

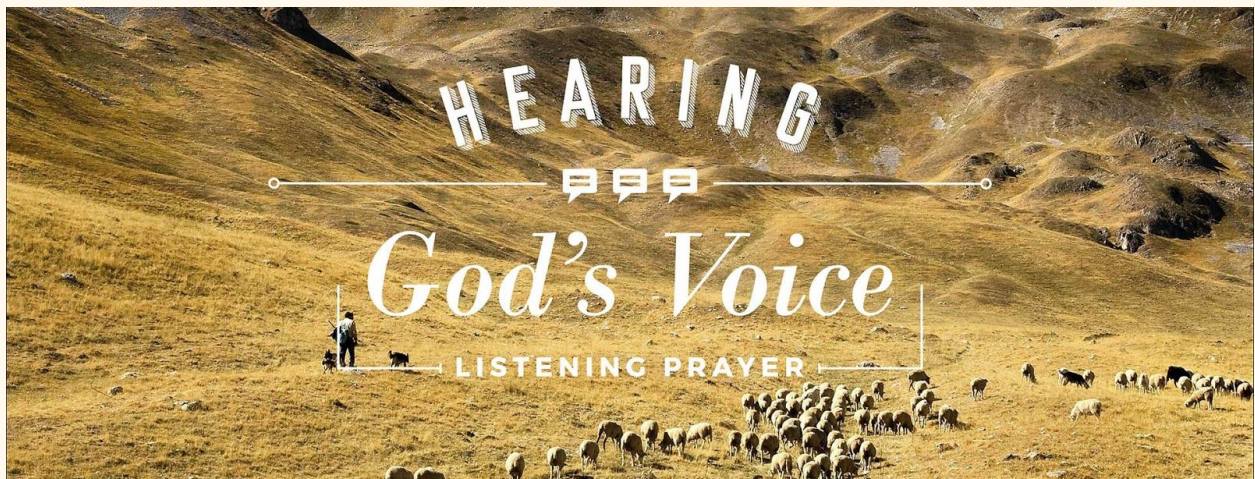
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# Ignite

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*“Dear Lord, You know what we are going through, we like the things the way they are. We don’t particularly like it when things change, or when we have to change because we get scared, and find it hard to trust You.*

*Help us to trust You today, we choose to listen to You today, and to obey Your word for us. We surrender to You and Your call for our lives, wherever that is, and to whoever, and whatever that looks like. Amen”*



# SERMON SUMMARY

## Hearing God's Voice - Listening Prayer : We can hear Him corporately

Pastor Chris Manivannan

**John 10:27**

*"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."*

**Daniel 9:1-3**

*"In the first year of Darius son of Xerxes (a Mede by descent), who was made ruler over the Babylonian kingdom-in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the Lord given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years. So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in fasting and in sackcloth and ashes."*

**Big Idea : What is God saying corporately...an application for us!**

### **Introduction**

We can hear the Voice of God personally, clearly and corporately. As we learn to recognize His voice and discern through the five tests (Is it Biblical? Is it helping me to be Christlike? Is there confirmation from the church family? Is this for me, too? Is there peace in my heart?), we need to also learn how to come together to pray and listen to Him corporately. Listening to God personally and clearly, lays the foundation to hear Him corporately.

### **A. Corporate reading Daniel 9:4-9**

Hearing God and understanding His will for us, can turn His judgements into blessings. Corporately, we can seek God, and God responds to the pleas of His people and shows mercy. Yet, we sometimes fail to listen to God corporately because we have sinned and disobeyed Him.

- **Disobedience, disunity** and **dishonour** to the Name of Christ has made the church to lose her flavor and shine.
- **Judgement** starts with God's **people** and then moves on to the **nation**.
- Daniel's desire is to see God's **judgement** turned to God's **blessing**.

## **B. The conditions of our hearts today.**

The problems in hearing God corporately stems from the conditions of our hearts. The disobedience and disunity are consequences of our hearts that are captivated by the world and hearts that are prayerless.

### **1. Hearts that are captivated by the world**

In 1520, Martin Luther wrote an essay which he called “**The Babylonian Captivity of the Church**”. Forces and powers that were foreign to Christ and to his Word had captured the mind and heart of the church. The church is no longer the **pacesetter**. The church is in love and bondage to a **Godless** force. There is no **differentiation** from the spirit of Babylon. We have forgotten that the Word and the Spirit is alive, given to us to be dominant in our lives. When the church is bonded to a godless force, the churches can be strong numerically, but they are weak spiritually.

### **2. Hearts that are prayerless [Daniel 9:5,7,8](#)**

Daniel spends most of his prayer confessing the sins of the people. Prayerlessness is not a discipline issue but at the heart of it is a **faith** issue. The lack of faith undermines prayers as it reflects that we do not trust God completely. People blame God when things do not go their way. John Calvin called prayer the “chief exercise of faith”. When faith is awakened, prayer does not need to feel like a burden or an obligation; prayer will come naturally. We start praying by **confessing** our shortcomings and repenting of our sins. From confession and repentance, flows a revival of our faith.

## **C. What’s our response? How do we pray?**

We can effectively listen to God corporately, by first setting our hearts right within ourselves and with one another. In doing so, we eliminate disobedience, disunity and dishonour to the Name of Christ. We respond and pray by first seeking the word of God, confessing our sins, and appealing to His glory and namesake.

### **1. Seek the word of God**

Prayer begins with the Bible. Prayer is also an expression of our complete trust in God, having faith that God will deliver (according to His will) and not turn from His people. Ask God what His plans are, not what our plans are.

The vigour of our spiritual life will be in exact proportion to the place held by the Bible in our life and thoughts.- George Mueller

## **2. Go on our knees-Confession [Daniel 9:4-15](#)**

The second way to pray is to confess our sin. About 12 verses of Daniel's prayer is confession (verses 4-15). Sin will kill your faith and blinds us from seeing what God truly wants us to do. Sin offends God, affecting our relationship with God. Confession is being **truthful** to God about our sin. Confession is **God-centered**.

## **3. Appeal to God for His own glory and namesake**

God is **committed** to God. He is committed with passion to the Glory of His name and **reputation**. We do not repent because we are righteous, but because God is merciful. He will respond to the pleas of His people. Therefore, come in humble repentance, and appeal to God. Let Him reveal to us what plans He has for us.

## **D. Conclusion**

The conclusion to the sermon was a testimony shared by sister Michelle. It was a powerful testimony on how corporate prayers by intercessors for change in Uganda, has in a way, shaped the political history of Uganda. One ruler after another, the political unrest, the dilapidated state of the country and the emergence of AIDS disease, all tainted the hopes of the intercessors. Many prayers later, the intercessors realized that during their corporate prayers, they did not ask God what He wanted for the nation. Instead, they came to Him with a "shopping list" of what they wanted. Seeking repentance, they humbled themselves, went on their knees and together, seek the presence of God. They changed their ways so they could pray and listen to God corporately. They build a prayer altar of what God wants, not one that they wanted. They surrendered themselves and united so they can work corporately with God. And, they kept the fire in the prayer altar burning all the time.

In short, to hear God corporately, demands us to set our hearts right, to surrender and unite with one another. Collectively, we can work towards God's plans.



# SERMON REFLECTION

“Hearing God corporately”. Many of us would probably feel that this has little to do with us, as we are mere individuals within a big church. It is “good enough” we hear God personally, so hearing God corporately is not quite on our priority list. But, do we realize that our actions and perceptions can stumble others and prevent spiritual breakthrough? After all, listening and praying to God corporately demands unity and obedience.

A good place to start exercising on hearing God corporately is within our Cell-Groups. As members come from all walks of life, getting along with each other can sometimes be a challenge. What hinders our relationship? Do we hold each other to the worldly standards because we are bonded by the trends of the world? Often, our worldly ways can brew silent discontentment, bickering and ill feelings, which can lead to separation. Clearly, we have disobeyed God’s desire for us. Without shared vision in Cell-Groups, there is also no unity nor faith in prayer. And with fallouts within Cell-Groups, the church is divided - we will not be able to hear God at all! We will not be able to carry out God’s plan, nor pray fruitfully to make changes.

Therefore, hearing God is not only personally and clearly, but also corporately. As we grow to recognize and discern God’s voice, we also need to pray and hear Him TOGETHER. We can do this by first forgiving one another, connecting with one another, and learning to let go and let God in. With our hearts set right in obedience, we can seek God truthfully. Then only will our works and prayers impact others in our communities and in our nation. We can do so much more corporately!

*Forgive us Father, for we have lost sight of our role in hearing You corporately. Help us to surrender and bow down in humility, and to confess our sins, so that our hearts are set right with one another. With obedience, guide us to foster unity and togetherness with each other, within our Cell-Groups, within the church, and the nation. And only through joining hands, can we make changes according to Your will. All this, so that we may hear what Your plans are for us, so that Your church is a stronghold for many.*

*Contributed by Adeline Ting, PJN2*

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# APPLICATION

**Note to Word facilitator:**

*As you prepare for this session, this is a great time to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you to use the questions efficaciously. You can select, modify or entirely create your own questions, according to the needs of your CG, especially if you feel that there are too many questions than required for the allocated time. The questions below are crafted with a certain flow in mind. You could use these towards the end or insert them in between your own sermon reflection and summary.*



**Suggested Icebreaker Question** (for Welcome that would link to the Word time)

- Have you heard from God this past week? Share when you heard God and whether you did the test to discern if it was from God, from ourselves or from the world.

**Suggested Word Introductory Question:**

- We can hear from God personally, clearly and corporately. But is it harder to hear from God corporately than hearing God personally? Share your thoughts on this.

**Suggested questions linked to each main point:**

**Listening and praying corporately**

- If God checks-in on us today, what do you think He will say about the state of our hearing Him corporately? Will we hear “Well Done!” or will we hear “Try harder”?
- Daniel, a man of prayer, was moved to pray for his fellow men, hoping to be spared from God’s judgement. Are we Daniels in the present day? Do we pray for God’s judgement to be converted to blessings?

## Conditions of our heart

- Christians were once pacesetters for the world to follow, but our hearts are now captivated by what is in the world. How can we return to be pacesetters for Christ- in our family, workplace, or ministry? Share your experience if you are a pacesetter. What can Cell-Groups do together to be pacesetters in impacting others?
- Praying requires faith. We have all either “found”, “lost” or “lost & found (again)” our faith at some point in our lives. Discuss this and how the experience has impacted your life especially in your hearing from God.

## Our response

- To hear God corporately, we must be united. Are there things we need to let go and let God in? It could be issues related to family, workplace, Cell-Group, or any areas that we are struggling with and not growing. Take time to examine our hearts, have an open sharing, and pray for one another. With humility and forgiveness, we can overcome.

**Concluding Question:** How do you respond to better hear God corporately? How can God our Father in heaven help you? How can we then pray for each other right now? Address the issues, set our hearts right, so together we can step up to impact others. Take time to pray for one another, to strengthen our bonds and to build each other up.

## Concluding Question/CG Activity:

**Practice Lectio Divina during the week** - Scripture reading: [Acts 10:24-33](#) (Wednesday), [Acts 10:37-48](#) (Friday) *(To help people shift from a performance-based mentality to a relationship with God)*

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# WHAT'S YOUR STORY?



## Story of the week...

"During the Movement Control Order / MCO, I had to work from home. I was transferred to a new division last October. I was not close to my colleagues and I did not understand a lot of things. While many people enjoyed the extra time at home with their family, I was getting stressed out and depressed. I would often lock myself in my bedroom and cry. Reading the bible and listening to worship songs did not help me. I felt very far away from God. My mother and I would argue about little things. Nothing seemed right..."

- Wendy ML Tan, PJS1

\* Read the rest of Wendy's story on [dumc.my/blog](https://dumc.my/blog)

■ "There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you."  
- Maya Angelou

If you or your CG member(s) has a story to share, **share their/your story** [\[HERE\]](#)



# PRAYER

**Note to CGL:** You (or someone you assign this portion to), may lead by praying OR reading these prayers together as a CG during worship.

*Father, help us to live this day to the full, being true to You, in every way. Jesus, help us to give ourselves away to others, being kind to everyone we meet. Spirit, help us to love the lost, proclaiming Christ in all we do and say. Amen.*

*-a Lectio 365 prayer on August 25, 2020.*

## **Uncertainty and Anxiety in our Nation**

*Dear Lord, we stand together as the body of Christ with Jesus as the head of the church to pray and intercede for our nation. We want to uphold our nation and communities as we go through different challenges.*

*Besides the uncertainties due to the global pandemic, we in Malaysia are facing added uncertainty with the national political turmoil. All these add up to anxious times for Malaysia as a nation.*

*We pray that the Church in Malaysia will stay focused on You, Lord and our mission to be salt and light, and the beacon of hope in these tumultuous times.*

*We pray against spiritual forces and groups who are exploiting the uncertainties to create social instability. We seek Your guidance for those who suffer in businesses in order that they will be able to adjust quickly to remain viable in the changing economic conditions. We pray that those suffering from anxiousness, depression and mental health issues will be able to receive care and support during this difficult period. May we continue to be Your ambassadors to the least and lost. Amen*





# OTHER RESOURCES

Below are some links to resource you. Do **CLICK** on the images below!

## FEATURED

*In view of our current changing landscape that affects us individually and corporately, here are some featured resources for you this month!*

 <h3>The Psychology of Crisis</h3> <p>1 hour 35 minutes rightnowmedia.org Truths for facing the COVID-19 pandemic. Video Clip Featured - August</p>	 <h3>Listening</h3> <p>8 sessions (6 minutes on average) rightnowmedia.org Listening is a critical aspect of leadership. Video Series Featured - August</p>
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 **Grief**

8 clips (4 minutes on average)


[rightnowmedia.org](http://rightnowmedia.org)

Involving your team during times of grief.

Video Series

Featured - August



 **Unanswered Prayer**

24 minutes

[prayercourse.org](http://prayercourse.org)

Challenges and realities when our prayers aren't answered.

Video Clip

Featured - August

## OTHER RESOURCES

*Discover a host of other resources curated for you here!*



## DUMC STORIES

*Be blessed by a compilation of inspiring DUMC Stories that  
you can share with others!*

