

Fathers' Studies: Family Responsibilities

"...that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

LESSON 50 OF 52

THE FATHER WHO LISTENS

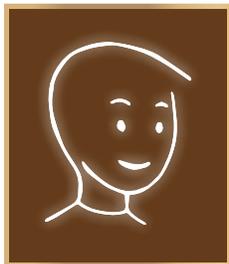
LESSON AIM: To show why listening is important for healthy family life.

KEY VERSE:

1. **JAMES 1:19** A man should listen much and _____ little.
2. **PROVERBS 18:13** To give an answer before listening makes a man _____.
3. **PROVERBS 15:31** A man who _____ will be considered wise.
4. **1 SAMUEL 19:4, 6** King Saul listened when his son _____ begged for the life of his friend.
5. **PSALM 34:15** Earthly fathers can take an example from the Heavenly Father, Who _____ the cry of those who do what is right.

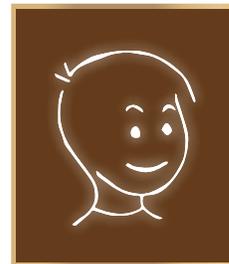
PERSONAL NOTES:

For You To Do



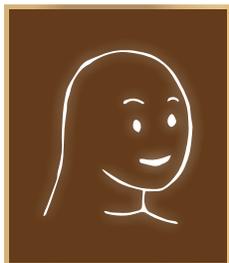
By Yourself

At the end of today, try to write down three things that your wife or one of your children told you today.



With Your Children

Take time during the next two days to listen to your children while they play or while they talk to someone. Try to find out what they are thinking about during the day.



With Your Wife

Try hard to listen to your wife for fifteen minutes, then repeat to her the main ideas of what she said. Ask her if you understood her correctly.

THE FATHER WHO LISTENS

LESSON 50 OF 52

A wise father knows how to use the “Listening Formula”.

LISTENING = HEARING + ATTENTION

Here are some steps that will help you to become a good listener.

1. **PAY ATTENTION.** Put down the book or newspaper. Turn off the TV. If necessary, go somewhere else to a quiet place to talk. Look at the speaker; your eyes can show him that you are really listening. When using the telephone, if you cannot get away from things that take your attention, ask if you can call back.
2. **REPEAT IMPORTANT PARTS OF WHAT THE OTHER PERSON HAS SAID,** or put them into your own words. Try to read the feelings behind what the other person says. If your child says, “You never do things with us. You never take us anywhere,” you can respond, “You feel that we should do more things together?”
3. **AVOID CRITICISM, RIDICULE, JUDGMENT, AND NAME-CALLING.** If the other person makes a mistake or unfair statement, do not be quick to correct the mistake. Do all you can to stay out of an argument with family members. You probably can win the arguments because you are older and more experienced, but you may lose the other person’s love.
4. **SHARE YOUR OWN VIEWS,** after you have given the other person all the time he needs to share his. Do it in such a way that he feels that you value his views as well as your own. Do not be so quick to speak that you interrupt him and forget to let him finish.

You can see that good listening is more than just hearing. A smart phone can “hear” but it cannot listen. Only people can give the attention and response that turn hearing into listening.

MY CHRISTIAN BROTHERS, YOU KNOW EVERYONE SHOULD LISTEN MUCH AND SPEAK LITTLE... (JAMES 1:19)

**Listening =
Hearing +
Attention**

**Turn away
from other things
that demand
your attention.**

**Respond in a
way that shows
you understand.**

**Do not judge,
criticize, or
ridicule.**

**Try to
understand
feelings.**

WINDOW TO LIFE

Stan and Tina had argued a lot ever since they were married. It seemed that whenever they talked about something, they ended up arguing. It got so bad that they decided to get help from their pastor. When they got to the pastor’s house, they both started talking at the same time.

The pastor was a wise man. He stopped them and said, “Stan, you have fifteen minutes to tell your side of the story. Then Tina will have fifteen minutes. And while one of you talks, the other is to listen and not to say anything.”

After Stan and Tina did this a few times, they began to see the importance of listening to each other. Their relationship began to get better, and they were both happier.

