

Ears To Hear

by: Grant B. Caldwell

Jesus said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" (Matthew 11:15). There are three times in the book of Matthew that Jesus used this expression. The phrase is a call to be alert to what is being taught. It is equivalent to our expression "pay attention" or "*Listen Up!*"

True Greatness—In this text, Jesus emphasizes the fact that *true greatness is in the kingdom of God* (verse 11). A person who does not make a lot of money, have a high IQ, or moves in the best social circles, can be considered great by God. So many wander through life trying to figure out who they are or where their place is. The creator of us all has answered those questions. *Listen Up!* One need only obey the Lord and be a citizen in His kingdom and he is greater than John the Baptist.

A Condition of Heart—In Matthew 13:3-23, Jesus tells the parable of the sower. It identifies four types of hearts men have. One is hard. It is difficult for the Lord to get anything into this heart. A second is stony. This heart wants to accept the Lord, but there is no desire for depth of understanding and growth. A third is thorny. It is burdened with the cares of this world. Even though it wants the Lord, He is choked out by too much business (busy-ness). But *Listen Up!* You can have a good soft heart that truly cares for the Lord and is willing to be devoted to Him. Those of us who sow the seed (the word of God) are looking for those hearts.

Must Live With Evil—In Matthew 13:24-30; 36-43, Jesus tells another parable, the parable of the tares. The point of this parable is that there is evil in the world. Sadly, we have to live with that evil all around us. That evil tempts us to sin. It makes consequences in our lives which are difficult to bear. Even when we are confident and doing all we can for the Lord, still there is pain because others are only interested in sin. The Lord cannot just do away with all of the sinners. First, there would be no one left. We all sin. Second, and more so, there would be no more conversions. The Lord wants all men saved and is longsuffering for that reason (1 Timothy 2:4, 6; 2 Peter 3:9). *Listen Up!* One day, the righteous will shine like the sun and the wicked will be cast into the furnace of fire. We have to live with the evil now, but one day evil will all be over for those who obey God.

What The Spirit Says—In Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22, Jesus said, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." It is time for all of us to pay attention to the teaching of the Spirit found in the word of God. *Listen Up!* It is only in accepting the Bible that you can be saved (Romans 1:16).

- via *Teaching Truth*, Hughes Road at Gooch Lane Church of Christ, Madison, AL
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If you're headed in the wrong direction, God allows U-turns.

News & Notes

CONFESSION: Taylor Heinselman.

MOVING: Today will be Bob & Martha Noland's last Sunday with us. They begin their new work with the Hanoverton, OH congregation next Sunday, Aug. 31st. Their new address: 9833 S.R. 9, Hanoverton, OH 44423. Phone: 330-223-1274. We wish them the best.

TONIGHT'S SPEAKER: Bob Noland.

THANK YOU NOTE: "Dear Brothers and Sisters: Words cannot express our love and appreciation for you all. Thank you so much for your gifts of money. We will use it to get something nice for our new house in Hanoverton. In Christian love, Bob & Martha Noland."

CARE & SHARE BEARS: Each Tuesday at 9:00 a.m. Join the ladies to help with this work to make bears for children in trauma situations.

PANTRY: Spaghetti & sauce. Please help restock the pantry.

THOSE WITH PHYSICAL PROBLEMS: At Home: Mabel Sprout, Virginia Rickerd, Harry Nice, Jim Beagle, Michelle Hanlon, Dan Williams, Blondenia Orr, Jenny Rhodes, Bette Gentry. Encourage others confined to their homes and in nursing homes and are listed on the bulletin board.

MEETINGS:

East Liverpool	Sept. 7-10	Terry Varner
McKinleyville	Sept. 21-25	Different Speakers
CHESTER	Sept. 28-Oct. 2	Steve Higginbotham

A Skunk in My Basement

A little old lady called the police station begging for help. "I've got a skunk in my basement!" As a solution, the policeman told her to crumble up some bread and make a trail of the crumbs up the stairs, through the house, and out the door. The policeman then instructed her to leave the house for an hour.

An hour later the lady called the police again. "I need help!" The same policeman asked her, "Ma'am, did you crumble up some bread, make a trail up the stairs, through the house, and out the door?" "Yes," she replied. The policeman asked, "Then, what is the problem? The lady cried out, "I now have TWO skunks in my house!"

Problems are inevitable. But as sure as we may experience problems, and as sure as they might multiply, there is a God who will inevitably see us through. He is our Rock and Deliverer (2 Samuel 22:2). We can know assuredly that when we face problems—or the multiplication of problems—God will take care of us. Be patient, be positive, and have faith in Almighty God!

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." — Romans 8:28

- Glad Tidings of Good Things - Jacksonville, AL

