

Encountering Jesus

Luke 5

Part 1

One day as Jesus was preaching on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, great crowds pressed in on him to listen to the word of God.

“pressed in on him to listen to the word of God”

“pressed in on him” (epikeimai) - to press, urge upon;

(be urgent; to be imposed upon) here in Luke 5, it has the implication: to lie heavy upon, press upon with a sense of possession

“pressed in on him to listen to the word of God”

“to listen to the word of God” (akouo) - to hear with attention;

- ▶ to have the faculty of hearing (Matthew 13.14-15)
- ▶ the ability to hear with the ear of the mind (John 8.43)
- ▶ hearing to be informed (“ears to hear” - Matthew 13.9)
- ▶ hearing to obey, to put into practice (Luke 8.15)

(1) The way that we encounter Jesus is by listening to his words—he is the “God-Word” (John 1.1).

- ▶ The first encounter that anyone ever has with Jesus is through the Word of God—“faith comes by hearing and hearing through the Word of God” (Romans 10.17).
- ▶ If you want to encounter Jesus, go to the Word. If you don’t go to the Word, you won’t encounter him, nor will you encounter God—for God can only be known through Jesus, the “One and Only Word” (John 1.1, 18).

“In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah,
‘You will be ever hearing but never understanding;
you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.
For this people’s heart has become calloused;
they hardly hear with their ears,
and they have closed their eyes.
Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
hear with their ears,
understand with their hearts and turn,
and I would heal them.’” (Matthew 13.14-15)

“Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. . . . He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.” (John 8.43, 47)

“The seed that fell among thorns stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life’s worries, riches, and pleasures, and they do not mature. But the seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.” (Luke 8.14-15)

(2) It matters very much *how* we listen.

- ▶ In the Biblical paradigm, love, listen, and obey are inseparable (e.g Deuteronomy 30.20). We love God by listening to His words and obeying Him.

“Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.” (John 14.23)

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love.” (John 15.9-10)

(3) Listening to the words of Jesus is very much a matter of *choice*.

“Martha, Martha,” the Lord answered, “you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better . . .” (Luke 10.41-42)

- ▶ Turning one's ear (Proverbs 2.2), cultivating a listening ear (Proverbs 25.12), or turning a deaf ear (Proverbs 28.9) define how we choose to listen and respond to the words of Jesus.

Listening like Jesus—

The Sovereign LORD has given me a well-instructed tongue,
to know the word that sustains the weary.

He wakens me morning by morning,
wakens my ear to listen like one being instructed.

The Sovereign LORD has opened my ears . . .

Isaiah 50.4-5a

- ▶ Set aside distraction-free time each day to read Scripture.
- ▶ Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the ability to hear—to see and understand what God is saying.
- ▶ Underline, make notes, journal—put into writing what you are hearing.
- ▶ Develop the art of meditating on the words of Jesus.
- ▶ Make it a priority to be in church for Sunday and Mid-Week where Jesus the Word is the one thing that matters.