

# How to Listen to Bible Teaching

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] You have your Bible, and I hope that you do. If you'll turn with me to Acts chapter number 19 and 20. For a little bit of time here, we're continuing our theme for the day, which is on text-driven preaching.

In Acts chapter number 19, verse 20, it said, So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed. Being a church that is mighty in the Word. I want to look at here about what it means to listen to preaching and focus on that.

I'm just here for a moment. What we must do as we hear the Bible being taught. Like the book of Nehemiah, we had a glimpse of what happened when the Word of God was opened.

There with Ezra reading the Scriptures this morning and how people responded to it. In the book of Acts, we also get a glimpse into the early church and what was going on among them and what they were doing, where they were gathering and studying the Bible and what kind of responses were happening there.

And so it's a significant glimpse into the worship life of the early church. In Acts chapter number 20, verse number 7, before I read that verse to you, I'll tell you, this is one of my favorite Bible stories, right?

[ 1 : 1 0 ] I've shared with you before how this was my first sermon that I preached at 16 years of age about a young man named Eutychus and how he sat in a window and he fell out of the window. How many of you know this Bible story, right?

And you wonder, you know, why is this shared in the Bible, what's going on? And I told you that I preached that whole message for the whole point of saying, you know, his name was Eutychus because Eutychus too, if he fell out of a third story window, all right?

And everybody laughed. I didn't know what to do. And it's only, it's kind of funny, I guess, but that's not the purpose of preaching. But on that note, since we have young people in here, this is recently pointed out to me, and it's not on topic, but it's, I would like for you to consider this.

When Peter wanted to distance himself from knowing Jesus, the quickest way that he could do that was from cursing and using profanity. When I heard that, that just, that just nailed it down.

I didn't have much use for it. I thought it just, it's ignorant, it's not, it isn't a good look, you know, for anybody, cursing isn't a good look. You know, you've seen it.

[ 2 : 1 6 ] It doesn't make you look more educated. It makes you look out of control. But for a Christian, it's just not a good look. But that statement right there, if you hadn't already made this decision in here, no matter how old you are, you ought to say, I will not be a person that uses cursing and profanity because that's what Peter used when he wanted people to know, no, I don't stand with Jesus.

Profanity is a good way to let people know that you don't stand with Jesus. And that's not who we are. As preachers like to say, that's free of charge, okay? That's not part of the lesson. But that was pointed out to me, and I've been thinking, I've got to share that because that's such a clear example here.

So Paul is preaching, and we get a glimpse into it. He's preaching long into the night. There's a lot of Bible teaching going place in Acts 19 and 20. Long portions of the day is what's happening.

People are soaking up the Word of God, and we're seeing the results of it. Acts 19 and 10 is going to talk about how the Word of God goes forth all throughout Asia Minor there, and it goes forward. As people are soaking up the Word, the Word goes forward.

And so in the middle of the night, Eutychus is sitting there in the window, and it says, it's like sleep comes upon him. And we all know what that's like when you can't fight off the sleep right.

[ 3 : 27 ] And so I'm sure he didn't intend to fall asleep. If you intend to fall asleep, you probably shouldn't sit on a window, all right? If you're prone to fall asleep. I don't see Henry in here, but I'm thinking of people who used to be infamous for falling asleep.

He's awake. Good job, all right, all right? Henry would not be somebody back in the day that we would have put in a window for the church service. And so after he falls out of the window, and then Paul goes and brings him back to life here, this is what it says in verse number 7, which I think is more comical than my Eutychus joke.

It's this, and it says, upon the first day of the week when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached to them, ready to the part of the moral, continued speech until midnight.

And he does that, and Eutychus falls. And so the first day of the week, they're gathering together, celebrating the Lord's Supper as part of the fellowship meal. They're diving into the Word.

Thank you, sir. This is water, right? Okay, good, all right. Hold on a few minutes if it is all right. And he's, thank you, Brother Chuck. And they're diving into the Word. They're breaking bread.

[ 4 : 33 ] They're taking the Lord's Supper together. And then we get to the part where Eutychus, he falls from the window. And then we pick up at verse number 11, and it says, when he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread and eaten, he talked a long while, even till break a day, so he departed.

And so after the healing of Eutychus, he just continues. You know, it happens late at night, and then you think, well, that's a pretty full night. I've brought the Bible all day. I brought somebody back from the dead.

Let's just call it a night, people, all right? But no, they continue the conversation out in the church for you about the Bible until the sun comes back up.

This is just people soaking in the Word. And consider this. The thing that happened in the book of Acts that has brought the gospel to us today was not the healing and the miracle there, but it was the teaching of the Word of God that happened that night.

That was the priority where it was at. The teaching of the Word was changing lives, and that was going forward throughout all of the world. Not just that miracle that took place.

[ 5 : 38 ] That did not become the preeminent thought for that night. They continued in all that they were doing there in the Scriptures. And so I want to say this.

When the church soaks up the Word of God, the gospel goes forward. When the church soaks up the Word of God, the gospel goes forward. Acts 19.10, it says, And they continue by the space of two years so that all which dwelt in Asia heard the Word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greek.

And so in Acts 19, we're told that it's likely referring to a time from 11 in the morning till 4 in the afternoon. For nearly two years, day after day, Paul stands in one place, and he reasons with them from the Scriptures there in that hall, in a place where there's been a lot of tourism and a lot of coming and going.

But the Word of God, when it's taught, it goes around the world. That's what happens. When the Word of God is being taught and it's being absorbed and soaked up, it goes around the world.

I said a couple weeks ago, some people in Carlisle, Ohio shared with little curly-headed baby named Graham about Jesus and the Bible, and then it went, it's now in Nigeria. You come in the church today, you went into your life group today, and you came ready to listen and attentive, and you soak up the Word, and it's going to find itself in its conversations throughout this week and wherever it goes.

[ 7 : 00 ] Short-range or long-range, the fact that it's getting to the ears of people that know the Gospel. So this is what we have to decide. We have to make sure that we are soaking up the Word of God, that we are listening attentively.

That's what they did in Nehemiah. They came with ears attentive to hear, and so we've got to make that same decision that we're going to, and James is going to give us three things that we can do to be attentive to the Word of God.

I thought I saw John Asher in here. John Asher, are you still in here? Can you raise your hand? How old is John Asher? All right, people are good at math and need some help on this. How old is John Asher? Is that a three?

Is that a four? Okay, so sorry, okay. Those fingers aren't as big as you may think they are, okay? And four years old, okay? And so let's say 70 more years of church, all right?

We'll give him three lessons a week. He's coming Sunday morning. He's involved in Awanas. Probably won't be his... Some way he'll probably be teaching someday in Awana, but give him three lessons a week for 70 years.

[ 8 : 03 ] How many Bible lessons is he going to get? All right. What? 210. 210? No.

210. No. He'll... Wait a minute. I must be asking this wrong. How many Bible lessons... 11,232. Oh, okay. I think... I think... Yeah, we have a miscommunication with some of y'all.

And then some of y'all are just saying random numbers so you sound like you're right. And you're not even playing along. And then some of y'all hate math so bad, you're like, not even playing. All right. What was our number?

11,232. All right. Over 11,000. John Asher, you're going to have 11,000 times to hear God's Word. And so this is what you need to do, buddy. Okay? James chapter 1, verses 19 through 25.

I know I took you to Acts. Now I want you to look at James 1, 19 through 25. And we'll give you these three points. We're going to move forward. James 1, 19 says, Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

[ 9 : 02 ] For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Wherefore, lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. It's that receiving the meekness the engrafted word we're going to focus on.

Be you doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. But if any be hearers of the word, and not a doer, he is like a man beholding his natural face in a glass. For if he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way in a straight way, forgeteth what manner of man he was.

But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. First of all, we have to receive the word of God humbly.

Verse 19 says, Let every man be swift to hear, and slow to speak. Listening humbly means you don't come in with defenses, or angry with resistance to the word of God.

You come in not talking, but listening. Meaning that we normally talk to the Bible, when we ought to be letting the Bible speak to us. I'll give you an example. Luke chapter number 12, Sell all your possessions, and give it to the poor, and you say, How do I get around that?

[10:07] What do you really mean? How can I make this more convenient for me? That's not our job. Our job is to say, God, let the full force of that scripture have its way in my life.

Submit yourself to the word of God. And then it says, Listen now, it says, Receive with meekness. God, you are God, and I am your creation. This is your word, and I'm going to submit to it.

So come humbly. You can do that by, you should do that in praying. You should do that with the position of your heart when you come in. I'm sure in life groups in different places, that's an important part of the praying at the beginning of our time together.

Second thing here, verse 25, But looketh in the perfect law of liberty, continue therein, he being not a forgetful hearer. We need to have intention when we come to the word of God.

There's so much busyness of life that's going on. I know for many of you in here, this is the only time in the week that you sit down for a solid hour and you don't produce anything. You know, you're not having to check your phone, you're not having to be on your computer, you're not even having to make a sandwich for the kids.

[11:15] All right? There's just nothing else that you have to do, and it's designated to say that, I want to make sure that there's no distractions from what I'm doing. And so listen as if your life depends on it, because it does.

Our life depends on the word of God, so when it's being taught, we listen as if our life depends on it. It helps if I drink it, doesn't it, Brother Chuck? You brought it, and I just now remember to drink it.

And then study it, remember it, and not forgetting it. Do things that not forget the word of God. These little kids are putting themselves through a process on Thursday night through a WANA program because we believe as a church that hiding the word of God in your life will make a difference.

Well, as grown-ups, we need to create our own systems. We need to be doing the same type of work to not be forgetful of it. I've kind of teased with Pastor Bo about the fill-in-the-blanks because I didn't used to like fill-in-the-blanks, and I'm like, don't give me work to do, you fill-in-the-blank and just give it to me, all right?

I don't need all this work, all right? And so I didn't used to like them, but I'm now enjoying it because I look forward to fill-in-the-blank, and it's a tool to help you remember what's being taught. It's nice when somebody does that for you, but you should be doing that for yourself.

[12:32] So take notes and all that you can, and we should be listening and asking the Holy Spirit to guide us. And then the third point, all right, John Asher, when you have a Bible lesson, you need to come and you say, this is the word of God, I'm ready to listen to it and do what it says.

Second, you're going to say, I don't want to forget what is happening. So if I need to color a picture about it, I will. When I get older, if I need to mark in my Bible, I will. If I need to take notes, I will.

If I need to schedule a meeting with somebody later in that week to talk through it so I can have better understanding, but I'm not going to miss the opportunity when the Bible is taught. And then obey the word wholeheartedly.

Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. But if any man be a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass. I thought that was such a funny story.

This is a passage you hear a lot as a teenager, right? Because just the idea of walking to a mirror and looking at yourself and trying to see what you look like. And as teenagers, you try to, when I was a teenager, you had to make it look like you didn't care.

[ 13 : 38 ] And so you'd make yourself look like you cared and then you'd mess your hair up and make it look like you didn't care, all right? And so they're looking in the mirror here and they walk away. What was the number, Greg?

Over 11,000. Over 11,000. Think about how many people for thousands of times in their lives have come to the place of Bible teaching and walked away and not done anything.

People are going to Bible teaching and not putting their faith in Jesus. Today, people went in the gospel preaching churches, somebody to the best of their God-given ability held up the word of God and said, this is the gospel and people walked away and didn't receive it.

That's wild. That's crazy. It's just craziness. As a believer, why would we, any walking up to the mirror of God's word and being shown what we should do and walking away and not doing, it's just craziness.

And so we need to obey it wholeheartedly. So I want to invite you to pray and say, God, what areas of our lives have you been telling me to obey to do this that I have not done? That's what we should be looking for.

[ 14 : 38 ] God, what is my next step based upon the word of God? God, what is it you want to correct in my heart? What is it that you want to do here in my life? I'm going to pray here in a second and when I do, I'm going to ask that those that are receiving the offering tonight will get in the place and do that.

And then after I pray, we have a video. Miguel, some of your friends from Columbia sent a video to you. And in Columbia, there are people that are ready to have Pastor Miguel back teaching God's word to them.

And I think that's so very special that that is the case. Patrick Henry said this and I just won't ever forget it. He said, one of the things that changed his preaching on the mission field is when he said, I realized that I am not supposed to just be preaching a message on prayer.

I'm supposed to be teaching people how to pray. And I just think that's just incredible. And so God has used Miguel and Mariela on the field to take God's word, not just to teach lessons and to preach sermons, but to show people what God's word has for them.

And people have received the gospel and it's just wonderful. And our buddy Chesley, he helped put this together, okay? And so if there's anything wrong, we can look to him about it. And I'm so, the thing that I loved when I saw this, Miguel, because as I said this morning, it just went so quick.

[ 15 : 59 ] Our time with them, with our missionaries, it always just goes so quick. They're here and you think they're going to be here forever. And the next thing you know, their furlough's gone and they're leaving. And they will leave from us and they'll be in the airports for a little bit.

But when they get to Columbia, they're going to be with a church. They're going to be with God's people. They're going to be with friends. They're going to be with people that really love the word. And that just makes me so happy to know that, to know that you're not leaving and going to a place that doesn't have that.

And by God's grace, God used you to help see that started and growing forward. So I'm going to pray. We'll show the video before the special tonight.

Heavenly Father, I pray that you would help us. Lord, I pray that you would help John Asher in these 11,000 sermons that you may allow him to hear in his lifetime. I pray that he does not look at them and then walk away unchanged.

Lord, for all of us in here, may we allow your word to have its place in our hearts. Lord, may we come to it humbly. May we come to it, Lord, wanting to obey it just completely.

[ 17 : 06 ] Lord, thank you for being patient and long-suffering. Father, I want to thank you for what you've done in Columbia and the brothers and sisters that are there now waiting to receive Miguel and Mary Angela and Mary Angela and Felipe.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. Amen.