

## Tuning In To God: 2

### Distractions Disengage Us

#### Proverbs 4.20

Last week we began a new topic related to wisdom, that of hearing from God. I have called this series 'Tuning In To God'.

“My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings.” - Proverbs 4.20

twice in this verse he says similar things as if to underline and emphasise the importance of the theme.

- **Attend** – listen, hear, pay attention, take note and mark well. A good definition of this word is 'to prick up the ears'.
- **Incline** – stretch, spread, turn and bend towards .

In other words he is saying – BE TUNED IN

A few weeks ago I was reminded of a radio that I was bought as a present when I was young with which I could tune in to a radio station with the dial. Finding music stations was fairly easy, but my real reason for wanting the radio was to be able to tune in to the aircraft, because I lived very close to Heathrow Airport and had a keen interest in planes. Tuning in to this signal was a little more difficult and required precision tuning. Slightly off and the signal was not clear but noisy and could easily jump to a stronger signal.

The same is true when it comes to listening to the voice of God, your spirit needs to be finely tuned in to Him to be able to hear Him.

“To hear the voice of God you must turn down the world’s volume”

#### Luke 10 38-42

“Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. (39) And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. (40) But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me." (41) And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. (42) But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.”

Jesus was in the house and He was speaking. But not everyone was hearing, not everyone was tuned in to Him – some were listening to other stations

Martha was **distracted** with **many things**

- much serving

- she could see all the work that was to be done
- she could see that her sister Mary was doing nothing to help.

So she approached Jesus and asked Him to tell Mary to help her.

*“Don’t You care Lord that she has left me to do all the work... tell her to help me”*

Jesus' response to Martha's request was simple - *“Martha you have **many things** on your mind...”* (vs41). The volume of all these things were drowning out the voice of Jesus.

It is not good to have many things on your mind – many things will cause you to become distracted, that is to divert your attention and focus from that which is necessary.

*“You cannot serve two masters” – Matthew 6.24,*

after Jesus said these words He went on to teach about worrying about the cares of this life:

- what we will eat
- what we will drink
- what we will wear

What is worry? The word literally means to take thought and in particular anxious thought (see KJV). Webster's defines worry as *'to tease, trouble, harass and vex the mind'*

Jesus told Martha that she was worried and troubled about many things. She was taking anxious thought about all these things – they were troubling her, harassing her.

She was tuned in to another station – she was listening to the worry and anxious thoughts that were on her mind. We cannot be tuned in to two things at a time.

We cannot focus on two things – look at the camera (focus on near object loses clarity on distant and vice-versa)

We need to be tuned in properly to hear from God.

## **One Thing**

Jesus continued with his response to Martha -

*“**One thing** is needed and Mary has chosen it and I'm not going to take that from her”* (vs42)

Mary was focused on (tuned in to) Jesus, she was single minded. She had chosen that. She wasn't listening to the same station that her sister Martha was listening to.

Jesus was telling Martha that she needed to turn down the world's volume and tune in to the voice of God, tune in to what He was saying. This is what Mary had done:

- she sat at Jesus' feet
- she heard Him teach the word

We too can choose to remain single minded, not to allow distractions to divide our attention and focus.

“The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine **eye be single**, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine **eye be evil**, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great *is* that darkness! No man can serve two masters:...” **Matthew 6.22-23** (AV)

Jesus refers to our eye being either single or evil.

**single** - the Greek word used here is *haplous* and has the meaning ‘*simple, single, whole or clear*’ The idea is that it is free of any obstructions or impurities

**evil** - the Greek word used here is *poneros* and has the primary meaning ‘*full of labours, annoyances, hardships*’ (*Joseph Thayer’s Greek Definitions*) it can also mean ‘*something that is bad or diseased*’. These labours, annoyances and hardships are distractions.

Having a single or clear focus brings light, it brings revelation – we will be in that position of receiving/hearing from God – anything else is evil

Mary had chosen that, we too can make that choice. We must turn the antenna toward God and tune in