

The Lakeside



Message in a bottle

Verse of the day for Monday July 15, 2024 - Mark 12: 30

30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'

Read Mark 12 for meditation and inspiration.



Dear Lakesiders and friends,

I have heard it said that God gave us two ears and only one mouth. This means that God knows that we need to listen twice as much as we talk. There is truth to that. We often listen far too little. We also need to listen with our heart so we can hear what a person is really trying to express.

Remember how Jesus said, "Listen, anyone who has ears" (Matthew 13:9).

Today, I want you to listen to the following case history from psychiatrist Dr. Paul Tournier's book, "The Strong and the Weak." It is the story of an intact family with a mother, father, and several children. The father had a problem with one of his daughters, a little girl who was very quiet, shy, and unable to express herself outwardly. The father was just the opposite -- an outgoing person, as were his other children. And he was puzzled and bewildered about this, but he tried to understand.

One day he gave his quiet little daughter a present. It was a necklace with an elegant glass elephant on a gold chain. He put it on the table before her and said, "I've brought you this present."

The girl was overwhelmed. Her mouth dropped open as she stared at this beautiful object. Dr. Tournier wrote, "It shone more beautifully than any star of Bethlehem because it symbolized her father's love for her." She sat there for several minutes, staring at this thing, unable to speak. Then she got up and went into the other room to tell her mother what had happened. When she returned, she was devastated because she saw her beautiful little elephant dangling from her sister's neck. In a kind of offhanded way, the father said, "Well, you didn't want it, so I gave it to your sister."

Didn't want it? He wasn't listening! He wasn't listening to the joy of her silence. He hadn't listened enough to this child to know who she was and how she expressed herself. And years later, she was in therapy, trying to grapple with the hurt she felt when her father's love seemed

to be ripped away. He just did not have ears of love to really hear his daughter. By his lack of listening, she was hurt and hurt very deeply.

So, let us resolve to listen to others and then respond with the love of God found in Christ Jesus our Lord.

May God bless you with good hearing.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roger".

Roger