

LISTENING IN A BUSY WORLD

We live in a fast moving world, full of technology, for example mobile phones.

Receive texts, calls and pictures any time anywhere.

ITALY - 10th place in world of phones/people. Western Europe, 2nd after Finland (Nokia)

Exclude Nokia and Italy is 1st, over 88.6 million contract phones - 2013 before latest iPhones.

Means 148.5 contract/100 people. Half contract? So if your phone stops working at mid-day, YOU have the half contract

Although this has changed lifestyle, one thing is still the same - as far as I can see. HANDS?

In UK common thought, "how to stop an Italian talking - tie hands by the side".

Even on the phone, the hands are communicating!!

So, we listen in many ways in this fast paced world but do we take time to listen to GOD?

Interesting insight from one commentator as I am reading through ACTS;

Have you ever considered that as you are reading scripture, you are listening to the words of Peter, Paul, John or even one of the Old Testament prophets? Instead do we simply "read" the words and miss the opportunity of "listening" as it were, through the Holy Spirit, to the voices of those people. These were men who had walked with Jesus and seen His power, adds even more power to scripture.

So, try to listen as I read some verses from Isaiah 55. (Amplified version)

"Wait and listen, you who are thirsty for more of Me,

Yes, come buy priceless spiritual wine and milk, without money and price,

Simply for the self-surrender that accepts the blessing.

Hearken/pay great attentions listen diligently to me and eat what is good

And let your soul delight itself in in the overflowing abundance of spiritual joy.

Submit and consent to the divine will, come to Me, hear/listen and your soul will live.

These are words Isaiah heard from God, so we need to listen.

So, what is God saying?

These words were for exiles in Babylon, some of whom now joined in with society around them. Others still longing after Jerusalem, now broken down. The temple is now in ruins, where God dwelt but not sure "what next". But they were hungry for something more, something more of God.

Here He is calling to ALL, return to, draw close, I (GOD), am wanting my kingdom, my presence to be seen on earth.

If you turn away from the distractions around you, return to me I will make things so different, I will do things so amazing that peoples and nations will come and see what is happening.

When they do, they will give praise to ME (God).

We are then given some amazing word pictures to show how certain God's promises are.

His plans are so much more than we can ever imagine - just like the distance between the earth and sky.

His plans are so certain - it is like the rain and snow falling to earth, it doesn't return back to the sky, it first waters the ground to help crops grow. So my words cannot return to me without fulfilling what I promise.

This GOD is telling them so that they can be part of seeing His presence, His kingdom, come again in the temple.

So, how does this relate to us today?

2 Timothy 3 vs 16,17 - ALL scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching So that the man of God may be adequate for every good work.

For me the challenge was and still is, to take time in His word, take time in prayer and listen to what He is saying. God wants His kingdom to come on earth - not just when Jesus returns but now, today. He wants the evidence of His kingdom. His power to be seen now so that not only our lives but the lives of people around us will change.

Matthew 6 v 6 and following - THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Something of a repeat of Is 55

Listen - go into your inner room, close the door

You who are hungry and thirsty - Give us this day our daily bread

For the exiles in Babylon, it would have meant leaving their comforts behind but God promised that instead of thorns and briars there would be Cyprus and Myrtle. In scripture these trees - open pathways, joy.

So, for us today, as we listen to God, seeking first His kingdom, we may hear something that sounds "uncomfortable" but look what God promises - Joy

He also asks us to pray His kingdom come, His will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven.

As I thought more.

John 4 vs 15 - 26. The woman of Samaria, she listened to all that Jesus said

What happened, her life turned around in an amazing way.

Often recall v29 "come see a man who told me everything I ever did"

Appearance must have been so different that everyone notices and went to Jesus.

Ok, that was Jesus but we have, His presence in us, the Holy Spirit and I believe He longs for us to listen and see the Fathers kingdom come.

Myself - desire to seeing more people healed.

2 examples where Holy Spirit told me to do something.

Both very uncomfortable but brought great joy.

Chris with gambling habit - prayed for him in the store - stopped gambling.

Phil - skin cancer, Holy Spirit told me to pour Communion "wine" over the skin. Following week, all gone.

So, take time to listen, be prepared to be uncomfortable (but then Holy Spirit becomes who He is, the Comforter) and see God's kingdom come.

Do you not know about this relationship with God?

Do you not know the comfort of His voice?

This is possible, even today. God longs for each of us to turn to Him.

Recognize we need His forgiveness, receive Jesus as Lord and start learning how to walk in the new life.

Domenica 15 febbraio 2015 a cura di S. Coates

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