

“Hearing What God Says”

[Thus saith the LORD] . . . *Howbeit I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods.* (Jeremiah 44:4-5)

Not hearing is one thing, but not even inclining an ear is another. For better reception we adjust an antenna. To hear fully we don't have anything blocking us, turn our head, or even cup our hands behind our ear. If we don't care, we might not lift our heads or give no line of sight to who's talking. The people Jeremiah was addressing above said they wanted to hear, but they didn't mean it. They looked like they were poised to hear, but they had no such intention. The reason they weren't inclining their ear was because their hearts weren't inclined to hear.

Psalms 1 lists a number of indicators that predict whether a person hears or not - where he walks, where he stands, and where he sits. Psalm 1:3 and Jeremiah 17:8 give a similar description of such a man. Interestingly, the very next verse in Jeremiah says: *The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?*

How do we know if we are inclining our ear and heart? Who can know? The answer is that through applying our hearts to the Word of God, it will reveal to us the reality. Hebrews 4:12 says the Word divides between the soul and spirit, that is, between our thoughts and God's thoughts. Are our thoughts a proper assessment of what we are doing? It depends if what we are doing is reflected in the Word of God, or rather, if the Word of God is reflected in us. We can see that as we look into it (James 1:25). James says the proof is in whether we are doing what we hear, not just saying it.

In a similar manner, when we aren't thinking right, God's Word reveals that fact to us (Phil. 3:15, Eph. 1:17). So we are doubly kept on the right path if we are inclining our ear to Him Who is revealed to us through His Word. We can tell when we're off and He reveals to us how to get back on.

It might be asked, "How far does this apply?" He died for us and we died with Him, which means the life we now live is for Him, if we're born again (Gal. 2:20). If not, we're still dead in our sins. In other words, it applies to every area of our lives. A nice thought: If there were a sin we committed that Jesus didn't conquer in the grave, He wouldn't have been able to be resurrected. But resurrect He did indeed.

God calls on us to hear Him (Heb. 4:13-15). When does He say to respond? Today.