

## THURSDAY— Clearing cloggy pipes

**Big Point:** *Sin and disobedience will diminish our ability to hear from God...that's not a good thing.*

*One of the most striking elements of 1 Samuel 3 is found in the opening sentence: "Now in those days, messages from the LORD were rare and visions were uncommon." Eli and his sons were serving as priests in the temple, yet their family history of disobedience had led to decreased messages from God.*

*If you are reading this LIO Bible study, we are going to assume that you have an interest in living a life that pleases God. However, we know for a fact that none of us is perfect. The problem comes when we have areas of our lives that we know are falling short of God's holy standard, yet we let those sinful behaviors or patterns of disobedience continue unchallenged.*

*How does disobedience diminish our capacity to hear from God? When we sin, it's like we put up a wall that keeps God's influence out of our life. Galatians 5:19-21 tells us that when we are disobedient, the fruits of that disobedience will carry us far away from what God desires for our lives. It's not God that abandons us; in fact, we separate ourselves from God when we sin.*

### READ...What does the Bible say?

#### **Luke 6:46-47 (New Living Translation)**

<sup>46</sup> "So why do you keep calling me 'Lord, Lord!' when you don't do what I say?" <sup>47</sup> I will show you what it's like when someone comes to me, listens to my teaching, and then follows it. <sup>4</sup>

#### **1 Thessalonians 4:7-8 (New Living Translation)**

<sup>7</sup> God has called us to live holy lives, not impure lives. <sup>8</sup> Therefore, anyone who refuses to live by these rules is not disobeying human teaching but is rejecting God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.

#### **1 John 2:15 (New Living Translation)**

<sup>15</sup> Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you.

### THINK...Find the answers

Luke 6:20-49 has been referred to as Luke's Sermon on the Plain (an apparent parallel to Matthew's Sermon on the Mount—Matthew 5-7). In Luke 6:46-47, Jesus is referring to those who profess themselves to be Christians, but what is it that they are failing to do?

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8. The Apostle Paul instructs believers to live in a manner that pleases God—particularly when it comes to remaining sexually pure. In today's culture, there is a lot of conversation about morality and sex. What does Paul say about those who refuse to listen to God's teaching about sexual morality?

Sometimes we get consumed by all of the noise in our culture—often that noise distracts us, causing us to turn away from listening for God’s voice. Read 1 John 2:15. What does it mean to “love the things of this world”? How does loving the things we see around us distract us or prevent us from hearing God’s voice?

## **LIVE...What will you do now?**

Are there any sins or patterns of disobedience in your life that you suspect are keeping you from hearing God’s voice? How is your spiritual life being hampered as a result?

## **PRAY...God, what do you want me to know & do?**

It’s time to address the things that you wrote in response to the question above. If you are ready, begin praying. Confess your sin and disobedience to God, asking Him for forgiveness and restoration.

### **Improve your listening skills:**

- Connect with God through prayer and reading scripture. Psalm 1-4
- Be immediately obedient once you confirm God’s leading—don’t delay! Romans 8:7-8
- Do not doubt God’s power or provision. He will provide for you! James 1:6
- Believe in God’s love so that you are free to live out His will for your life!

### **DAILY BIBLE READING COMMENTARY: Proverbs 22**

**22:2**—*At the end of our lives, it doesn’t matter how much money we did or did not have—we will all answer to a Holy God and be held to the same standard.*

**22:3**—*This is one of the most often quoted verses in the Bible. A parent’s role is to teach children HOW to make decisions, not to make all of the decisions for them. When parents teach children how to make decisions, then parents do not have to always watch every decision their child makes and the parents can rest knowing that they have honored God by teaching their children the right priorities. Whether or not the adult child abides by those priorities is not the parents’ responsibility.*

**22:7**—*Here is another popular verse. Question: Is it a sin to borrow money? No, but we must be careful to avoid taking on loans that we might not be able to repay. At some point, no matter our income level, too much debt is just too much.*

**22:13**—*Lazy individuals who do not like to work or struggle to keep a job always seem to have strange or lame excuses for not staying employed.*

**22:17-28**—*This is a collection of good advice that we can still apply to our lives today.*

**22:24-25**—*“Don’t befriend angry people” Another verse (1 Corinthians 15:33) also tells us to remember that “bad company corrupts good character.”*

**22:26-27**—*This verse creates a lot of tension, but the writer’s advice is true! Have you ever had to pay for a car that someone else bought but you co-signed for in order to help him or her get the car? If you can afford to co-sign, then make sure the person you are co-signing for is worth the risk. However, you can’t afford to co-sign for another’s debt, you are actually putting your household at risk. That’s not wise.*