

Intersections: Christianity & Today

Stan Schmidt

Listening—A Lost Art?



1. How much of prayer should be listening?
 - * The question doesn't make sense. Isn't prayer just talking to God?
 - * It should be about 50-50. I know as much as He does.
 - * 90%
2. "The principal form that the work of love takes is attention. . . . By far the most common and important way in which we can exercise our attention is by listening." —M. Scott Peck, *The Road Less Traveled*, p. 120
3. God gave us two ears and only one mouth.
4. Whom in your life have you listen to most intently?
5. When in your life have you listened to most intently?
6. Please share with the group the method you use to listen to God. Has God said anything to you in the last 12 months?
7. "When you fail at listening you are sending out an armada of negative messages. You're saying: ❖ I don't care about you. ❖ I don't understand you. ❖ You're wrong. ❖ You're stupid. ❖ You're wasting my time."
—Marshall Goldsmith, *What Got You Here Won't Get You There*, pp. 86–87
8. Listening is hard work.
9. "We spent an enormous amount of time listening, most of which we waste, because on the whole, most of us listen very poorly." —M. Scott Peck, *The Road Less Traveled*, p. 121
10. Here is what the call to grace sounds like if you are really listening:

We are accustomed to imagining the . . . sudden call to grace as an "Oh joy!" phenomenon. In my experience, more often than not, it is, at least partially, an "Oh shit" phenomenon. . . . For the call to grace . . . is a call to total adulthood.

—M. Scott Peck, *The Road Less Traveled*, p. 121