

## **Week Two - *How Can I "Tap in" to God?***

### **2 Samuel 6:12-23**

#### **Spend FIFTEEN - Day One**

1. When was the last time you felt someone really listened to you? When was the last time you really listened to someone else? How could you tell? How did it feel?
2. When was the last time you felt God listened to you? How could you tell?
3. Read 2 Samuel 6:12-23. Why is David so joyful?
4. Read Exodus 25:17-22. The Ark represented God's physical presence. God was among people. Another word for it is Immanuel, a name given to Jesus. What does this tell you about God?
5. God wants to be intimate with his people. He wants to be heard. What distracts you from experiencing God's intimate presence?
6. Listening requires "other awareness," or in this case, awareness of God. As you finish your FIFTEEN, ask God to heighten your sense of him both in you and with you. Consider ways to remind yourself of God's real presence. This week, practice being aware of God.

#### **Spend FIFTEEN - Day Two**

7. From your experience, how well would you say people today listen to each other? Has this improved over the generations or gotten worse?
8. What problems arise when we don't listen to one another? What problems could arise when we don't listen to God?
9. Read Psalm 19:7-11. How are the words of God described?
10. How could words that are refreshing, trustworthy, illuminating, or dependable make your life "sweeter"?
11. We have the blessing of God's words written down, like a personal letter to each of us. How do you feel when someone does not read your letter, email, or text? What are they missing out on? How is it similar when we do not read God's Word?

12. Finish your FIFTEEN by looking through a Bible. Pick a short book of the Bible such as Philippians, James, or 1 John. Sometime this week, read the book straight through as you would a letter. What stands out to you? Ask God to speak to your current circumstances through his written Word.

### **Spend FIFTEEN - Day Three**

13. Read John 10:1-5. Have you ever tried to recognize someone by his or her voice? What helps you know their voice? What would help you recognize the voice of Jesus?
14. Review Psalm 19:7-11. How would you describe the relationship between the psalmist and the LORD?
15. How would you describe your relationship with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?
16. The more we listen to someone, the more we recognize them when they speak. We also know the content of what they've said previously, so we can more confidently identify them. How does this relate to "Tapping In" to God?
17. Recognizing God's voice takes practice, experience, and knowledge of his written Word. Have you ever been frustrated when you "couldn't hear God"? What practical steps could you take to be able to better recognize God when he speaks?
18. St. John Church outlines steps in a life journey with God as 1.1.15.6. Look this up on the website (stjstl.net). How could each step help you recognize God's voice? A good first step to hearing and recognizing God's voice is regular prayer. Finish your FIFTEEN by inviting God to speak. Tell him you are listening. Ask questions. Express your feelings, doubts, and desires. Spend time both talking and listening. Ask God to help you hear his response.

### **Spend FIFTEEN - Day Four**

19. What listening skills have you learned through experience, observation, job training, etc.?
20. One article on active listening (mindtools.com) states, "One way to improve your listening skills is to practice 'active listening.' This is where you make a conscious effort to hear not only the words that another person is saying but more importantly, the complete message being communicated." They give 5 key active listening techniques: pay attention; show that you're listening; provide feedback; defer judgment; respond appropriately. Which of these seems easier to you? Which seems harder?
21. How could you apply these techniques, or others you have learned, to listening to God?
22. Real listening is hard work, but the results make it worth it. Read the story of Jesus and the 10 lepers. (Luke 17:11-19) Which active listening techniques do all the lepers display? Which techniques does only one leper display? What blessing does the "tapped in" leper experience?

23. Which active listening technique would take your connection with God to a new level?

24. Spend the remaining FIFTEEN talking and actively listening to God. Attempt to practice all five of the active listening techniques. Be sure to notice the blessings that result.

**Spend FIFTEEN - Day Five**

25. Have you ever envied someone's close relationship with God? Have you ever wondered why someone else seems to hear God's voice and you don't? What do these feelings drive you to do?

26. Read 2 Samuel 6:1-2 and Numbers 7:89. Why was David so excited about the Ark coming to Jerusalem?

27. Review 2 Samuel 6:12-23. Why was Michal so upset with David? Do you think she was envious?

28. Focus on verses 18-19. How did David's passion for God benefit others?

29. What can we learn about life with God from this story of David?

30. David didn't care if his passion for God was public and exuberant. He craved God's presence. David loved God. David knew God loved and forgave him. David's heart was "tapped in" to his heavenly Father. His response was worship and generosity. What is your response to the love and grace of God through Jesus Christ?

31. Read Hebrews 4:14-16. The good news is God craves your presence too. He wants to be in communication with you. He wants it so much he came to earth to live, die, and rise again in order to make it possible. We can approach God with confidence knowing he will help us hear his voice. End your FIFTEEN thanking God for making a way for us to confidently enjoy his presence and hear his voice.