

Discussion Questions

July 2, 2023

B.L.E.S.S. Listening Well



1. Read Philippians 2:1-9

Verse 5 says to have the same attitude as Jesus. Describe Jesus' attitude in this passage. How is Paul saying Jesus sought the interests of others in humility?

Discuss: What are the biggest barriers today for us seeking the interests of others?

2. Re-read Philippians 2:3-4. How does listening well allow us to live out this passage today?

3. Share an example of a time where you did NOT feel heard by someone. (Don't use names)
What made you feel unheard?

4. Describe a time when you felt you were listening, but the other person did not feel heard.
Share where the disconnect was.

5. James gave 5 practical steps for listening well:

1. Pray
2. Minimize Distractions
3. Replace judgment with Curiosity
4. Let them "empty their bucket"
5. Validate/Empathize

- Regarding listen without judgment, but with curiosity instead - How can we avoid judging and be curious when listening to someone who is sharing something we disagree with or feel is wrong? Why does this matter?

- Regarding letting people "empty their bucket." Describe a situation in your life where you could see where this could help you better listen to someone around you.

- Why is validating so critical to someone actually feeling heard?

6. Describe a recent situation where you recognize you did NOT listen well to someone. Share what you think you could have done to be a better listener and how it could have changed the dynamic of that conversation.

Philippians 2:1-8 (NLT)

Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose. Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.

Big Bang Theory clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a91T8MdXXMc>

Inside Out clip: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t685WM5R6aM&feature=youtu.be>

Francis Schaefer was asked, "if you had an hour to share you're faith with someone, what would you say?" He responded, "I'd spend 55 minutes listening to their story and asking lots of questions, then spend 5 minutes sharing the gospel"

Simon Sinek

True Listening doesn't happen UNLESS someone FEELS HEARD

Listening is not the act of hearing the words spoken. It is the art of understanding the meaning behind those words. When people say you aren't listening to me and we simply parrot back the words that were said, "Congratulations, your ears work." That is the act that is the act of listening. But the art of listening is creating an environment in which the other person feels heard

5 Steps for Listening well

1. Pray
2. Minimize Distractions
3. Replace judgment with Curiosity
4. Let them "empty their bucket"
5. Validate/Empathize

Dr. Michael Nichols - The Lost Art of Listening

Genuine listening demands taking an interest in the speaker and what he or she has to say... To take an interest in someone else, we must suspend the interests of the self. Listening is the art by which we use empathy to reach across the space between us. Passive attention doesn't work.

Some good resources on listening:

- The Lost Art of Listening: How Learning to Listen Can Improve Relationships by Dr Michael P. Nichols
- Extreme Listening with Deeyah Khan - A Bit of Optimism Podcast - Episode 11, August 10, 2020
- The power of listening | William Ury | TEDxSanDiego
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=saXfavo1OQo>
- The Art of Listening | Simon Sinek
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qpnNsSyDw-g>