

SLIDE 2**GOD SPEAKS - ARE YOU LISTENING?****Matthew 13:13-17**

Intro.

A. Most problems occur because we do not listen.

1. Husbands do we listen to our wives?
2. Children, do you listen to your parents?
3. Parents do you listen to your children

B. The big question is: Do we listen to God?

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1. Jesus addressed his disciples about this in **Matthew 13:13-17**. He was speaking of those who don't listen. ¹³ Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. ¹⁴ And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive; ¹⁵ For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing,

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And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.'¹⁶ "But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; ¹⁷ for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

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2. At the scene of the transfiguration When Jesus was seen with Moses and Elijah in **Mt.17:2**, while Peter was praising this event and suggesting erecting tabernacles for Christ, for Moses and for Elijah, God spoke from heaven and said, "**This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, Hear Him.**

3. LISTEN TO HIM!"

C. This message is for us today.

1. If you want to know how to become a Christian, Listen to Him.
2. If you are a Christian and your faith is weak and you wonder why so many things are going wrong in your life, Listen to Him.
3. If you want to have stronger faith, Listen to Him.
4. If you want to have greater commitment, Listen to Him.
5. if you want to go to heaven, then LISTEN TO HIM!

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D. For our lesson today, I want to mention four reasons that we need to listen to Jesus.

1. So Your Heart Does Not Become Hard And Calloused
2. So You Do Not Have A Foolish Heart
3. So You Will Not Be Deceived
4. So You Will Have A Good Heart

SLIDE 7**I. So Your Heart Does Not Become Hard And Calloused.**

A. Jesus said in vs. 15 of our text - "For the Heart of this people has grown dull"

1. People become hard hearted and become calloused, because
 - a. they close their eyes and will not see,
 - b. they stop their ears and will not listen.
 - c. It is not that they cannot, but choose not to see or hear.

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B. Why won't people listen?

1. One thing is TRADITIONS
 - a. Traditions create "Stopped ears"
 - b. In Acts 6:14, Stephen was seized by the scribes for attacking their traditions.
 - c. They set men to offer false testimony against Stephen. They said **for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs which Moses delivered to us.**"
 - d. Jesus condemned the Scribes and Pharisees on many occasions for clinging to their traditions instead of following the truth.

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2. Then, people won't listen because it is UNCOMFORTABLE to change

- a. Peter experienced this with Cornelius in **Acts 10.**
- b. Peter had a hard time accepting the gentiles as Christians.
- c. But the Lord showed Peter that gentiles are to be accepted in the kingdom just as the Jews.

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3. Some people won't listen because of MONEY

- a. In **Acts 19:23-28**, we find that in Christianity, the truth about idols came out.
- b. This was disrupting the profit made from selling statues of the goddess Diana.
- c. Demetrius, a silversmith, created chaos among the people.
- d. They seized traveling companions of Paul.
- e. Many people will turn deaf ears to God because of money.
 - 1) Rich young ruler. **Mt.19:16-22**
 - 2) Ananias and Sapphira. **Acts 5:1-11**
 - 3) Judas Iscariot. **Mt. 26:14-16**

4. Many turn a deaf ear to God when PROBLEMS of life arise.

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5. Some won't listen because of POPULARITY.

- a. They are afraid they will lose their friends"
- b. And the truth of the matter is that you cannot be friends with the world and friends of God at the same time.
- c. James tells us this in **James 4:4**. **Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.**

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6. The DECEITFULNESS of sin! will cause people not to listen to God.

- a. The Hebrew writer tells us **But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.**
Hebrews 3:13

C. So, we must be careful to Listen so our heart does not become hard and calloused.

SLIDE 13**II. So You Do Not Have A Foolish Heart.**

A. Remember from our text, Jesus said in **Matt. 13:15** "Lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts"

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B. For some reason, Foolish People Don't Want To Listen.

1. Solomon declares this in **Prov. 1:7**, The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.

C. Foolish People Want To Remain Foolish:

1. Many people have the attitude "I'm Fine The Way I Am."

2. Solomon says in **Ecc. 4:13** Better a poor but wise youth than an old but foolish king who no longer knows how to take warning.

3. Then, in **Prov. 15:7**, Solomon says The lips of the wise spread knowledge; not so the hearts of fools.

D. Listen, Pay Attention So You Will Not Have A Foolish Heart.

SLIDE 15**III. So You Will Not Be Deceived.**

A. In the parable of the sower in **Mt. 13:22**, Jesus explains that we can be deceived by the "worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth "

1. We need to learn to Listen so we will not worry about the things of this life.

a. Jesus told his disciples **Jn. 14:13**. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

b. In the sermon on the mount in **Mt. 6:25** Jesus said, "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?"

2. We need to Listen so we will not be deceived.

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- a. There are many places throughout the New Testament where we are told not to be deceived.
- 1) Jesus told his disciples in **Lk. 21:8** - "Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and, 'The time has drawn near.' Therefore do not go after them.
 - 2) Paul in **1 Cor.6:9** - Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

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- 3) **1 Cor. 15:33** - Paul again, saying Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits."
- 4) Perhaps Paul's most notable statement of this type is found in **Gal. 6:7-8** - Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸ For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

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- 5) James chimes in in **James 1:14-16**. He describes the process of sin. ¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. ¹⁵ Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death. Then comes **vs. 16** - ¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

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B. The Bible gives us several Illustrations of those who were deceived

1. The Prodigal Son was deceived by money - **Luke 15**
 - a. He wanted his inheritance. "father, give me the portion of goods that fall to me." **Vs. 12**
 - b. His quick wealth led him into a life of wickedness - Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. **Vs.13**
 - c. His wealth was short lived - And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. **Vs.14**
 - d. His wealth deceived him and left him in ruin. - Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. ¹⁶ And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything. **Vs.15-16**

2. The rich farmer was deceived by all his possessions **Luke 12:16**
- a. His wealth made him selfish - 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' ¹⁸ So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. **Vs. 17-18**
 - b. He thought he was set for life - And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry." - **Vs. 19**
 - c. His deception cost him his life - But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' **Vs. 20**
3. Many others:
- a. Adam and Eve by their desires; **Genesis 3**
 - b. **1 Kings 13** where the young prophet was deceived by the old false prophet to come home with him and eat bread when the Lord had told him not to eat in that place.
 - c. Samson was deceived by Delilah in **Judges 16**
- C. We need to be careful that we are not deceived by sin.

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IV. We need to listen So we Will Have A Good Heart

- A. In **vs. 16** of our text, Jesus says "But blessed are your eyes for they see and your ears for they hear."
- B. Are those words spoken about you and me?
1. Do we listen to Jesus?
 2. Do we hear his words of obedience?
- C. Now, here's a thought - Listening doesn't do a bit of good if you don't use the information you have heard.

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1. Listen to how Jesus addressed this issue - with the story of the wise man and the foolish man. **Matthew 7:24-27**

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²⁴ "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶

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And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

2. Jesus is making it clear that anyone is wise if he is obedient.

3. The obedient heart is the good heart.

a. It is the good heart that looks for truth.

b. It is the good heart that obeys the truth.

D. And of course, good hearts come from listening to God's word. So Listen.

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Conc.

A. Jesus does indeed have the answers to all of our questions of life - LISTEN TO HIM!

B. Jesus can solve all your worldly problems - LISTEN TO HIM!

C. Jesus can solve your SIN problems - LISTEN TO HIM!

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D. Today, if you are not a Christian, the words of Jesus can give you salvation - LISTEN TO HIM!

E. Erring Christian, the words of Jesus can bring you back into the fold of safety - LISTEN TO HIM!

IF SUBJECT, COME