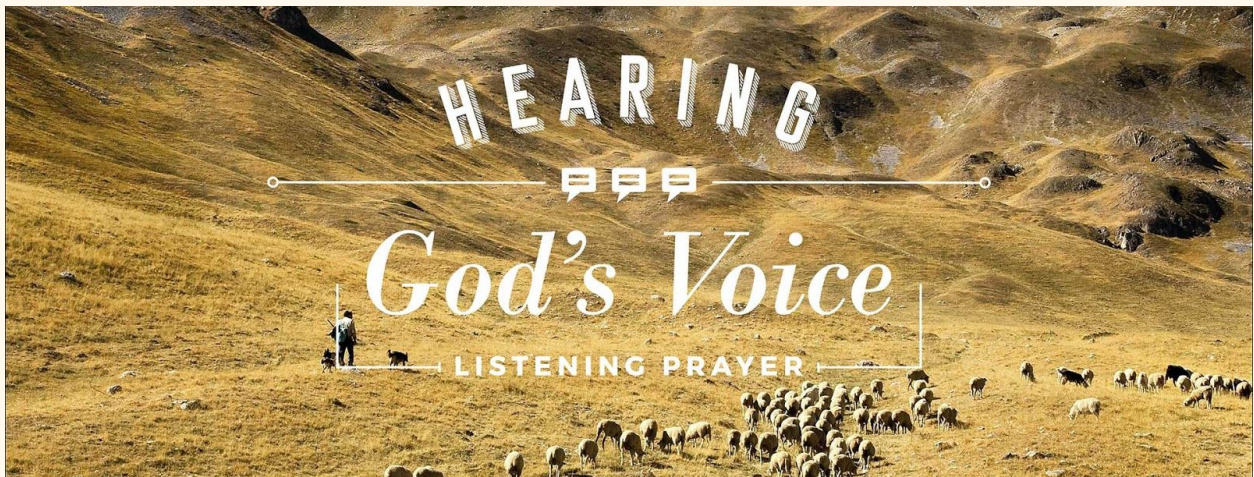

Ignite

"Dear Lord, thank You for being a good shepherd that constantly loves and cares for Your sheep. We pray that as we go through this week, our ears are attentive to Your voice and our hearts obeying Your commands. Amen"



SERMON SUMMARY

Hearing God's Voice:
We can hear Him personally

Senior Pastor Chris Kam

John 10:27

"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."

Luke 10:38-42

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" "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, and it will not be taken away from her."

Introduction

As followers of Christ, we are given the privilege and ability to hear the voice of God. Unfortunately, many Christians have not learned to do that well, hence drowning out their lives with their own voices, the voices of the world, or worse still, the voices of demonic beings. The promise of Jesus is for all of us who are His disciples. When we learn to do that, we save ourselves from wasting time, from wallowing in heartaches and brokenness that was never meant to be in the first place. Instead, we embark on an amazing journey of living in the will of God. This listening is not only for the individual Christian, but also for the corporate body of believers to discern together what Christ, the head of the body, is saying and directing us to what we should be and do, as salt and light of the earth.

Big Idea : As followers of Jesus Christ, we can hear the voice of God.

1 So, can I hear the voice of God? [John 10:27](#), [John 10:3-4](#)

The answer is yes. We can hear the voice of God. John 10:3 says that "My sheep listen to my voice." It did not say, "My sheep can hear my voice" or "should hear my voice". Jesus made the emphatic statement that His sheep do hear His Voice. Many Christians question the inaccuracy of this statement for their own experience did not line up with that truth. Since Jesus cannot be wrong, it can only be concluded that they just do not recognise what they are hearing as the voice of God, because they do hear His voice. They are hearing, but they are not really listening. It happens sometimes in conversations when we hear the words, but we are not actually listening. We can hear the voice of God, but we do not recognise what is coming from the heart of God.

Radio stations are always transmitting 24/7. However, we can only hear them when we turn the receiver on and tune in to the frequency that it is transmitting. Failure to

hear does not mean that the station is not transmitting, it is just that the person is not receiving.

2 What's preventing me from hearing the voice of God? [Psalm 46:10](#), [Luke 10:39-40](#), [Luke 10:41-42](#)

We need to tune our receivers, believe that God is speaking and start listening. It will take time, effort, discipline and patience to learn how to do that. There is no shortcut. Learning to hear from God does not come immediately when you set out to do it. It takes persistence to make time for God and patience to wait on Him. The average lifestyle of a Christian is a busy one, which makes it uncondusive to hearing God's voice. The first key is to be still. The problem is that some of us are not still enough to hear Him speak, and for some of us, we are afraid of what we might hear. We fail to realize that our Heavenly Father longs to have a relationship with us, so He can bring greater blessings to our lives.

Martha was doing good things by serving Jesus and the disciples, but she was so busy that she missed what Jesus was longing for from her, that which was what Mary did. Jesus loved Martha and appreciated her service, but she is missing the point that God's desire is not so much about what we can do for Him, that by our performance, God will love us a little more.

We can read the word of God every day, but still miss the point of what it means to read the word of God. We miss the whole spirit of it and take pride about how we know His Word but we do not fall in love with Him. We even quarrel with each other about what His letters mean. We defend our doctrine, we take pride in studying the Word, we hear sermons; but the main question is, how are we relating to the writer of these love letters? Do you have an intimate and loving relationship with the Author?

3 How do I move forward from here? [Genesis 3:8-10](#), [Luke 22:42-43](#)

The first thing we need to do is to repent. Repent for not making time to hear His voice for ourselves. Repent for taking a shortcut to hear what others have heard from God rather than what we ourselves have heard. The saddest verse is found in Genesis 3:8-10, when Adam said these three words, "So I hid." Man is made for an intimate relationship with God, but we have been hiding from God ever since. Today, we are so drowned by the voices of the world that we forget what God is saying to us about our lives. The reason why so many of us are living so mediocrely is because we have not learned to tune in to the voice of God. We need to repent of being independent and doing our own things, of running our own lives.

The question is, do we have a desire to hear God's voice? We cannot move forward if we do not resolve this. This is not about listening to His voice for your own selfish desires, your wants or your needs. This is about listening to God's voice like how

Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane, when Jesus poured out His heart and listened to the Father.

Conclusion

The value of persistent prayer is not that He will hear us but that we will finally hear Him. - William McGill. We have many prayer requests in our lives. Some of us have been praying for many years with no visible result. It could be that we have not heard from God. It is time for us to start listening. As we start to listen to the voice of God, it may even change the way we pray.



SERMON REFLECTION

One night a few months ago, as I was moving about my house, all of a sudden I felt very tired and my body felt very weak. I felt so faint that I had to lie down. I even vomited a few times. I went to see a doctor, who directed me to go to a hospital. It was a long wait until I finally got my blood test done.

The blood test result indicated that my body sodium levels were low, and they put me on an IV drip to raise my sodium levels. Also, given the time of the moment, (It was during that time when numbers of covid-19 infections were increasing rapidly and Movement Control Order was implemented by the government) there was the concern that I might have the coronavirus, and I was placed in an isolated ward just in case. They kept me there in the hospital to monitor my condition, to see if I would develop any serious symptoms characteristic of a covid-19 patient.

I was generally feeling better after being put on the IV drip. However, on the subsequent days, when I started coughing in the night and found blood mixed with my phlegm in the morning, I started to worry that I might really have the coronavirus after all. I spent time reading the Bible, praying, and worshipping God to

build up my faith and to anchor on peace. It was a good thing that I was placed in an isolation ward, for I could pray and worship in the privacy of my room.

It was when I was reading a passage of scripture that my mom shared with me from a devotional reading, that God spoke His Rhema word to me. The scripture was from 2 Chronicles 20, when a vast army of Moabites and Ammonites with some of the Meunites came to wage war against King Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat turned to God and cried out to Him, saying, ***“For we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you.” (2 Chronicle 20:12)*** These words reflect the cry of my heart, for I felt powerless against this ‘army’ of coronavirus! I do not know what to do either, but to fix my eyes on Jesus.

The Spirit of the Lord came on Jahaziel, and he said these words which leap right out of the page of my Bible and into the core of my being. ***“Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God’s. Tomorrow march down against them. They will be climbing up by the Pass of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the gorge in the Desert of Jeruel. You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the Lord will give you, Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the Lord will be with you.” (2 Chronicles 20:15-17)***

It was as if God was saying to me personally, “Do not be afraid or discouraged because of the coronavirus. For the battle is not yours, but God’s. Go out and face them tomorrow, and the Lord will be with you.” God’s Word gave me the faith, the peace, the assurance and the strength that I needed for the rest of my time at the hospital. After that, even when I continued to display certain symptoms, I was not worried or anxious. The symptoms did not get worse, and a couple of days later, the doctor gave me the green light to return home.

Hearing God speak to me through His Word was a blessing especially when I was facing a “battle” and needed His strength and encouragement. I was never really alone in that isolation ward, for God was with me. Even as I go through life and encounter challenging and difficult times, it is God’s Word that refreshes and renews

me, strengthens and sustains me, empowers me and sees me through. For that I am humbled and thankful.



APPLICATION

Note to Word facilitator:

As you prepare for this session, this is a great time to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you to use the questions efficaciously. You can select, modify or entirely create your own questions, according to the needs of your CG, especially if you feel that there are too many questions than required for the allocated time. The questions below are crafted with a certain flow in mind. You could use these towards the end or insert them in between your own sermon reflection and summary.

Suggested Icebreaker Question (for Welcome that would link to the Word time)

- What do you find yourself listening to the most? (Which news channel, social media, celebrity, or preachers do you spend your time listening to the most?)
- Which of these voices do you find the strongest/loudest or has the most influence over your life?

Suggested Word Introductory Question:

- Do you believe that you can hear from God? Do you believe that God speaks to you?
- Share an experience in your life when you heard God speaking to you. Was it in an audible voice or was it through someone else, or was it through the Bible or a still small voice? How did you react or respond? How did it affect you? How did it change your life or your thinking/perception?

Suggested questions linked to each main point:

So, can I hear the voice of God?

- "Failure to hear does not mean that the station is not transmitting, it is just that the person is not receiving." How do you think you can tune into God's frequency? What are some of the ways that can help you receive from God more effectively?

What's preventing me from hearing the voice of God?

- What are some of the things that are preventing you from hearing the voice of God? What part can you play in overcoming these things?
- "The average lifestyle of a Christian is a busy one, which makes it un conducive to hearing God's voice. The first key is to be still." Does this statement reflect you and your life? If so, what are some ways that can help you foster a more conducive environment/lifestyle/state of mind that can help you to hear better from God? How can you be still and yet continue to meet the needs of your demanding lifestyle?

How do I move forward from here?

- "The reason why so many of us are living so mediocrely is because we have not learned to tune in to the voice of God." Do you have a desire to hear God's voice? How can you start learning to hear from God in your prayer time and conversations with Him?

Concluding Question/CG Activity:

Practice Lectio Divina during the week - Scripture reading: [Acts 9:15-22](#) (Wednesday), [Acts 9:32-43](#) (Friday) *(To help people shift from a performance-based mentality to a relationship with God)*

Question Bank *(Extra questions you can use to bring discussion further as you see fit):*

- Do you think the possibility of hearing from God is available to pre-believers as well?
- Who can you better identify yourself with, Mary or Martha? Do you find yourself striving to perform or serve in ministry with the intention of winning God's approval? Are you constantly worried and upset about many things in life, failing to realise that "Few things are needed, or indeed only one"? Following the example of Mary, whom Jesus said has chosen "what is better", what can you do to cultivate greater intimacy with God?

- Do you find yourself overly relying on other preachers or ministries to feed you spiritually and tell you what God is saying without learning to hear from Him yourself? How are you relating to the Writer of the love letters of the Bible? Do you have a personal, intimate and loving relationship with the Author? How are you reading the Bible to understand God's heart better without missing the point?
- Why do you think Christians hide from God sometimes? How do you think God feels or what does He think about His children who hide from Him?
- What are some of the things you need to repent of that can help you move forward from here? What are some of the changes that you need to make?
- Do you have any prayer requests of which results and answers you are still waiting for? What is God saying to you? How can you practice *listening prayer* and actively hear from God?



WHAT'S YOUR STORY?



Story of the week...

"During the first two months of the MCO, even though I especially enjoyed my time at home with my family, deep down inside I was restless and confused. I did not know how to cope internally as it felt as though I was suddenly left without any work to do! I could not travel nor go anywhere. All the bad news that I was listening to also began affecting me..."

-Choon Leong, CGL, PJS2

* Read the rest of Choon Leong's story on dumc.my/blog

"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you."

- Maya Angelou

If your CG member(s) has a story to share related to today's Word,
Share their/your story [\[HERE\]](#)



PRAYER

Note to CGL: You (or someone you assign this portion to), may lead by reading these prayers together as a CG during worship.

God of justice and mercy, I come before You now with an awareness of those whose prayers today are sighs, sobs or even screams for help. Soften my heart to care more keenly, sharpen my mind to think more clearly, and clench my fists to fight more fiercely for those who are oppressed. Amen.

-a Lectio 365 prayer on August 11, 2020.

Nation

Pray for the Parliament of Malaysia, the ultimate legislative body which is formed by the upper house (Dewan Negara) and the lower house (Dewan Rakyat), that they will take extreme precaution in the issues of passing, amending and repealing acts of law before submitting to the Yang-di-Pertuan Agong, that whatever bills passed after debates and further approved by the Agong will be conducive to bringing greater advancement in the society as a whole.

-taken from NECF 40-day prayer and fast booklet

Churches & Believers

Pray that those of us who have left our first love will humble ourselves to acknowledge that we have fallen short of His glory, and that it is time we return to

His first love, and to do the very first works that we are called to do with the empowerment of the Holy Spirit with vitality and liveliness.

- taken from NECF 40-day prayer and fast booklet

Communities & Social Transformation

Lord Jesus, we ask that You will pour down Your Holy Spirit to bring conviction of sin, reconciliation of relationships and families, and restoration of broken communities and neighbourhoods. We pray for our neighbours and communities to be transformed and rebuilt through forgiveness, forbearance and love, as we confront the big issues of social polarisation, poverty and injustice. Amen.

The World - Prayer for Beirut

Gracious and loving God who hovers over the pain of your world. We pray for all who suffer or experience pain through the chemical explosion in Beirut.

We remember especially this day the people of Beirut. Help the injured, protect those in danger, support the dying, bring comfort to the grieving and soothe the anxious whose families and lives are forever changed by grief and loss.

Bless with your strength and comfort those who have survived the trauma and devastation of this disaster.

We ask your blessing on all those who have lost their homes, their livelihoods, their security and their hope.

Strengthen and guide doctors, nurses, and all those who serve in emergency services and all who bring comfort and relief.

In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen





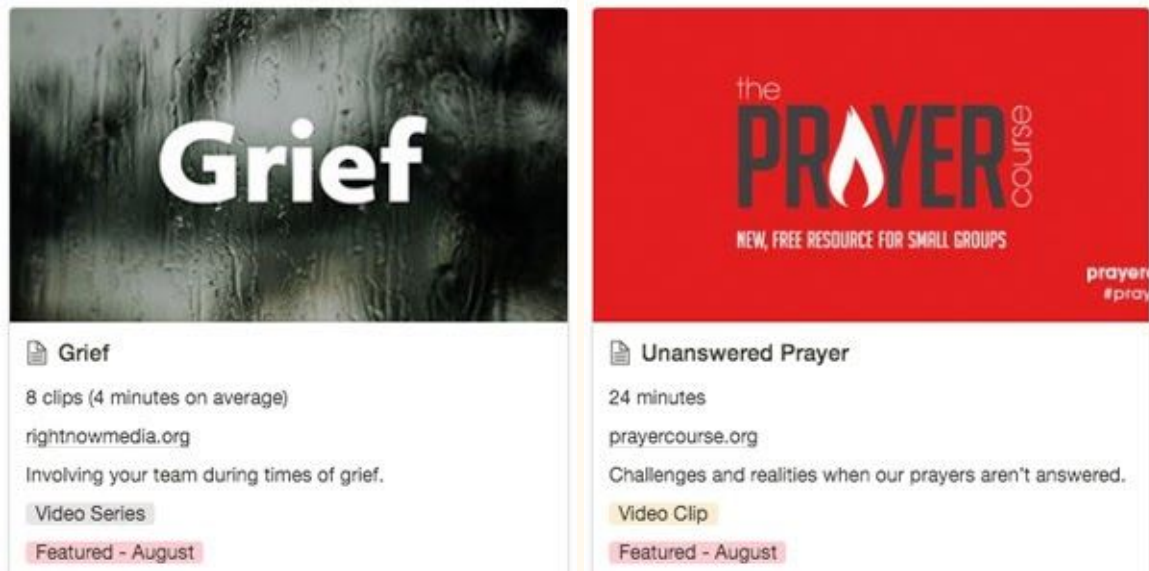
OTHER RESOURCES

Below are some links to resource you. Do **CLICK** on the images below!

FEATURED

In view of our current changing landscape that affects us individually and corporately, here are some featured resources for you this month!

 <h3>The Psychology of Crisis</h3> <p>1 hour 35 minutes rightnowmedia.org Truths for facing the COVID-19 pandemic. Video Clip Featured - August</p>	 <h3>Listening</h3> <p>8 sessions (6 minutes on average) rightnowmedia.org Listening is a critical aspect of leadership. Video Series Featured - August</p>
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OTHER RESOURCES

Discover a host of other resources curated for you here!



DUMC STORIES

Be blessed by a compilation of inspiring DUMC Stories that you can share with others!

