

Practice Guide



Week of
September 29

The goal of Ask to Listen is to help our people cultivate a listening life – listening for the Voice of God and discerning the difference between His and other voices – so that we may be in union and on mission with God. The assumptions driving this emphasis are, first, that **God speaks continuously**: He speaks to his people and so hearing God’s Voice is the normal practice of a Christian. Second, the practice of hearing God’s Voice **involves habits** (scripture reading, prayer, meditation, fasting, service, worship, etc.) **and dispositions** that

belong to both introverts and extroverts, to both the individual and the community. Third, the purpose of hearing God’s Voice is not just to know God’s will but **to know God and to join Him in His work.**

Each week, we will provide suggested rhythms to our days through these handouts that allow us to engage in Ask to Listen outside of Sunday morning worship services.

Monday ▶

What does Ask to Listen really mean, and what does Scripture have to say about it? In the Bible, we see many ways in which God’s people respond when they hear God’s voice. However, listening does not simply mean hearing but obediently responding to what was heard.

In this video, Dr. Dave Smith points to the faithful responses of Mary in both Luke and John’s gospels to explain what it looks like to obediently listen when God speaks.

Go to www.collegewes.com/asktolisten to watch.

Weekly Discussion Question

Since God speaks not only to individuals but also to communities, we encourage weekly discussions about how we are posturing ourselves to hear from God and what we think God might be saying. These discussions can happen in groups, around the lunch table, or with your family. You do not have to meet with the same people each week.

If you need ideas or recommendations of practices to try, contact eric.crisp@collegewes.com

- What are your current Scripture reading practices?
- What habits help or hurt your practice of reading God’s Word?
- What do you think God is saying to you through your scripture reading?
 - » What is keeping you from doing this?
 - » If you are able to do it, what might be a good first step?
 - » Who will you ask to help you?

Wednesday

PRAYER PRACTICE



If you are unable to join us in the CWC Chapel at 7am, we invite you to find a place of stillness and pray through your day with a practice called the Ignatian Examen. Here is a more specific version of the Examen. (You can find a version of this prayer and more in “Reimagining the Ignatian Examen” by Mark E. Thibodeaux)

Be still. Find a comfortable place and posture to relax and become aware of God’s presence. Release any distraction that might come to your mind. It might help to focus on an attribute of God or repeat a prayerful phrase from Psalm 121, “My help comes from the LORD, the maker of heaven and earth.” You can breathe in as you say, “My help comes from the LORD,” then exhale with, “the maker of heaven and earth.” Do this until your mind begins to settle and distractions fade.

Give thanks. Remember God’s great love for you. Ask God to remind you of the many blessings in your life. Go through the previous week remembering the gifts and graces you have received, from the big ones (family, friends, and hope) to the small ones (a restful night, good conversation, a good meal). As you remember, spend just a moment giving thanks and praise to God.

Review the previous day or week. Since your last examen, slowly and prayerfully review what has happened. Ask the Lord to show you moments when you were not fully present - when you may have been distracted while the moment called for your full attention. Then ask the Lord to help you recognize those grace-filled moments when you were fully present.

Reflect. Reflect on each of these moments. Talk to God about the moments you were distracted or absent and ask God to show you how much better things could have gone if you had been fully present. Ask God for healing, forgiveness, and insight into how to be more engaged and attentive in the future. Give thanks to God for the moments you were able to be fully present and celebrate the ways in which you were able to love God and others better through this presence.

Receive from God. Receive God’s forgiveness, love, grace, and joy, contemplating God’s goodness and love.

Look ahead. Now walk through the upcoming day or week. What moments are going to need your full attention and presence? When will you be tempted to be distracted or caught up in a diversion? Talk to God about how you might be more present in those situations, thanking God for revealing these moments to you now.

Friday

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

As you discern God’s voice throughout the week individually and in community, we want to know how God is speaking to you.

- What is your current or favorite Bible reading practice?
- How has God used that practice to speak with you?

Share your story with us:

www.collegewes.com/asktolisten

Email us: mystory@collegewes.com

Or follow us and see our weekly posts on social media

