

Remark-able #1: I Understand

Proverbs 18

ICE BREAKER: Who is the person who listens best in your life, and why?

Paul talks about the church as a body, in 1 Corinthians 12. Each of us makes up parts of the body. Each of us is essential, and as a body, we are to be united, **connected** to each other by our love for each other. One of the ways of being **connected** and loving toward each other is to listen to each other and understand the lives of each other. But sometimes we have problems listening to each other.

1. What makes someone a poor listener?

Pastor Brian used Proverbs 18:2 and 18:15 to point out some issues with listening and understanding.

Proverbs 18:2 *Fools find no pleasure in understanding but delight in airing their own opinions.*

2. What does the fool find delight and pleasure in? Why do you think this is foolish?

3. What is our primary source for finding understanding? How does knowledge of the Holy One provide understanding for us? (Proverbs 9:10)

Proverbs 9:10 *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.*

4. How do you think we can become more others-centered in our hearts? (Galatians 5:22-23, 2 Peter 1:5-7)

Galatians 5:22-23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*

2 Peter 1:5-7 *For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; 6 and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7 and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love.*

Pastor Brian pointed out that we can have faulty listening habits that hinder our ability to understand each other.

Faulty Listening Habits

- **“The I-Phoner”**- Distracted, not really focusing on the speaker, or the message
- **“The Interrupter”**- Only thinking about his reply, only cares about his thoughts
- **“The Problem Solver”**- thinks it’s his responsibility to solve every problem mentioned. Loves to air his own opinions.

5. Which of these faulty listening habits do you struggle with?

6. What do these faulty listening habits indicate about the desires of those who display them?

7. What can we do if we have any of these habits? (Psalm 139:23-24 2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Psalm 139:23-24 *Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. 24 See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

2 Timothy 3:16-17 *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

8. What makes someone a good listener?

Proverbs 18:15 *The heart of the discerning acquires knowledge, for the ears of the wise seek it out.*

9. How do the discerning acquire knowledge? How well do we listen to God?

10. How do you suppose we can be more discerning and acquire greater knowledge? (James 1:19 Hebrews 5:13-14)

James 1:19 *My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry*

Hebrews 5:13-14 *Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. 14 But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.*

11. How does this desire for greater knowledge affect our relationships with each other?

Mark 10:46-52 **46** *Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (which means “son of Timaeus”), was sitting by the roadside begging. 47 When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” 48 Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” 49 Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” So they called to the blind man, “Cheer up! On your feet! He’s calling you.” 50 Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. 51 “What do you want me to do for you?” Jesus asked him. The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.” 52 “Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.*

12. Who was with Jesus and what were they doing when Bartimaeus called to Jesus? How did the crowd react to Bartimaeus’ calling to Jesus?

Pastor Brian stated that there is a fourth type of Listening Habit - **“The Understander”!** **The characteristics of an understander are:**

- **Remove the barriers that vie for our attention**
- **Stop interrupting or ignoring**
- **Ask questions**

13. How did Jesus demonstrate each of the characteristics of “The Understander” in Mark 10:46-52?

14. Why did Jesus ask Bartimaeus what he wanted, rather than just know and heal his blindness? What does this indicate about Jesus/God’s desire for relationship with people?

15. What can we learn about how we should relate to others from Jesus’s example?

One of the greatest gifts we can give to our friends, our family, and our co-workers is the gift of understanding.