

## **HEARING AND LISTENING AT THIS TIME**

### **AS A CHILD DOES**

Our family was listening to Premier Doug Ford's announcement at his press conference on Monday that parts of Ontario would now be allowed to reopen under Phase 3. After explaining how Phase 3 works and what can reopen in this stage, the Premier then took questions from the media. A reporter from Toronto acknowledged that he was confused as to whether the City of Toronto would have to wait four more weeks before they could move into Phase 3. Both the Premier and the Minister of Health had explained a few minutes earlier that the Chief Medical Officer of Health likes to see a 4-week period of testing and numbers before making a decision on which areas of the Province are safe to reopen. The communities allowed to reopen this Friday have gone through the 4-week period and areas like Toronto that were delayed by a week before entering Phase 2 would not likely be allowed to move into Phase 3 until the following week. When the reporter said he didn't understand if it would be at least four more weeks before Toronto would move into Phase 3, Coral turned to me and said *"Didn't he listen to the earlier explanation? It was clear to me. I understood what the Premier was saying!"*

After Coral said this Nadine commented isn't it interesting how a 14-year-old understood what an experienced reporter did not.

This got me thinking about a time in the Gospels when we saw a child hear and listen better than adults. The story of Jesus feeding the crowd of 5,000 is found in all four Gospels. In Mark's account, Jesus told the disciples to go out and find how much food and bread they had. The disciples would have begun asking around amongst the crowd if anyone had food to offer and share. Amongst a crowd of 5,000 men and most likely 5,000 women as well, it was a young boy who heard and listened to the disciples' request the most. John's Gospel tells us a young boy heard this request for food and offered to give to Jesus the five barley loaves and two fish he had. Jesus used the food the boy offered and miraculously fed the entire crowd.

Many adults would have heard the same request that this young boy did. These adults had food and money on them, but they did not listen and respond in the same way:

- Were they afraid that they would have no food left for themselves if they gave it to the disciples?
- Were they thinking it would make little difference in a crowd of that size?
- Were they focused more on themselves than helping others?
- Did they doubt what Jesus could do with whatever He was given?

Whatever the reason, this example made me wonder as adults, do we do the same with other things that Jesus asks us to do?

- Do we really hear and listen to the promises that Jesus makes to us?
- Do we really hear and listen to Jesus' instructions on how we are to live as Christians?
- Do we really hear and listen to what Jesus says are God's truths and absolutes?
- Do we really hear and listen to Jesus' call to follow him completely?
- Do we really hear and listen to Jesus telling us when sin is crouching at the door?
- Do we really hear and listen when Jesus is asking us to serve or make sacrifices for Him?

As adults we can sometimes let things like fear, worry, distractions, doubts, insecurities, and other things affect our ability to truly hear and listen to what He is telling us. We can miss out on experiencing so many things that Jesus has in store for us by failing to hear and listen to what He is saying. For instance:

- Imagine missing out on standing on the firm foundations of Christ's promises by not listening.
- Imagine missing out on righteous living by not listening to His truths.
- Imagine missing out on being part of a miracle by not hearing and listening.
- Imagine missing out on using your God given gifts for the Kingdom of God by failing to listen and hear.

As adults, our minds can be filled with so many thoughts, insecurities and distractions that we fail to hear and respond properly to what Jesus is saying to us. The lesson here for us as adults is to learn from our young

children and teens by listening more clearly and carefully when people are explaining things, particularly when that person is Jesus.

In Mark 10: 14-15 Jesus said

***“For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children. I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn’t receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it.”***

Now more than ever we need to be listening to Jesus with this child-like faith. By doing so we will be reminded that Jesus will come and provide for us through this pandemic in the most miraculous of ways.

Let’s keep listening to Jesus’ words and voice just like a young boy once did.

***God Bless and Keep Safe!***

***Rev. Dean***