

Bay City Wesleyan Church
October 9, 2016

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Sunday Morning 10-09-2016

The Holy Spirit reveals our progress on our spiritual journey. He sets us free from slavery to sin assuring us of our adoption into God's family. He opens our eyes to the spiritual reality around us. He helps us become managers of all God entrusts to us. And he helps us learn to listen with spiritual ears.

<http://bible.com/events/108142>

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[Image]

http://dlo2alqw72z1h8.cloudfront.net/5722009-1475874885984_152x152.jpg

News about our Wesleyan family in Haiti
Haiti is one of the poorest nations in the world.

Haiti has over 10 million people in a country smaller than the state of Maryland. We have 137 churches, many schools, a hospital, and other ministries there.

The direct force of the category 4 hurricane hit the southwest region, which has been cut off from the country by collapsed bridges, overflowing rivers, collapsed cell towers, and no electricity. Although the interior minister refers to 283 confirmed deaths, there are many more missing, and unfortunately, there are no comprehensive reports even yet from the area of greatest impact, which will no doubt multiply this number.

Tens of thousands have lost homes and are in tents or temporary shelters or have no shelter. It is believed that nearly all roofs were ripped off buildings in the swath that received hurricane-force winds. This is the first major hurricane to hit Haiti in 50 years. Clean water is going to be the most immediate need for humanitarian response and to head off spread of disease. We are partnering with World Hope and Global Partners to purchase up to 10,000 ceramic water filters and hygiene kits.

Water Filters for Haiti

General Superintendent Dr. Wayne Schmidt has authorized the Wesleyan Emergency Relief Fund to launch an appeal for prayer and financial support for the HURRICANE MATTHEW HAITI DISASTER RESPONSE. Your donations will help families and churches trying to recover in Haiti. Thank you for your generous giving during this time of crisis.

<https://www.wesleyan.org/relief>

Each of us is on a spiritual journey in this life. You are headed somewhere; but how do you know which direction you're going? How did you choose your destination? How can you tell if you're making progress?
We've discovered three out of four mile markers on the way to knowing Jesus better.

· When I'm headed toward Jesus, I am no longer a slave to fear; I am a child of God.

· When I'm headed toward Jesus, my faith sees the real world, not simply the physical world.

· When I'm headed toward Jesus, I understand that I'm a manager of everything God entrusts to me; it's not my stuff.

1. Some people give Jesus followers a bad name.
2. Hearing from the LORD was rare even in ancient Israel.
3. Samuel learned to listen to God.
4. There are three ways to connect with the Holy Spirit as Samuel did.

1 Samuel 3:1-21 NIV

The boy Samuel ministered before the Lord under Eli. In those days the word of the Lord was rare; there were not many visions. One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place. The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the house of the Lord, where the ark of God was. Then the Lord called Samuel. Samuel answered, "Here I am." And he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." But Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." So he went and lay down. Again the Lord called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." "My son," Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord: The word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. A third time the Lord called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." Then Eli realized that the Lord was calling the boy. So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening." And the Lord said to Samuel: "See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make the ears of everyone who hears about it tingle. At that time I will carry out against Eli everything I spoke against his family—from beginning to end. For I told him that I would judge his family forever because of the sin he knew about; his sons blasphemed God, and he failed to restrain them. Therefore I swore to the house of Eli, 'The guilt of Eli's house will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering.'" Samuel lay down until morning and then opened the doors of the house of the Lord. He was afraid to tell Eli the vision, but Eli called him and said, "Samuel, my son." Samuel answered, "Here I am." "What was it he said to you?" Eli asked. "Do not hide it from me. May God deal with you, be it ever so severely, if you hide from me anything he told you." So Samuel told him everything, hiding nothing from him. Then Eli said, "He is the Lord; let him do what is good in his eyes." The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of Samuel's words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba recognized that Samuel was attested as a prophet of the Lord. The Lord continued to appear at Shiloh, and there he revealed himself to Samuel through his word.

If we asked people to define prayer, do you think most would describe it as either talking to God or asking God for something? I do. We are masters of asking but there's more to prayer. Prayer helps us connect with Jesus best when to expect it to be a conversation. We need to take the time to listen.

Before we talk about how to do this, let's think about why we must learn to listen in prayer.

Why would we stop merely asking and start really listening?

Because the Creator of all things, the King of kings, wants to connect with us. Jesus lived, died, and rose again to make that connection possible. The Spirit lives in us longing to speak to and through us.

Ideas for application:

- Get alone.
- Practice thinking slowly.
- Schedule a day alone with God and go somewhere without technology. Take only your Bible and something to write with. Read silently or out loud to yourself, and listen for God to speak to you. Write down what you hear him saying.
- Listen to the Bible. Don't just read it; hear it. (YouVersion)
- Read the Bible with long pauses in between paragraphs.
- Read a phrase and meditate on it for a while.
- Tell someone you trust what you think you heard God say. Ask them for their opinion.