



Swift

To Hear

Wayne Dailey
May 1, 2001

It is not necessary for Christians to fall into a snare. If they do, it's only because they refused to listen to the Lord when He warned them about it.

I Corinthians 10:11

Now all these things
happened unto them for ensamples:
and they are written for our admonition,
upon whom the ends of the world are come.

You can learn a lot from the mistakes of others. In this message we will look in the Word at some examples to see what we can learn from them.

The Corinthians were in the place of being informed of the errors which others had made in the past. In the Old Testament God gives a detailed history of the children of Israel, that we might pay heed.

Look at what the prophets had to say to Israel - and the mess that was made of things because the people wouldn't heed what had been told them.

the words which the Lord hath cried by the former prophets

God had raised up the prophet Isaiah to speak against the evil that was in the land. He used Isaiah to warn Israel to turn from their sins unto God.

Realize, now, that those warnings weren't just intended for the children of Israel - but are for us in these last days, as much as they were for the people way back then.

But when they heard these warnings, they didn't pay any attention - so God kept dealing with them, generation after generation.

He warned that if they didn't surrender unto Him, He would bring an army down upon them. And that army would cause their land to become desolate. God would use those armies to kill with the edge of the sword and with famine and pestilence, as well as to carry away a multitude captive from the land.

But nobody paid any mind to those prophets! Instead, they mocked and scoffed them. They persecuted them, and raised up unto themselves false prophets who went about claiming that God would never bring judgment.

Zechariah 7:7

Should ye not hear the words which the Lord hath cried by the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and in prosperity, and the cities thereof round about her, when men inhabited the south and the plain?

Though Isaiah has passed from the picture, his words are with us today.

Jeremiah was another prophet whom God raised up to warn His people. He sent Jeremiah forth to cry against the sins of the people, cry against what they were doing. And to warn them that God would bring judgment upon them if they didn't repent.

But nobody paid any attention to what Jeremiah had to say. The people mocked and persecuted him, having him thrown into a dungeon because of what he told them from the Lord.

He prophesied that for seventy long years their land would lie desolate, while they were carried away to another nation until the end of those years.

But everyone mocked and scoffed him. They took his words lightly. They didn't believe that what he said would come to pass - but it did! Yes, it all happened, just as Jeremiah had prophesied.

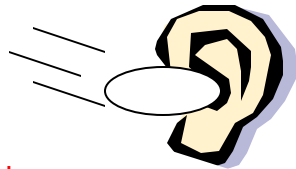
All the judgments which God had pronounced upon them began to unfold. There was much weeping and misery, because the people failed to heed when God spoke to them.

They didn't want to listen!

Years later, Zechariah warned the people of the errors their fathers had made:

Zechariah 7:11

But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.



Some of the greatest prophets rose up in their midst. They weren't hearing these words from someone who was talking off the top of his head. God spoke through the prophets He had raised up.

But these people refused to hear the Word of the Lord. They didn't believe God would do anything to them. They rebelled and stopped their ears from His solemn warnings.

Zechariah 7:13

Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the Lord of hosts:

Hearing is a two-way street - involving both talking and hearing. And prayer is also a two-way street: you not only talk to God - but also hear from God.

Some cry out, *Oh, God! Hear my prayer.* While, at the same time, God is saying, *Oh, people. Hear My Word!*

If you don't want to hear God's Word, maybe He doesn't want to hear your prayers. He said unto the people of Zechariah's day, *I cried unto you, and cried unto you. I raised up prophets to warn you - but you wouldn't listen.*

Then the wrath began to fall, and troubles upon troubles began happening. Their land was being laid desolate.

In the midst of all this sorrow, they cried unto the Lord - but He didn't pay any attention. They cried out to Him - but He would not listen.

When you refuse to hear the voice of the Lord, when you won't respond to His Word - the day will come when He won't listen to your cry.

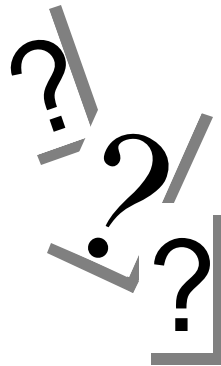
But there's no need for any of us to get into such a state. If we are swift to hear God's Word, swift to do as He said - He will be swift to hear our cry.

Isaiah 58:3,4

Wherefore have we fasted, say they,
and Thou seest not?

wherefore have we afflicted our soul,
and Thou takest no knowledge?

Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure,
and exact all your labours.



Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.

The fast referred to here was more than just not eating. It was a solemn time of seeking the Lord. God didn't pay any attention to what they were doing because of the manner in which they were doing it.

You went through all the motions, and you said all the right things - but your heart was far from Me.

Ezekiel 33:31b

. . . with their mouth they shew much love,
but their heart goeth after their covetousness.

So many bad things happened to this people just because they refused to listen to God's Word, because they refused to obey what God had to say.

Is there a place of neutrality with God? Is there a place where He is neither for you nor against you? Can you be blessed of God - without living for Him?

No, with God you are either in - or you are out. You are either blessed - or you are cursed. You either go all the way in serving Him - or you find yourself paying the price for your halfheartedness.

The Bible tells us that Jesus is the door. We must go through Him if we want to find access unto the Father and gain eternal life.

But the Bible also speaks of another door in Revelation 3:20 -

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock - if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.



The door referred to here is our heart. Jesus wants us to open the door of our heart so He can come in. He is waiting to hear the cry of our heart for restoration.

When we swing the door of our heart wide open for Him to enter, we open the way to blessing in our life.

We live in a day where the need for restoration is great. As we look down through history, we can see the church slipping from the place of power and blessing, that place where God intended for it to remain.

In this last day, we see many sliding away from sound doctrine. We see many falling away from the hearing of God's Word. Many have drifted off into having a mere social gospel. The church is no longer spiritual. It has become a social club to many.

Yes, the church is constantly busy with social activities: bingo, church suppers, bazaars, etc. They don't want to hear the Word of God. They don't want a pastor who preaches against sin. They just want a social time.

II Timothy 4:3

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears

God tells us that this is the day of the latter rain. In this midst of all this rotten decay, in the midst of a time when the seed is rotten under the clods, in the midst of a deadness, where there is little true revival - yes, this is also the day of the latter rain!

Zechariah 10:1

Ask ye of the Lord rain
in the time of the latter rain;
so the Lord shall make bright clouds,
and give them showers of rain,
to every one grass in the field.

He wants us to prepare to receive all He has to give. While the rain is starting to fall, it's time to get down to business and restore the things of God in our midst.

You are in one of three places:

- either you are going all the way with the Lord
- or the door of your heart is closed to the Lord

Or, you are trying to be neutral,
not wanting to go back into the world,
nor wanting to go all the way with God.

Those who try to be neutral want the blessings of God - but they don't want to press in to receive them. What a bad state to be in.

Now, where are you in your walk?

Revelation 3:15,16

I know thy works,
that thou art neither cold nor hot:
I would thou wert cold or hot.
So then because thou art lukewarm,
and neither cold nor hot,
I will spue thee out of My mouth.

Those who are lukewarm refuse to give heed to the Word of God. They refuse to get down to business, refuse to take their salvation seriously. They just drift along in a lukewarm condition.

That neutral position is the worst possible position one can be in.

It's hard for the Lord to get someone's attention when he is lukewarm: when the lukewarm hear the Word, it doesn't take root and lodging in his heart. It just goes in one ear and right out the other.

Those who are cold find it easy to admit their need; but those who are lukewarm deceive themselves into believing that they possess what they really only profess.

Now, this passage from Revelation wasn't a message to backslidden Israel. This message was given to the church at Laodicea.

Revelation 3:17

Because thou sayest, I am rich,
and increased with goods,
and have need of nothing;
and knowest not that thou art wretched,
and miserable, and poor,
and blind, and naked . . .

We don't want to find ourselves in the condition that this church was in. We don't want to look to material prosperity as the guideline of our spiritual state.

Keep your ears open !

How swift are you in hearing the voice of the Lord? Is your heart enlarged? Have you made room in your heart to see His will accomplished?

We need to keep our ears open, responding quickly to the voice of the Lord.

Those who are on fire quickly respond, *Yes, Lord*. They don't tell the Lord to wait until they think it over. They don't tell Him that they have to pray before they decide whether or not to deny self.

Let's not be like other generations who stiffened their necks at the Word of the Lord, and responded, *Don't tell me!!*

It's precious when our hearts are yearning for the things of God. It's wonderful to be in tune to the Spirit of God, knowing what the mind of the Lord is.

Yes, it's wonderful when our hearts burn with the same desire that is in the Lord's heart - and we hear His cry to reach out and win souls.

When you're in tune, you're in revival; you call - and He answers. He hears your cry because you've gotten into the place where He'll listen.

I Corinthians 6:19,20

What? know ye not
that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost
which is in you, which ye have of God,
and ye are not your own?
For ye are bought with a price:
therefore glorify God in your body,
and in your spirit, which are God's.

You are that building where God has chosen to dwell, that building where He has placed His name. When you received Jesus into your life, you gained the identity of being a child of God.

Just think of it! God desires to be associated with you that closely, desires for it to be noised abroad that you are His child. Yes, He desires to move in and through you to His honor and glory.

What would it be like if God went away on vacation for a week?



There would be no use trying to pray! - for He wouldn't be there to listen. There would be no point opening your Bible to hear from God - for He wouldn't be there to speak.

But God isn't on vacation - and He has promised never to leave us nor forsake us, though we can be guilty of forsaking Him.

He said that He loves us with an everlasting love - but if we live carelessly, our love for Him can grow cold and indifferent.

God never changes - but we are subject to change. We either find ourselves changing for the better, or changing for the worst. If we determined in our hearts to go all the way with God, those changes can always be for the better.

Zechariah 8:1,2

Again the word of the Lord of hosts came to me, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury.

Jealousy is that awful feeling you have that you're going to lose something, or someone, that belongs to you.

Many times there are reasons for jealousy to rise up, such as when someone tries to flirt with your mate.

Now, God saw the world reaching out to take hold of His children - and He grew jealous. He wasn't about to let them go.

I was jealous for her with great fury -

The Bible says that jealousy is as cruel as the grave. God was determined not to let His people slip away without taking drastic measure to stop them. He wasn't about to let them just walk away.

Deuteronomy 32:16

They provoked Him to jealousy
with strange gods,
with abominations
provoked they Him to anger.

So the fury came, and the armies invaded the land. The people met famine and the edge of the sword. They were led away into captivity for seventy long years. Why? because God was jealous over them with fury.

How much easier it is to listen when God speaks - and to respond with all of our hearts.

Zechariah 8:3

Thus saith the Lord; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain.

I am returned unto Zion. This was written at the end of the seventy year captivity. God was bringing His people back to the holy land. He was going to restore the holy place

It was agreed, as a covenant, that all who turned toward Jerusalem to pray would be heard by God, but this verse reveals that God had departed from the land for a season.

What an awful thing - for God to have to leave His holy habitation. It all goes to show what happens when someone stiffens his neck against the Word.

How much we ought to appreciate that God has chosen to dwell in a temple not made by man - but to dwell in human temples - see I Corinthians 6:19-20.

[Whatever we face in this life, we are not alone.](#)

Think of how close He is. He is right there with you in the midst of your trials. He was right there with me and my son in the wreck that totaled my car!

God inhabits the praises of His people. He loves to have His people appreciate what He is doing.

What pleasure would there be for Him, if He dwelt all alone with the stars and distant planets? What a boring existence that would be!

Yes, God finds pleasure in fellowshiping with His children - those who have been created in His image, those who have been redeemed with the blood of His only begotten Son.

Now, bear in mind what it means to have an open heart, to remain in the place of hearing and responding to the voice of the Lord.

Realize that the Lord still speaks by the prophets of old. He still speaks through Isaiah, Jeremiah, and all the others whom He used to record His Word.

We need to heed their warnings, and get restored, knowing that the coming of the Lord draws nearer and nearer - and we must be prepared and ready.

[What are you really doing to prepare yourself?](#)

Are you taking the message of the Lord to heart? are you yielding completely to His will? or are you keeping at a distance?

[It's time to get serious about your salvation.](#)

Zechariah 8:6

Thus saith the Lord of hosts; If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in Mine eyes? saith the Lord of hosts.

We show God whether or not we truly want revival. He knows whether we really want to see Him glorified in this day and hour. He knows if we really want to see souls saved.

James 4:8

Draw nigh to God,
and He will draw nigh to you.

Now, with that in mind, should God ever be far from any of His children? Should any of us find it hard to get answers to prayer?

Not if we take time to draw nigh to Him with a true heart - He will draw nigh to us.

Don't be like those in Zechariah's day -

Zechariah 7:11

But they refused to hearken,
and pulled away the shoulder, and
stopped their ears, that they should not hear.

