1 Peter chapter 1 verses 18 through 19, here's what you were told. You were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers.

You were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers. Not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

God has been at work to ransom you, to set you free from the ways of your culture, from the ways of your family, from the ways that you were brought up in and that you have bought into.

And he did it by sending his son and to set you free. Not no amount of silver or gold in the world could set you free from that. You cannot buy your way out of that.

[ 29 : 06 ] Only his blood is enough. The precious blood of Christ. So now you have a savior who shed his blood to pay the penalty of your sin.

You have a father who is freeing you by his spirit, by his word, who is freeing you from the power of sin. And he is at work to rid you entirely on that day when you appeared before him, to rid you entirely from all the presence of sin in your life.

So would you now go back to the futile ways you inherited from your forefathers? Would you keep holding on to those ways you have of handling life and relationships?

Would you hold on to those survival strategies, those coping mechanisms that you've always relied on to get by, that always work until they don't? Won't these schemes, won't these strategies just do harm to you and to the ones you love and pull you away from the living God?

haven't you been like a beggar child who has just been adopted into a family that is all the wealth in the world, but you won't show up at family dinner where you are richly provided for because you're too busy digging through dumpsters for scraps?

[ 30 : 37 ] will you hold on to the futile ways you inherited from your forefathers? Or will you marvel at the precious blood of Christ and say, I need my father's words now.

I need my father's help. Will you not ask your father for help? Will you not instead start listening to your father and start paying attention to his son?

Farther down in this passage, Peter tells us how you can truly learn to live forever and live a new life forever.

You have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable through the living and abiding word of God.

For all flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever.

[ 31 : 41 ] And this word is the good news that was preached to you. Your father's word makes you new. And best of all, your father's words will all come true.

Your father's words will all come true. Some of you have been listening to the sermon, and what I've said hasn't connected with you at all. you've always been able to make your way through life.

You've always had enough money. You've always had people stepping in and helping you. You've never had to really adjust the way you live. Life's always worked for you. You've always gotten ahead. Someday you will wake up.

Someday, by the hand of God, you will see that what God's word says about this life and this world is true. That all flesh is like grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass.

The ways of your forefathers are futile. The grass withers and the flower falls. An old hymn puts it this way, change and decay in all around I see.

[ 32 : 57 ] Each passing decade, you will know it to be true. Some of you are too young to know this now. You will need to hold on to this word and trust me on this. But for those of you who know this, those of you who have felt this, those of you who know that you are weak, those of you who know the overpowering, controlling messages of our world, our culture, our families, the voices running in our head, the confusion, the chaos and the decay.

If you are there right now, you can be assured of this. There will be a resurrection from the dead.

We know this because Jesus Christ rose from the dead first. There will be a new heaven and a new earth.

We know this because Jesus is the first glimpse of that new heaven and that new earth. You will have a body that is strong and healthy forever.

We know this because our Lord received a new body, strong and healthy. Death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore for the former things have passed away.

So we will always be with the Lord. Here's what we're promised. in 1 Peter 5 verses 10 and 11.

[ 34 : 25 ] After you have suffered a little while, after you have suffered a little while, remember, if you follow Jesus, you will go where Jesus goes. Jesus suffered, so will you.

You will not escape it if you are a true follower of Christ. Just an aside, the people I worry about the most are the people who seem to just make it through life without difficulty, without suffering, without running into obstacles.

I worry so much. But those who have suffered a little while, here's what you have. The God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.

to him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen. Because you have a father who keeps his word.

You can learn how to live faithfully in whatever suffering you are experiencing. We'll talk more about that next week.

[ 35 : 35 ] What do we do? How do we relate to God when we're in the middle of hardship, when we're in the middle of suffering? suffering that every Christian does go through. But when you're in the middle of it, know this, you do not suffer without hope.

Because your father's words will all come true. Listen to the father's final word. Listen to his son. His son is the one who brings you wisdom and righteousness.

honor and life. Are you listening? Father, we are people who struggle to listen.

Our ears are filled with voices from all around us. Our eyes are on our phones, are on our screens, are on anything and everything but Jesus.

Our hearts are filled with the inner critic. Our hearts are filled with boasts in ourself and what we can do. We have crowded you out.

[ 36 : 58 ] Now, father, we repent. Turn us from our sin. let us listen to you. Let us turn and open these pages of scripture and take to heart all that they say, all the promises, all the great expectations that we have for everyone who belongs to Jesus Christ.

Christ. I know in a room like this, there must be people who have truly not given their heart to Jesus, who have not been listening to him.

Perhaps they have not been listening to anything up until this point. Give them eyes to see, ears to hear, a heart to understand. And Lord, may they listen to your son, because it is not about us, it is about you.

To Jesus Christ be the dominion forever and ever. We listen to you, Lord, because you are king, and you are Lord, and you are risen from the dead. We honor you, we put you first, and we find that that is the way to truly live.

Let all the world listen to your son. Amen.