

Gathering Question: When you pray, do you ever sit for minutes without words? Is that kind of idea compelling to you? Can you see any benefits for sitting silently before the Lord? When you are listening for God what do you mean by that?

Listening to the Voice of God

It is such an honor to speak to God! We are so blessed to talk directly to the Creator of all that is. We don't have to have a priest or any other go between. Because of the sacrifice of Jesus, the way is open to the very throne of God. Anytime, anywhere, under any circumstances, we can "approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." (Hebrews 4:16).

But in relationships conversations go both ways. We speak to God and he speaks to us. But how do we hear his voice? One obvious way is that he speaks to us through Scripture. As we read and meditate upon God's written Word, he uses it to remake us into his image. There is no way we can read Scripture prayerfully and not be changed by our loving Father. It is amazing how a familiar verse or event jumps off the pages of the Bible just when we need that message or help.

Another way God speaks to us is through people. It may be that when we are going through tough times our brothers and sisters in the Lord will live out God's message to us—telling us that we are loved, cared for, or providing comfort. It may be through a counselor who is filled with God's Spirit and can live God's message in front of us.

God also speaks to us directly through his Holy Spirit. This is neither eerie nor ethereal. According to Scripture the Holy Spirit helps us in our weaknesses; he comforts us, rebukes us, affirms us, and assures us that we are the children of God. God gave us the Holy Spirit as a gift as we were washed clean of our sins at conversion. And ever since he has been there to do the ultimate makeover of our lives into the likeness of the Son.

You matter to God! He made you, and he knows what you need more than you do. He wants to guide your life. He wants to help you through the stress of struggle of life here. So, try it! "Be still and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10).

Read: Luke 10:38-42; Romans 8:12-27

Reflect:

1. Does it bother you that Mary chose to sit at the feet of Jesus and listen when there was so much to do? Which of the two women do you understand best? Why?
2. How did Martha misinterpret Mary's preference to sit and listen?
3. How does the "Spirit testify to our spirit that we are children of God?"
4. List ways the Spirit helps us in our weakness?

