

BLESSED to be a BLESSING – Listen

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. - *Matthew 5:14-16 (ESV)*

‘The Lord said to Abram, ‘Go from your country. Your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you. And whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you’. - *Genesis 12:1-3 (ESV)*

⁷ Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. ⁸ And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.”⁹ So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. - *(ESV)*

I think ‘Hearing’ is an event; it is something which happens to us as a natural process.

But ‘listening’ is an action; it is something we consciously need to do – It’s paying close attention and considering what you are hearing!

‘My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: **‘Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak’**. - *James 1:19a*

When people in our lives do not feel listened to, it can leave them feeling unheard, uncared for and unloved.



“The most basic of all human needs is the need to understand and be understood. The best way to understand people is to listen to them.” - Ralph Nichols

‘Active listening is a lifelong skill that will serve you well in your relationships with friends, family, and co-workers. All it takes is a bit of effort,

a lot of patience, and a willingness to be present with another person, and genuinely interested in what they have to say.' - Health Line

Jesus took the time to listen

1) Jesus listened to his heavenly father

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. - *Mark 1:35 (NIV)*

2) Jesus listened to the people around him

- Jesus **L**oved
- Jesus **I**nquired
- Jesus **S**topped
- Jesus **T**ested
- Jesus **E**ngaged
- Jesus **N**udged

“Just as love to God begins with listening to his Word, so the beginning of love for the brethren is learning to listen to them.” - *Bonhoeffer*

Learning to listen to others:

- **History:** Tell me your story? Where did you grow up?
- **Heart:** What's your favourite... thing to do, team, food, holiday destination
- **Habits:** What do you like to do with your free time? (hobbies, fitness, walking, family)
- **Hurts:** How are you doing?.... since your mum passed away

3) Jesus listened to his community

- Healing the Sick
- Feeding the Multitudes
- Public Teaching
- Comforting the Grieving
- His death on the cross

As a church family, we are trying to listen to our community:

- MK Food Bank

- Angel Tree, supporting the families of inmates in prison
- Through initiatives reaching into our community supporting individuals, charities, organisations and churches
- Supporting people who are grieving through loss
- Ministering to the elderly
- Ministering to young people
- Ministering to children
- Support marriages
- Supporting families: Day Nursery, Parent and Toddlers, Sensory suite, Community breakfasts at half-term
- Listening to the cry for practical help to those in need in Uganda, India & Albania

One of the most practical and powerful ways we can be a blessing is to simply listen