

Lesson 83

TEXT Proverbs 17:4; Matthew 7:24-27; Luke 8:11-15; 2 Timothy 4:3,4

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain the relationship between hearing and doing. They will further be able to differentiate between the good and the bad that the ears channel into the mind, and reject that which is contrary to the Word of God.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER The ear of the wise seeketh knowledge. — Proverbs 18:15

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH Incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding. — Proverbs 2:2

**ANSWER
TITLE:** **Tuned In**
**SEARCH
TITLE:** **Ears**

Reference Information

In Biblical times, people spoke to each other’s ears. When listening, they “inclined their ears.” When they prayed, God “bowed down his ear” to hear them.

In the Old Testament, the ear figured in various Jewish customs and ceremonies. In Exodus 21:5,6, a faithful servant who greatly loved his master would submit to having his ear pierced with an awl, indicating he would serve his master forever. David said in Psalm 40:6, “Mine ears hast thou opened” (or “digged” in Hebrew), referring to this ceremony.

In the consecration ceremonies (Exodus 29:20,21), the priests were sanctified by the blood of a ram, some of which was placed on the tip of the ear. And blood from the trespass offering was placed on the tip of the ear for the cleansing of one suffering from leprosy.

In Proverbs 18:15, Solomon states that “the ear of the wise seeketh knowledge,” and that if any turns his ear from hearing the law, “even his prayer shall be an abomination” (Proverbs 28:9).

YOUR OPENER

Ears

TEXT: Proverbs 17:4; Matthew 7:24-27; Luke 8:11-15; 2 Timothy 4:3,4

KEY VERSE: Incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding. Proverbs 2:2

RESPONSES

1. Your class should conclude that the man was wise because he was a doer. Guide the discussion so your students will realize that hearing alone is not sufficient. Action must be taken in accordance with what is heard. Ask your students why just hearing—even retaining—Bible knowledge does not establish a person as a true Christian. There are those who are well versed in Scripture and can give Biblical references without hesitation, and yet they do not bear the fruit of true Christianity in their lives. Have a volunteer look up 2 Corinthians 3:6, and discuss this verse in context with the lesson.

2. Your students' answers may include man's theologies, philosophies, theories regarding creation, values, and moral standards. Often we think of this man who built on sand as building on the things of the world. But consider with your class—could he have been building on a foundation of a false religious belief: Perhaps he listened to the wrong voices.

3. The hearer had to have faith in God to receive eternal life. Direct your students' thought to the necessity of believing the simplicity of the Word and developing faith.

As we study our text and related Scripture, we realize that God is speaking of much more than just our ears receiving and identifying audible sounds. God expects us to act upon what we hear and be a doer of the Word and not a hearer only. We should also be aware that there are voices to which we should not listen. We must carefully evaluate what our ears hear, rejecting that which is contrary to the Word of God.

1. In the text in Matthew, was the man wise because he could remember all the sayings taught by the Lord? Give a reason for your answer.

2. Think about the characteristics of a rock and sand. The man mentioned in Matthew 7:26 had a problem because he built on something that was shifting, movable, changeable. What are some of the things we may hear in our world today which are also shifting and changing?

3. In John 5:24, what action did the hearer have to take to receive eternal life?

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

4. In Romans 10:17, the Apostle Paul says that we receive faith by hearing. Hebrews 11:6 says that without faith it is impossible to please God. Is hearing more than just perceiving an audible sound? Would deaf people be unable to gain faith because they cannot hear? Write the definition for the word *hear*.

5. The wayside hearers mentioned in Luke 8:12 are those who listen to the devil when he comes with doubts or a suggestion such as, "Hath God said?" Inasmuch as we rarely have a head-on confrontation with the devil, how might he introduce some of these doubts and fears into our minds?

6. Read James 1:23,24. Unto what does James liken the one who is a hearer but not a doer of the Word? What do you think this means?

7. List some of the things to which a Christian should not lend an ear. See Proverbs 6:16-19; 10:18; 20:19; Romans 16:17.

8. We cannot shut out the audible sounds of the world around us even though they are not in accord with the spirit. How do we deal with them?

4. After your students have shared their answers, focus on the fact that hearing is more than just perceiving an audible sound. It also means, "to take notice of; pay attention to." It is this second meaning that is so important to one's gaining spiritual ground.

5. In discussing this question your students will probably mention false prophets, associations, media, teachers, etc., as emissaries of Satan whether they realize it or not. Stress the importance of evaluating what we hear and measuring it against the Word of God to determine whether it is in keeping with God's design for our lives.

6. A man looking in a mirror, but then forgetting his own characteristics. Help the students realize that there is a responsibility that comes when they hear, through the Word of God, where they need to measure up. They must answer for the knowledge God has given them, or the knowledge that was available to them. Discuss the eternal results if persons willfully close their ears to the truth.

7. Have some volunteers read the references and allow the students to choose the things to which they should not "lend an ear." Proverbs 6:16-19, lying tongue, false witnesses, sowers of discord; Proverbs 10:18, lying and slander; Proverbs 20:19, gossipers; Romans 16:17, those who cause divisions and offenses.

8. Help your students to realize that while these audible sounds are heard with the ear, they must not be allowed to come into their hearts. The action they take must be the direct opposite to what they take when they desire to retain spiritual truths. Specific suggestions might include: replacing the negative with a positive thought; pleading the Blood of Jesus; and, if possible, removing themselves from the situation.

YOUR WRAP-UP
