

12 Seeds Growing in Love is a series published by 12 Seeds International, Inc. 1515 E. 66th St., Mpls., MN 55423

Purpose: to help followers of Christ obey His command, recorded in John 13:34: "Love one another."

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Please pray: for the families, friends, teammates, students, military personnel, inmates, released offenders, recovering addicts, and others who are striving to increasingly practice the 12 Seeds in their daily living with the Lord and with others.

Listening to the Shepherd's Voice



A shepherd brings his flock of sheep into a pen for the night. A few minutes later, another shepherd brings his flock into the pen. Then yet another shepherd brings his sheep into the pen. There are three groups of sheep in the pen with no identifying marks among any of them.

This scene still occurs in Israel. What is fascinating is that the next morning, one of the shepherds says something to his sheep. One by one, the sheep in his flock file out to follow him. Only his sheep follow his voice. It's amazing to see: only that shepherd's sheep follow him. The other sheep remain in the pen.

What a picture of Jesus' words spoken centuries earlier (see John 10).

How much do you know about . . .

LISTENING

Select the best answer:

- Listening involves paying _____ .
a. the piper; b. for a ticket; c. taxes; d. attention
- Listening that goes beyond hearing with your ears is listening with your _____.
a. feet; b. iPod; c. heart; d. headset
- The Bible (NIV) uses the word "listen" over _____ times. a. 5; b. 50; c. 350; d. 295,000
- A major reason to listen is that we _____ when we listen. a. hear sounds b. learn; c. can walk; d. can chew gum

Answers on other side.

LISTENING

SEEKING TO HEAR, HEEDING

Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

– James 1:19b

Listening is making a conscious effort to hear. It involves "paying attention to" another person. Listening is vital for communication and for good relationships. Listening helps meet the need people have for attention.

Listen!

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A PRAYER

Dear Lord, help me to always listen to You. Thank You for listening to me. Please help me to be a better listener to the people around me. Help me to listen with my heart. In Your Name, Amen.

The 12 Seeds are Biblically based relationship principles that are lived out through five habits in order to love others. All scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. NIV®. Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved.

FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

Consider these verses . . .

- I Samuel 3:10
- Proverbs 18:13
- Proverbs 19:27
- Jeremiah 7:2
- Acts 16:25
- James 1:19

Consider these questions . . .

- Who should we listen to? Why?
- What is a good example of listening?
- Who have you listened to recently?
- Why is listening a way to love?
- What could you do to listen better to someone you love?
- What will you do?

Answers to quiz on side 1:

- 1. d 2. c 3. c 4. b

The first duty of love is to listen.

– Paul Tillich