Ears To Hear
Topical

Objective: Inspire people to be consciously alert to hear and see spiritual truths.

Reading: Matthew 13:13-17.

Memory: Matthew 13:16. “But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear.”

Introduction:
1. Amazing how we walk through life without seeing things. To be so dull that we miss things.
2. Amazing how we can have selective hearing. To be so dull that we don’t notice sounds.
3. Yet, it is also amazing that, for some things, we are incredibly alert. A Mom can hear the faintest stirrings of her newborn.
4. The most vital and important things in life, really are spiritual truths. Vitally important things communicated by God. Yet, how often we fail to see and hear those vital things. How is it that our hearts become calloused so we don’t see and hear like we should?

We need to be sensitive to spiritual communications. (HOW?)

God grant me the ability to be awake and alert; to see and hear and be aware of the things you have so lovingly taught and communicated. Here are some ways in which, I pray to God that he would wake me up and enable me to use my senses to be spiritually sensitive and receptive.

Over and over, the Lord Jesus urges folks to wake up, to unstop their ears, to hear what He is saying and teaching. He repeatedly uses the refrain; “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.” Lord, give me

I. Ears to Hear.

A. Hear God’s Word.
1. Matthew 13:13, “…Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand.”
2. Help me to hear those parables with my heart and soul so I will be transformed by them.
3. The Word has power! It is the same “Word” that spoke the universe into existence.
   a. God “said” let there be light” and there was light!
   b. “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, 15and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth.” And it was so.
   c. If God declares me a child of God, that will be so also.
4. Help me to hear when He tells of His grace and love.
5. Help me to hear when He points out my sin and my need.
6. Mark 1:14, “Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 15“The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!”
   a. Imagine the Good News; They are giving away cars – and you don’t hear it.
   b. Or you are a father; healthy twins; you don’t want to be the last to know, or worse, never know.
   c. Imagine the Good News; you really can get rid of that constant tickle on the back of your throat, all debts forgiven if you phone in today – don’t miss out!
   d. We have far better Good news if we will just hear it – you don’t have to die in your sins. Jesus will pick up your tab if you belong to Him. Trust Him and everything will turn out fine. He is the author of your salvation – He knows the last page – He wins in the end and so do you if you are with Him.

B. Hear God’s warnings!
1. I see kids walking around so absorbed in what they are doing that they can’t here me when I shout a warning at them! “Bobby, , look out!” Bonk, he walks right into a tree! Or worse, into traffic.
2. Matthew 13:13, “…Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand.”
3. When God says, “For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:20) Let me hear it and take it to heart! Seriously work on my righteousness.
4. Or; “... “I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 18:3) Let me hear it and take it to heart! Let me pursue that childlike innocence and childlike trust.

5. 2 Corinthians 3:14-18, says “But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. 15Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. 16But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 17Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect£ the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”

a. Hear this. Genuinely, wholeheartedly turn to the Lord so the veil will be removed. So your mind will no longer be dull. So you will have freedom. So you will be transformed.

b. Back in Jeremiah 3:10, the same sort of discussion is going on and God identifies the problem He declares; “In spite of all this, ... Judah did not return to me with all her heart, but only in pretense,” declares the LORD.” Hear the need to come to God with all your heart, not just in “pretense”.

6. When God says; “But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. 12Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.” (1 Timothy 6:11-12) Take it seriously. Hear it!

C. Hear God's calling.
1. Matthew 22:14, “For many are invited, but few are chosen.” Frankly they are not chosen because they do not hear! Their hearts are calloused, They have their fingers in their ears, they are too absorbed with the business of life to pay attention!
2. 2 Peter 1:10, “Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure.” Don’t let such an invitation go in one ear and out the other. Hear it!
3. Acts 2:39, “The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” Help your children hear it!
4. Luke 11:27-28, “As Jesus was saying these things, a woman in the crowd called out, “Blessed is the mother who gave you birth and nursed you.” 28He replied, “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.” I want this blessing! Help me to hear in such a way that I genuinely obey it.
5. John 5:24, “I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.”
6. Hear the Gospel message. It is God’s very own voice, It is our welcome home!
7. Matthew 13:16, “But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear.” God will help you, but it starts with you genuinely listening and paying attention!

Again, the Lord Jesus urges folks over and over to open their eyes and see what He is presenting and showing us. He repeatedly urges people to use their eyes to “see”. Lord, give me

II. Eyes to See.

A. To perceive and understand.
1. Isaiah 6:9, “He said, “Go and tell this people: ‘Be ever hearing, but never understanding; be ever seeing, but never perceiving.’ a. I want to see what I am looking at. Spiritually!
b. I want to see the pitfalls, hazards of life so I can avoid them.
c. I want to perceive the glories of God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit!
d. I want to have “epiphanies”, “Aha” moments. “Wow” moments when I recognize what God has done and is doing.
e. I want to see Him at work in my life!
2. In Mark 10:51-52, Jesus responds to a blind man who cannot see and asks; “What do you want me to do for you?” .... The blind man said, “Rabbi, I want to see.” “Go,” said Jesus, “your faith has healed you.” Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.” I want to really see. I want Jesus to open my eyes so I can see and follow Him in truth and in spirit. I want the eyes of my heart opened so I can see spiritual realities.
3. Why is it that small children seem to see angels from time to time, but I don’t? Am I hardened? Am I worldly? I want to see.
   a. Like Elisha’s servant in 2 Kings 6, “Oh, my lord, what shall we do?” the servant asked. 16“Don’t be afraid,” the prophet answered. “Those who are with us are more than those who are with them.” 17And Elisha prayed, “O LORD, open his eyes so he may see.” Then the LORD opened the servant’s eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.”
   b. I want to see that God is here. Present.
   c. I want to see, at least with my heart that His angels are here to protect.
   d. I want to see that God’s Spirit, the Counselor is here with me.
4. This is what Paul is praying for folks in Ephesians 1:18, “I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.” I want to see with my heart so I can comprehend the depth of spiritual realities!
5. Jesus scolds the Pharisees for their blindness. John 9:39-41, “Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, so that the blind will see and those who see will become blind.” “Some Pharisees who were with him heard him say this and asked, “What? Are we blind too?” 44Jesus said, “If you were blind, you would not be guilty of sin; but now that you claim you can see, your guilt remains.”
   a. If He scolds them, it’s because they can to do better. They have a choice. So do we.
   b. What if you could “see” your sin? What would it look like? Help me to see my own sins so I can repent of them! Oh to see that I am without spot or blemish, but have been made holy and clean by the blood of Christ!

B. A sense of wisdom.
1. To know where the pit is so I don’t fall into it. “…in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.”
2. 1 John 4:1, “Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.” I want to “see” the soul of a person, the spirit of a person, to discern true teachers from false prophets.
3. Matthew 23:24, “You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.” I want to “see” what is really important and what is not. What is distraction and what is critical.
4. To comprehend Christ’s power; Mark 8:17-18, “Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked them: “Why are you talking about having no bread? Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Do you have eyes but fail to see, and ears but fail to hear? And don’t you remember?” Do you “see” that He can provide like He did before for the 5,000!
5. To see Christ’s glory; John 17:24, “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.” I want to see that! It is visible NOW if we look.
6. To be able to lead others to safety; Luke 6:39, “He also told them this parable: “Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit?”
7. God send your spirit upon me to help me “see”.

So What?
In the reading, Jesus identifies the problem as a calloused heart: Matthew 13:15, “For this people’s heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.”

The urging this morning is to soften your heart, and pray for ears to hear and eyes to see.

Closing Prayer:
Ears To Hear
Topical

“B_y_e_b_t_s_, a_y_e_b_t_h_.”

We need to be sensitive to spiritual communications.
Ways in which to be spiritually sensitive and receptive.

I. Ears to Hear.
A. Hear God’s Word.
   Matthew 13:13   Mark 1:14

   B. Hear God’s warnings!
      1 Timothy 6:11-12

   C. Hear God’s calling.

II. Eyes to See.
A. To perceive and understand.

   B. A sense of wisdom.

So What?   Matthew 13:15
Soften your heart, and pray for ears to hear and eyes to see.