

**Peace for the Journey ... July 15, 2010**

Scripture Reading: [Mark 4:1-9](#)

*"Yet they did not listen or incline their ear; they stiffened their necks and would not hear or receive instruction." ~ Jeremiah 17:23*

Do you ever hear, without really listening?

If you answered **yes**, you're not alone. Most of us, at one time or another, have been guilty of not really listening.

Maybe it's a meeting at work, or a class at school. Maybe it's at home when your child tries to tell you about her day. You hear, but aren't really listening. The words do seem to go in one ear and out the other.

Maybe you've sat (or stood) in a worship service and not really listened to the words of the hymn you sang. Maybe you heard the special music, but didn't listen to the message of the song. It's not intentional -- usually -- but it happens. Your mind is busy with the cares of the world, and listening, really listening, takes energy and commitment -- your full attention.

It's no wonder that Jesus, when telling his keynote parable, reminded his hearers to listen -- twice: before he starts and when he finishes (Mark 4:3 and 4:9). And the parable itself is a reminder to listen, for the seeds that bear fruit are not choked out by weeds, but are the lives of people who hear the word (really listen) and accept it. (See [Mark 4:13-20](#).) Jesus says that God's word bears fruit in our lives when we listen. Really listen.

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Dear God: Forgive me for being too caught up in my own life that I don't listen to you or anyone else. Help me set aside the cares of the world long enough to let your word take root in my life. Help me to hear your word and accept and bear the fruit of your Kingdom in my life. Amen