

“Listen - I mean really listen...”

(to be 100% present in the moment)

I have a doctor who is a pulmonologist. Over the past year I have seen him on several occasions. He is a man who takes time to explain medical things to you in a way the layman can understand. Occasionally he will look me in the eye and say, Richard listen to me. I want you to understand. How do you feel? I mean “get in your face” type of a guy and means for you to totally understand what is happening. I like that. No beating around the bush. He has an interest in you understanding. Then he asks if you have questions. Then he listens.

I have a friend who recently had a first time visit with a rheumatologist. While he and his wife were in the waiting room he heard voices from the back. Having difficulty understanding the voices he hoped this was not the doctor he was to see. It was. The doctor spoke with a Greek accent and my friend was definitely required to listen very carefully.

Or what about that time when you were in school and you really enjoyed being there because there was this one special person that you probably talked to at the wrong time too much. Then you heard the teacher. He or she may have called you by name and told you to quit talking and then they might have said....Listen to me. And you listened; you really listened because you did not want this to go any further than the room. You remember when you found yourself in that situation? Yes you do and you also remember that the teacher knew where you lived and they were not beyond....Need I say more? So you listened, I mean you really listened.

No matter where we are or what we are doing we are required to listen at times to others. In a professional sense it might be a team meeting. When the boss requires an end product from the team, listening is critical. In our leisure environment we tend to tune out at times until someone brings us back to reality and we choose to listen more carefully. In social settings with family or friends we enjoy listening to good things that are happening to those that we care about. But what about the most important decision that we ever make in our lives. And I mean the most important decision. That would be the one regarding where you are going to spend eternity. Don't stop reading now, please. I want you to listen. I mean really listen. You do on a daily basis in your professional life, your leisure environment and your social settings. Now is more important than any other setting you will find yourself in. Consider the following:

The Invitation for you: *Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.* (Revelation 3:20)

The Promise for you: *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.* (John 14:3)

The Result for you.....*the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*
(Romans 6:23)

Perhaps you have heard the Bible stories since you were young. You have been affiliated with a church for all your life. You have enjoyed all the activities that a church has offered you.

Or perhaps you haven't had much to do with the Bible in your life. You have worked hard and stayed away from a church most of your life. You know of activities that occur within the church but you are always telling yourself that when I have a little more time or that is great for them or some other excuse that keeps you away.

Please listen, I mean really listen. This is your eternity and only you can make the decision. You have made all kinds of decisions all your life and you have overlooked the most important one. This is your eternity. I have purposefully left out the first part of Romans 6:23 and now I would like to share that with you.

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 6:23)

Are you listening? I mean are you really listening? Romans 6:23 makes it understandable for me. There are eventually only two choices for you and Iand one of those choices will be ours for an eternity.

Richard Hurt, Retired Classroom Teacher