

NOW I SEE, BECAUSE I LISTENED

A Lord's Flock General Assembly Topic

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The Lord is inviting us to listen attentively through prayer. Prayer is about listening and not the other way around; instead of God listening to us, we should be the one listening to Him. Most of us try to persuade or manipulate the will of God to our wishes. Prayer is not changing His plan in our lives. Before we were born, He already had a plan for us, "For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, to give you hope and a future" (Jer. 29:11). Furthermore, we must pray to give us the grace till our heart learns to listen to His will.

The Importance of Listening to God thru Prayer:

1) Transfiguration. Jesus went to the mountain into deep prayer and listened to the will of God - He had to suffer and offer His life for humanity's salvation. He was transfigured: His face shone like the sun, His clothes became a dazzling white (Matt. 17:2).

2) Creation- We are created to love and the first duty of love is to listen.

3) Blessed Virgin Mary. She was the perfect example of obedience and listening. When angel Gabriel declared to her that she was to bear a son, she listened to the angel and submitted to God's will, "Be it done unto me according to your word" (Luke 1:38). Thus, a Savior was born.

4) Fate of Jonah. He was swallowed by a big fish when he disobeyed God's command to go to Nineveh to teach people to repent. Finally, after 3 days, he was spat out (Jonah 1:17). In the end, he went to Nineveh to do the will of God and the city repented. Hence, God spared them.

5) Teachings of the Church:

5.1 Every Christian is enjoined to read the scripture, ask counsel from well-respected people sent to us by the Lord such as our

elders, psychologists, priests. They were anointed to teach us to listen so that there will be no vague perspectives.

5.2 Furthermore, God teaches us to experience pain and sorrow; shedding tears is an expression of our prayer and love. He allows our pain so that we can be alert, and to listen to what the pain is telling us. There is always a sacred message and purpose in our pain. Shedding tears in times of difficulties is an occasion for us to listen to God's message.

6. Prayer. Let us then repeat the prayer of our speaker, Fr. Alex, to gain indulgence from God: "Lord, we are here begging for your wisdom. We beg for your foolishness, for I do believe that the foolishness of God is greater than human wisdom (1 Cor. 1:25). We pray that You purify our heart, to make a way for us to look at things clearly, no longer with our narrow-minded self. Allow us to see things around us not from our perspective, but the perspective of God who knows everything, who knows the best. We are here, Lord, to listen so that we can see clearly as we continue our journey in life because only You can see clearly."

Conclusion:

It is important that we listen to the voice of God through our prayer in order to clearly see the truth amidst the confusion and the many questions in life. God gave us the grace to listen and see according to His perspective.

Reflection:

1. Do you pray and listen to the dictates of your conscience and heart? Do you listen to Jesus?
2. Have you listened to Jesus' teaching about forgiveness? Have you forgiven and prayed for your enemy?

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