THE RESPONSIBILITY OF LISTENING OR HEARING

INTRODUCTION
1. One of the great problems in the church is to get people to LISTEN to WHAT is being said.
2. INATTENTIVENESS is found among many Christians when the sermon is being delivered.
3. The body is in the assembly, but the mind is somewhere else.
4. This is the reason many fail to learn and to grow.
5. CONCENTRATION is one of the most difficult mental exercises, yet it is indispensable to learning --  
   I Pet. 1:13
6. Many seem to think it is the teacher's or preacher's job to "get their attention", but feel no 
   responsibility to "give attention".
7. In this lesson I want to show the hearer's responsibility to give attention to what is being taught.

I. THE LORD HAS COMMANDED US TO HEAR HIS WORD.
   1. Matt. 11:15
   3. Mark 4: 9, 23
   4. Luke 8:8
   5. Rev. 2:7, 11, 29
   6. Rev. 13:9
   7. Matt. 17:5

II. WE ARE TO TAKE HEED HOW WE HEAR -- Luke 8:18
   1. HOW as in WHAT MANNER WE HEAR.
   2. How we are NOT to hear.
      (1) Not a "forgetful hearer" -- James 1: 22 - 25
      (2) Not let the things we hear slip -- Heb. 2:1
      (3) Not a "dull-ear" hearer -- Matt. 13:15; Heb. 5:11; 4:2
      (4) Not an "itching ear hearer" -- II Tim. 4: 3 - 4
      (5) Not a hearer of some "new thing" all the time -- Acts 17: 21
      (6) Not hearers only -- James 1: 22
   3. How we are to hear:
      (1) Be a "swift" hearer -- James 1:19
      (2) Be an obedient hearer -- James 1: 22
      (3) Some obedient hearers:
         1. Jews on Pentecost -- Acts 2
         2. Cornelius -- Acts 10
         3. The Eunuch -- Acts 8: 26 - 40
         4. The Jailor -- Acts 16: 31 - 34

III. "TAKE HEED WHAT YE HEAR" -- Mark 4: 24
   1. "Take heed" is a warning that we should be alert to the danger threatening all hearers.
   2. What we hear has to do with the MATTER which we hear.
   3. The MESSAGE which we hear is a significant factor in determining the profit of our hearing.
4. Do we like to hear the SCRIPTURES THAT MAKE US WISE UNTO SALVATION?-- 2 Tim. 3:15; Acts 20:32
5. Or, do we like to hear fables that scratch our ears? 2 Tim. 4: 3 - 4
6. We need to consider carefully the way we hear and the matter we enjoy hearing.
7. Innovations could not come into the church if members were more concerned with WHAT they hear, and less enraptured with the "man pleasing" approach of teachers of strange doctrines -- Heb. 13:9
8. The CONTENT OF THE SERMON must be the chief concern if one is to hear discerningly.
9. We must not allow the "drapery" of the preacher's manner to weigh so heavily upon us that we fail to weigh the preacher's message -- Acts 17: 11
10. The discerning hearer will always give an extra careful study of the teaching of those who are "over-much" pious -- Rom. 16:18; I John 4:1; Heb. 5:14

IV. WE ARE TO HEAR AND TO UNDERSTAND
1. Jesus said "Hear me, every one, and understand" --Mark 7: 14 (NJV)
2. He said, "hear and understand" -- Matt. 15:10
4. Paul said we are to understand what the will of the Lord is -- Eph. 5:17
5. We can hear and understand the word of God -- Eph. 3: 3 - 4; John 8:32; Heb. 10:26; I Tim. 4:3

V. WHEN WE HEAR AND UNDERSTAND WE ARE TO DO WHAT WE HEAR
1. Do the will of the Father -- Matt. 7:21
2. "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever" -- I John 2:17
3. Matt. 7:24
4. John 7:17
5. James 1: 22 - 25
6. James 2: 24

VI. THE WHOLE MATTER OF LISTENING IS TWO BASIC ATTITUDES:
1. The attitude of the "CLOSED MIND" -- Matt. 13:15
   (1) The people who listened to Stephen's sermon had a closed mind -- Acts 7: 54 - 60
   (2) The people of Antioch in Pisidia -- Acts 13: 44 - 46
   (3) The disciples of Jesus in John 6 -- John 6: 60, 66
2. The attitude of the "OPEN MIND".
   (1) I Thess. 5:21
   (2) The Bereans -- Acts 17: 11 - 12
   (3) The Eunuch -- Acts 8: 26 - 39

CONCLUSION
1. How does the Son of God classify you -- wise or foolish?? -- Matt. 7: 24 , 26
2. In order of the Son of God to judge you as wise, and to allow you to enter into the joy prepared by Him, you must:
   (1) HEAR the will of God -- Matt. 17:5
   (2) UNDERSTAND the will of God -- Eph. 5:17
   (3) DO the will of God -- Matt. 7:21

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