

10. **Repentantly** (Neh. 9: 1-3). The people listened with repentant hearts. If the Lord brings something to your attention, do not blame others. Be honest with God about it.

Write these ten words inside the front cover of your Bible, and review them before you hear next week's sermon. Then ask God to help you to be attentive, and He will speak to you.

** (excerpted from: www.intouch.org)

*******You may also be interested in reading the text concerning the word of God in the Gospel about the calling of Phillip and Nathaniel sitting under the fig tree. Instead, I will mention in the Old Testament of the young boy named Samuel hearing God calling to him and not recognizing that it was God's voice he heard. Samuel was a young boy who had been brought to the aging priest Eli by his mother Hannah, who had promised God that if God would grant her a son, she would dedicate him to God's service. God answered her prayer. She gave birth not only to Samuel but to three more sons and two daughters. After Samuel was weaned, Hannah fulfilled her part of the bargain bringing him to the temple and presenting him to Eli to serve him in the temple.

Samuel is still a young boy. Eli is now aged. As Samuel was falling asleep that night in the silence of the temple, he thought he heard something, a voice, coming from where there should not be any voices. So he did what any child does when there are strange noises in the night, he headed for his proxy parent's room, the priest Eli. Eli replied that he had not called the boy. After this happened for several times, Eli concluded that there was more to this than an overly nervous child. He told Samuel to go back and lie down in his room, and if he heard the voice again to say; "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening." Are we listening for the word of God in our lives?

*** (excerpted from: www.webmedleysb.com)

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The Word of God



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The Word of God

*In the bible we read that God's words of love were proclaimed zealously by the prophets of the Old Testament, and foremost among God's messengers was Elijah. Elijah, the prophet of Carmel, was a man of prayer and action who experienced God's word in the sound of silence.

In His own Son, Jesus Christ, God spoke in a new way. Many people who encountered Jesus were struck by how he reminded them of Elijah.

Elijah practiced the ancient traditions of Lectio Divina (holy reading) and Centering prayer (prayer in secret). We should learn how to listen contemplatively to God's word in the Bible and in the silence of our hearts.

Contemplation is a gaze of faith, fixed on Jesus. That is "I look at him and he looks at me." This was what the Cure of Ars, Saint John Vianey used to say about his prayer before the tabernacle. This focus on Jesus is a renunciation of self. His gaze purifies our heart; the light of the countenance of Jesus illumines the eyes of our heart and teaches us to see everything in the light of his truth and His compassion for all men.

Contemplation prayer is hearing the Word of God. Far from being passive, such attentiveness is the obedience of faith, the unconditional acceptance of a servant, and the loving commitment of a child. It participates in the "Yes" of the son become servant and the Fiat of God's lowly Handmaid.

Contemplative prayer is silence, the "symbol of the world to come" or "silent love." Words in this kind of prayer are not speeches; they are like kindling that feeds the fire of love. In this silence, unbearable to the "outer" man, the father speaks to us his incarnate Word, who suffered, died, and rose; in this silence the

Spirit of adoption enables us to share in the prayer of Jesus.

*(excerpted from: www.jknirp.com)

**Another Scriptural example of how God speaks to man can be found when the Israelites were captives in Babylon, and Jerusalem's wall was in ruins. Nehemiah asked the Babylon king for supplies and time off from his duties so he could help rebuild the wall. With God's help, Nehemiah and other exiles rebuilt the wall in 52 days, despite opposition from their enemies. The people then asked to hear the word of God.

One must listen to hear the word of God. How was this accomplished by Nehemiah:

1. **Eagerly** (Neh. 8: 1-2). When you come to worship service, ask God to speak to your heart.
2. **Attentively** (Neh. 8: 3). Your attention span is determined by your desire to know God and His will for your life.
3. **Trustingly** (Neh. 8: 4-5). Our world is unpredictable, we must place our faith in something that gives us assurance—and God's word is trustworthy.
4. **Expectantly** (Neh. 8: 5). In Nehemiah's day, the people could not understand the original languages of the scrolls. But they stood in anticipation of hearing God's word.
5. **Prayerfully** (Neh. 8: 6). The people bowed low and worshipped the Lord.
6. **Patiently** (Neh. 8: 7). The people listened for hours as God's word was read.
7. **Humbly** (Neh. 8: 6). The people fell on their faces in humility because of their ancestors' sins, which had caused them to miss the Lord's blessing.
8. **Purposefully** (Neh. 8: 12-17). They wanted to gain insight into the law. Each time you come to church, ask God for insight about His character.
9. **Happily** There was great joy when the people listened to the Law. You are responsible for your own attitude toward church.