

July 21, 2021

God is Listening

Last week we considered the matter of edifying speech. Why is edifying speech important? Notice the middle of **Malachi 3:16**. Concerning the conversation of the believers the Bible says "...the Lord hearkened, and heard it." We know that God hears everything. He is the omniscient, omnipresent God. Nothing escapes God. What does it mean then that "the Lord hearkened and heard it?" While God hears everything, there are some things that get God's attention more than others.

Most often we speak of God listening in terms of our prayers. We know God hears and answers pray, but God is listening even when we are not speaking directly to Him. The word hearkened means to prick up one's ears. It is illustrated by a horse or a dog, turning his ears at the sound of his master's voice. The word heard means to bow low so as not to miss a word. God loves to hear His children talk about His Son and the things that pertain to godliness. While God was always listening, when the believers began to speak about the Lord, God pricked up His ears and bowed low so as not to miss a word.

God not only pays particular attention when we speak about His Son, but He also pays particular attention when people speak against the Lord. In **verses 13-14** which we studied previously God was able to repeat the words they had spoken against Him. In **Numbers 12:1-4**, what sin did Miriam and Aaron commit? What was God's response? What were the consequences for Miriam and Aaron? While edifying words please the Lord, grievous words kindle the wrath of God. In **Numbers 11:1-2**, who was speaking and what was the manner of their conversation? How did God respond and what were the consequences? Also read **Deuteronomy 1:34-35**.

When we gather together in the house of the Lord, what should be the topic and nature of our conversation if we are to please the Lord? First, our words should be words of praise. The book of Psalms is the hymn book and prayer book of the Bible. It concludes with the great psalm of praise, **Psalms 150:1-6**, "Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise Ye the Lord." Generally, we think of praising the Lord in terms of music and singing, but we are also to praise the Lord with our words or conversation. How should I direct my conversation if it is to praise the Lord?

Second, our words should be words of thankfulness. **Psalms 100:1-5** begins with the element of praise followed by service. The context of the psalm is the house of the Lord, coming into His presence, entering into His gates, and entering into His courts. Which verse deals with being thankful? What is the basis for our thankfulness?

Third, our words should be words of peace. **Psalms 34:13-15** "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry." No doubt Peter was referring to this passage when he wrote **I Peter 3:10-12**. Rather than using our tongues for evil and guile, we are to use them for good and peace.