

church of Christ at Greenwood

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Are You Listening?

The following story is told of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who often endured long receiving lines at the White House. Whether it is a true story or fiction, I do not know.

President Roosevelt often complained that no one really paid any attention to what he said. So, one day during a reception, he decided to try an experiment. To each person who came down the line and shook his hand, he murmured, "I murdered my grandmother this morning." The guests responded with expressions like, "Marvelous! Keep up the good work. We are proud of you. God bless you, sir."

It was not until the end of the line, while greeting the ambassador from Bolivia, that his words were actually heard. Not quite knowing what to say, the ambassador leaned over and whispered, "I'm sure she had it coming."

If President Roosevelt was already weary of going unheard before this incident, he most certainly was more weary afterwards! I suppose we can all relate to that feeling. At one time or another, we all have probably said and have most likely heard someone else say, "Nobody ever listens to me!" It is indeed frustrating to be ignored, especially when you have something valuable to share.

If we get frustrated because no one will listen to our mere human insights, then imagine God's frustration when we will not listen to His divine wisdom! God's power, knowledge, and wisdom are infinite. While there are limits to our intellect, His mind knows no such limits.

He is the very One who created the ears by which we hear and the minds by which we comprehend what we hear!

God is more than frustrated when people refuse to listen to Him — He is highly displeased! Such has always been true. Consider the following rebuke of His people under the Old Covenant: "...The Lord warned Israel and Judah through all His prophets and every seer, saying, 'Turn from your evil ways and keep My commandment, My statutes according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you through My servants the prophets.' However, **they did not listen**, but stiffened their neck like their fathers, who did not believe in the Lord their God. They rejected His statutes and His covenant which he made with their fathers and His warnings with which He warned them... **So the Lord was very angry with Israel** and removed them from His sight..." (2 Kings 17:13-15, 18).

Is it any better for those under the New Covenant who refuse to heed His words? Consider these words of Jesus: "He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them, because you are not of God" (John 8:47).

If we want to be "of God" — have a relationship with Him, be His children — we must heed what He has to say and apply those principles and instructions to our lives. God does not like to be ignored, and He will punish those who try to do so! **Are you listening?**

~jeremy paschall