

DISCUSSION NOTES

Love Your Neighbour

Mark 4.23 | *Listen* | July 19, 2020

OVERVIEW PARAGRAPH

MAIN POINTS

- The gospels tells us that Jesus had something to say and his invitation to the world was to listen.
- Many people think that worshipping God is about adhering to rules or checking off lists, when in fact we'd do better taking that word *list* and adding a couple more letters on at the end. *List-en*. Listening to God is the beginning of loving God. In fact, that's what Jesus describes as genuine worship.
- If loving God begins with listening to God, loving our neighbour also begins with listening to our neighbour. "Love God with everything you've got" says Jesus, "and love your neighbour as yourself."
- It's worth noting that as well as speaking God does an awful lot of listening in the Bible, which is helpful when asking ourselves what it means to be *God-like*.
- So how do we love our neighbour? Sometimes, the most loving thing you can do for another person is to listen to them. When we listen, we are making room for someone, we're dignifying them by demonstrating that they are worth our time, worth being seen and heard, their melody worth our attention.
- If we're not used to listening, it might take some practice, it might feel uncomfortable or stretching. But like learning a new physical posture, with stretching comes growth as the heart begins to pump fresh blood around the body. In other words, *listening gets our heart working*. And if we find listening a challenge, for example when it comes to listening to some of the pain being poured out through protest around the world these days, it might be an indication that our hearts are due some growth. Listening is not about winning arguments, it's about washing feet. Listening is putting our hearts to work. And its *heart-work* we all must do, no matter our background, political leanings or social interests. When we listen one another, what divides us tends to take a back seat to what connects us.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How has listening informed your life of faith?
2. What makes listening such a challenge today?
3. Share a time you were listened to and felt loved.
4. What are some steps you might take to become a better listener?