



## ... Heart to Heart ...

For some it is one of the most difficult tasks they could ever undertake. Others find it easy, because they give it no consideration! People go about, just doing normal daily things not realizing the impact it has and how it deteriorates relationships. It affects our faith to the core. What am I talking about?

### ***Listening!***

The Lord made us with two ears and one mouth for a reason! Some can sure talk, but they won't listen. Some seemed compelled to talk, no matter what. “When there are many words, transgression is unavoidable, but he who restrains his lips is wise.” (Prov. 10:19) What will listening teach you? A free talker will sin with their lips and it can't be avoided! A free talker isn't wise. James says it this way, “But let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger.” (Jam. 1:19) Have you noticed when someone is angry, they can't hear? They are quick to speak? You can't get through to them because their anger has shut off their hearing and their lips are ready to open.

Jesus spoke to His disciples in Luke 8, telling them the parable of the sower. We seem familiar with the parable, but have you ever paid close attention to the ending? “Therefore take care *how* you listen...” (8:18) *How* one listens determines a lot about them. It is the difference between receiving and not receiving. There is another element involved in listening. “Take care of *what* you listen to.” (Mark 4:24) *What* you listen to determines the standard you go by. People talk of how difficult it is to read their Bibles, but little trouble reading other material. Mark continues with these words: “By your standard of measure it will be measured to you...” (Mark 4:24b) Every thing comes down to *how* and *what* we listen to.

People come to wrong or poor conclusions because they don't listen. Their mind is made up and nothing that is said will change that. We must be careful to *how* and *what* we listen to.

We need to listen to God and His word. We need to allow His word entrance into our hearts so He will change our beings. “Guard your steps as you go to the house of God and draw near to listen rather than offer the sacrifice of fools; for they do not know they are doing evil. Do not be hasty in word or impulsive in thought to bring up a matter in the presence of God. For God is in heaven and you are on the earth; therefore let your words be few.” (Eccl. 5:1-2) These are words to listen to and take in. Are we serious about growing, or just all talk? *How* and *what* do you listen to? Think about it!!!

Brent