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# PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

Greetings, ministers and wives!

Last week I finished an article for the *Trumpet* about Winston Churchill. As I was writing the article, I found this passage in Martin Gilbert's biography of Churchill that I wanted to share with you. It talks about the way Churchill organized his time.

"Amid all his preoccupations with defense and foreign affairs, Churchill still found time to work on the third volume of his life of Marlborough," Gilbert wrote. "Early in April his new research assistant, Bill Deakin, arrived at Chartwell for the first time. At lunch, Deakin later recalled: 'He hardly spoke at all. There was something else on his mind, as there often was.'" That is a sign of what a thinker Mr. Churchill was.

"Deakin ... quickly won Churchill's confidence ... and within a short time Deakin became part of life at Chartwell. Forty years later, in a conversation with the author, Deakin recalled Churchill's routine: '*the ruthless partition of the day, the planning of things all to time.* THERE WAS NEVER A WASTED MOMENT. He had intense control."

Gilbert quoted Mr. Deakin as saying, "I felt very shy and nervous, but once he accepted you he was very considerate, of course he expected you to be as tough and concentrated as he was—he rather accepted that."

Mr. Deakin also said, "The activities seemed to stimulate him. *I never saw him tired.* He was absolutely totally organized, almost like a clock. *He knew how to husband his energy, he knew how to expend it.* His routine was absolutely dictatorial. He set himself a ruthless timetable every day and would get very agitated and cross if it was broken.

"He would start the day at 8 o'clock in bed, reading things, reading proofs. Then he started with his mail, which he would clear fairly rapidly before going back to whatever interested him. He would get back to his reading or his proofs and say to me: 'Look this up. Find out about this.' If there was something he wanted to hear about I sat at his desk in his library and read to him. At luncheon he did not come downstairs until the guests were there—he would never greet them at the door."

Deakin also made some interesting observations about Churchill's habits in conversation: "His lunchtime conversation was quite magnificent. It was absolutely free-for-all. He did not restrain himself."

Mr. Churchill also had his down time: Deakin explained, "After lunch if people were there he would shut off completely from politics, from writing. If he had guests he would take them around the garden. If there were no guests he would potter off into his room. He never had exactly a siesta. Sometimes he would lie down for a few minutes. Between 5 and 7 he would clear the mail he had dictated in the morning and sign letters, but still there would be no work. He might play cards with his wife or Randolph. At seven he would bath and change for dinner.

"Dinner at 8:30 was the event of the day. In very good form he could hold forth on any subject—memories of Harrow, or the Western Front—depending on the guests. After the ladies had left, he might sit up with his male guests until midnight. He seldom talked about the work he was doing, though he might bring out something that had interested him. "At midnight, when the guests left, *then* he would start work. Work on Marlborough would go to 3 or 4 in the morning. One felt so exhilarated. Part of the secret was *his phenomenal power to concentrate—the fantastic power of concentrating on what he was doing*—which he communicated. You were absolutely a part of it—swept into it. ...

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“Nothing was allowed to interfere with the night work. While he worked he would call up a secretary and start to dictate. I might have given him some memorandum before dinner, four or five hours before. Now he would walk up and down the room dictating. My facts were there, but he had seen it as a politician. My memorandum was a frame. It set him off, it set off his imagination.”

With love, in Christ's service,



## CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

### CORRESPONDENCE COURSE FOR MINISTRY

The correspondence course system and procedures are automated wherever possible to minimize manual labor. Consequently, *all* those enrolled must take and pass a test every fourth lesson in order to receive any further lessons. Tests are machine graded, and scores are *automatically* posted to the database where a passing grade signals the system that the individual is eligible to receive the next four lessons at the rate of one per month. Without that “trigger” no further lessons can be sent.

In order that the ministry not have to be burdened with taking tests, *and* to ensure that every minister receives the lessons, those ministers who have enrolled have been DE-enrolled. Ministers should NOT ask to be enrolled for the BCC.

Instead, as new lessons are received at the MPC, they will immediately be mailed to the ministry. This means you will usually receive your copy several weeks before the subscribers who are enrolled do, giving you a chance to become familiar with the material in case any questions arise. It also means you won't have to take the tests! To get you caught up, you will be sent Lessons one and two as soon as possible (regardless of whether you received Lesson one at the conference).

Wives who enrolled separately from their husbands are still enrolled and will continue to receive their own copy of the lessons through the regular system, subject

to the testing requirements and all the provisions of the automated system.

Anyone who is ordained to the ministry, who was not previously enrolled, will receive a packet with all available lessons he doesn't have and will be sent new lessons as they become available.

Headquarters will implement these procedures for all ministers around the world with the exception of the Australasian region. The Australian Regional Office will take care of this routine for the ministry in this region, since it maintains its own database.

In summary, ministers should not enroll for the BCC and should not send in any test answer sheets as they will “not compute” in the system and it will slow things down. Wives, on the other hand, are free to enroll if they wish, under their own name, and must submit test answer sheets after every fourth lesson in order to receive subsequent lessons. Note that whenever tests are made available, ministers will also receive a copy of the test answer key.

This procedure is the best way, we believe, to accommodate the different needs and desires of the ministry and wives while keeping the system fully automated and most cost effective. If you have any questions, please e-mail [cc@icedmond.org](mailto:cc@icedmond.org) or write to Correspondence Course, Box 3330, Edmond, OK 73083. *Fred Dattolo*

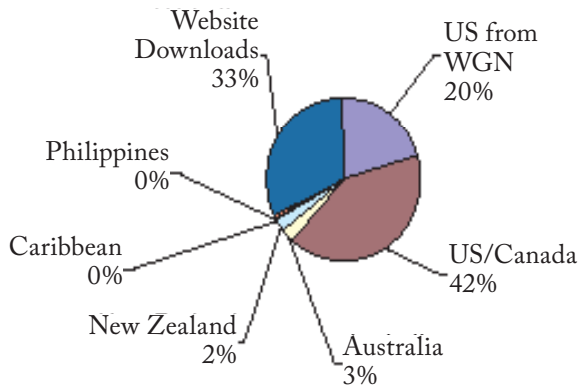
# MEDIA SERVICES

## TOP-10 PROGRAMS OF 2004

Based on response information collected from all broadcasts of the programs around the world, including the Internet downloads, below is a list of our ten most responsive programs that aired in 2004:

<u>Program Title</u>	<u>Response</u>
Russia and China in Prophecy	4,101
The King of the South (Repeat)	3,526
Crown of the Holy Roman Empire	3,524
The Prophetic Beast	2,651
Why Europe Hates America	2,599
Understanding Jeremiah	2,586
Joel's Day of the Lord	2,490
Jordan Foils WMD Attack	2,484
The Human Mind	2,415
The Prophetic Beast (Repeat)	2,372

Response to the above listed programs came from the following sources:



## BACK ON THE AIR IN THE UNITED KINGDOM!

*The Key of David* program is once again available throughout the U.K. on The Reality Channel. This station is carried on the three major cable TV providers in Britain (Sky, Telewest and NTL). According to the June 2004 OFCOM report (Independent Cable TV Regulator in the U.K.), there are 3.36 million cable (both analog and digital) households throughout the U.K. that receive our program on The Reality Channel.

While we have an early airing (Sunday morning at 6 am), we are hoping to move to a better time soon. In the meantime, we will begin to establish a history of successful broadcasting once again throughout the United Kingdom. Most of our programs have been accepted

by the compliance officer of Zone TV which regulates content for The Reality Channel. We are being cautious with the programs we send over initially to establish ourselves.

As Mr. Durrad said in a recent e-mail, "Just to let you know we received *The Key of David* loud and clear on Sunday morning. This is great news for all of us in England. Please pass on to Mr. Flurry that everyone is very excited here and that 'That Prophet' is being aired to more than the membership."

## TWO CAMERAS

Mr. Flurry has decided to return to a two-angle, two-camera production for the weekly taping of *The Key of David*. Instead of a tight and wide shot with the same background, we will once again have two medium shots, but with different backgrounds. Mr. Flurry turns from one camera angle to the other about halfway through the show. "The Mystery Watchman" program slated to air at the end of February will be the first program to feature our return to this production style.

## NEW LITERATURE OFFER

We are expecting a big response to this weekend's program in which Mr. Flurry offers the Imperial College Correspondence Course for the first time on television. About seven minutes toward the end of the program is used to promote the Course and to encourage the viewers to enroll immediately. As always, the subject matter of the program is quite gripping as Mr. Flurry discusses the Olivet Prophecy, and then wraps up the program with a personal promotion of the course.

We are staffing up with our full compliment of in-home operators in anticipation of what could be one of our highest responding programs to date! Please pray for a tremendous response to the program so more people will enroll in God's Correspondence Course!

## KEY OF DAVID WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Program Title: "How Not to be Deceived"

Airdate: February 20, 2005

Literature Offered: Correspondence Course

Synopsis: In Matthew 24 Jesus Christ warned His disciples that if they were deceived, they would miss the signs pointing to the end of the world. Religious deception is rampant in this world. How can you know if you are deceived? This week on *The Key of David*, Gerald Flurry discusses how not to be deceived.

# PHILADELPHIA FOUNDATION

This week, the Philadelphia Foundation hosted—for the third time—the incomparable Vienna Choir Boys. They performed in the John Amos Field House to a crowd of nearly 350. Close to 200 of those were from the community.

This was a similar turnout to the Canadian Brass concert in September 2003, but lower in numbers than the first time we hosted the Choir Boys in the field house (when over 550 attended).

We didn't know exactly how many to anticipate for. We did a more aggressive advertising campaign—mainly utilizing the local papers more, on top of our usual publicity campaign through posters, mailers and radio ads. We made over double the money we spent on the newspaper ads in ticket sales. Despite this advertising campaign, we were dealing with a weeknight concert—which we had never done before.

Nonetheless, those who attended the concert were very excited about it and were looking forward to our upcoming season. One gentleman worked for the department of education. He called the day after the concert saying how much he enjoyed it and asked to be added to our mailing list. We thought it was interesting that more people (particularly someone in the state capital) know about Imperial College.

The concert itself was a huge success. With the help of the entire student body, the concert was staffed by a group of young people who let their light shine in a unique way. The Choir Boys enjoyed returning here and

sang a delightful program including folk songs from around the world and popular Viennese waltzes.

At the concert, we were able to drum up interest for the Messiah concert coming in April. We were also able to draw people's attention to the fact that we debuted the Hamburg Steinway that night. We also were able to announce the roster for our next season—approved by Mr. Flurry last week.

We have yet to finalize the formal contract signings, but if everything goes according to plan, here are the artists we will have in our 2005-2006 season. In November, one of the most stirring baritone performers around: Jubilant Sykes. In January 2006, one of the world's premier piano trios (violin, cello and piano): the Eroica Trio. In March, the Berlin Philharmonic wind quintet with internationally acclaimed pianist Jon Nakamatsu. The Berlin Philharmonic is respected as one of the finest orchestras in the world. These are the wind players from that orchestra. We hope to close the season in April with a return concert by the Canadian Brass.

In the summer, we will launch publicity about the season (the website is already updated with the tentative information). Right after NYC, we hope to begin season ticket sales.

We are reaching people in the community we may never reach through the other arms of the Work. Being a light to this world is so pleasing to our Father as it brings glory to His name. Please continue to pray as the concert series grows in its quality and impact.



## REGIONAL REPORTS

### MID-WESTERN UNITED STATES

Things have been quite busy for me since the last time I updated you concerning the mid-western region of the United States. I'm quite sure, knowing the nature of God's Work during this last hour, that things have probably been the same for you.

Since I last wrote to you, I have overseen three Spokesman Club ladies nights, there have been eight new requests for ministerial visits within the region, four (including two children) have been invited to attend services and two more have requested to start baptismal counseling.

In addition to this, I have been able to travel into several areas and conduct some much needed in-home visits with the brethren. I don't think we can over-emphasize the importance of those in-home visits with God's people. The benefits are enormous. Obviously, like most regional directors based at Headquarters, I'm limited in my opportunities to get to the brethren's homes personally, but I try to do so as often as I can. Also, I encourage the ministers living closer to the brethren to do so as often as possible. It's also very important to have the brethren into our homes when we can. We can't be effective shepherds unless we are with the sheep!

I mentioned last time that I believe the region is as stable as it has been since I began serving as regional director. I recently received a report from one of the local church elders that illustrates this point. He serves in an area that has experienced many problems in the past. With Christ's help and direction, much diligent effort from the ministry and the dedicated commitment of the brethren, that congregation is making notable progress. This minister's report read, "When I visited [the congregation] this past Sabbath and Saturday evening, everything went very well. The brethren seem to be very joyous and excited about hearing Mr. Flurry's messages. I really see the congregation getting closer and closer. I think this is because of the example of [the deacon], but also the men who are in club are really bonding together, and this in turn draws the entire congregation together. That doesn't mean we don't have any problems, *but I don't think there has ever been a time when the congregation was closer.*"

How wonderful it is to receive a report like this. Indeed, it truly is good and pleasant to see brethren dwelling together in unity!

Brian Davis

### WESTERN UNITED STATES

In the past month, PCG congregations in the West U.S. continued to grow with several more new members and prospective members being added to our ranks. Overall, attitudes among the brethren are positive and united in support of God's Work and Pastor General Gerald Flurry.

Members are thrilled about the "Daniel Unlocks Revelation" lecture series from this year's Ministerial Conference, and I've heard numerous positive comments about the latest *Key of David* programs—how Mr. Flurry's messages are growing increasingly in terms of power and efficacy.

Trials of health and wealth (3 John 2) continue to plague many in the region; as a result, most of the Western Region ministers, including me, have tailored our recent sermon and Bible study messages to address these issues. The recent *Royal Vision* articles on personal finances have been a real boon to the ministry in counseling the local brethren regarding tithing, managing money, etc.

Four large Western Region PCG family campouts are planned for this year; everyone is invited to attend these. The first campout, which will take place this spring on Memorial Day weekend (May 27-31), will be held in northeast Arizona, about an hour's drive south of the Grand Canyon. The second campout is being planned near Spokane, Wash., to be held in June, just after Pentecost. The third campout will be held at Camp Methuselah in Southern California, as in years past, over the Independence Day weekend (July 1-5). The fourth campout will be held at Cape Lookout on the Oregon Coast in the early fall, Labor Day weekend, Sept. 1-6.

New contact requests continue to come in steadily from all over the region; mainly from Southern California.

I had a most unusual visit with a man—a "new contact"—in Pasadena a couple of weeks ago; the visit took place in the man's apartment, only about a mile from the Ambassador Auditorium. This man sounded like a decent prospect over the phone: He told me he had been baptized in the WCG in the 1970s and had attended services in Pasadena for many years. He seemed to have a decent understanding of our doctrines, and had recently read *Mystery of the Ages*, *Malachi's Message*, and *That Prophet*. Before scheduling a visit to him, I interviewed him by telephone and was satisfied that he

would possibly be ready to be invited into the PCC. From the moment I arrived at his place, however, I believe God made it plainly evident that this man should definitely not be allowed to fellowship with us. His apartment was a cluttered mess—with a veritable collage of “religious art” (pagan icons), trinkets and newspaper clippings plastered all over the walls. He was dressed eccentrically and his mannerisms were slightly effeminate. Soon after my arrival, he announced that his apartment was a “spook-house” and “haunted”—and that he had seen, touched and talked with demons hundreds of times—and had just finished conversing with a couple of demons earlier in the morning before I got there! Needless to say, I cut the visit short and “got out of Dodge” as quickly as possible! As I left this man’s apartment, it struck me—more than ever before—that

since Jesus Christ removed His lamp from Pasadena, demons have flocked there to fill the vacuum that was left behind. I immediately thought about what God, through Mr. Flurry, has been teaching us lately about scriptures such as Jude 4, where Satan-influenced men have attempted—with a certain degree of success—to infiltrate God’s Church and disrupt His great Work. This “close encounter” helped me learn more deeply the reality of what Evangelist Marvin Campbell spoke to us about in his conference lecture titled “The Last Hour Battlefield.” It’s a jungle out there. And there’s no doubt in my mind that Satan has been cast down and is going about in a “mad dog rage” trying to destroy God’s Church any way he can. How vigilant we must be in this “last hour”; these are indeed urgent and abnormal times!

*Eric Anderson*

# MINISTERIAL TRAINING SERIES

## BECOME A LISTENING MINISTER

By Alex Harrison

U.S. President Lyndon Johnson had a sign in his office that read, “You ain’t learning nothing when you’re doing all the talking.”

The German-born philosopher Paul Tillich said, “The first duty of love is to listen.”

There is no way a minister of God can be effective unless he learns to listen. He cannot give sermons of any value unless he learns this skill. If we have ministers under us, we must also help them develop this vital skill.

Lee Iacocca, the man who turned around the Chrysler Corporation, wrote in his autobiography, “I only wish I could find an institute that teaches people how to listen. After all, a good manager needs to listen at least as much as he needs to talk. Too many people fail to realize that real communication goes in both directions.”

How many times have we been guilty of not listening? Maybe someone’s just having real difficulty explaining an emotional issue, or trying to get you to understand what they’re really trying to convey—are you listening? Are you listening to them in every way?

Does Christ switch off halfway through a conversation when you’re talking to Him? *Does He make a judgment before He’s heard you?*

When visiting Europe, I have to deal with the language barrier. I have wonderful men traveling with me and assisting me. Through these language barriers I have learned a great deal about listening. I listen by observing the body language. It tells you a great deal. I watch the facial expressions of the people as I talk to the interpreter and the interpreter talks to them and it comes back to me. And I analyze the conversation all the way, even if it’s in another language. You can tell a great deal, even though you don’t understand the language, by listening. You look into a person’s eyes, and you concentrate on what they’re saying, even though it may be another language. You can learn so much from someone by giving your undivided attention to that conversation, even though it’s through an interpreter.

One thing I’ve learned: *Listen to hear what’s NOT being said.* Some people find it very difficult to talk to a minister, perhaps because of a past situation where they’ve been hurt. They carry scars. Or they don’t trust us because of what’s happened in the past—because God’s people have been betrayed by the ministry.

In the book *What Life Has Taught Me*, Viscount Joet wrote this in an essay: “*The tolerance that is worthwhile is the tolerance which enables a man to listen quietly to points of view with which he violently disagrees.*” Do you ever do that?

Pastor General Gerald Flurry wrote in the June 1996 *Trumpet* on the subject of Aaron’s rod, on page 3: “One of the greatest sins a minister of God can commit is to abuse God’s family government. IT DOES DAMAGE THAT EVEN REACHES INTO ETERNITY. This abuse can be too harsh or too permissive. The only way to reach the proper balance is to totally surrender to God’s loving government *yourself*. Jesus Christ must administer that government through each person (Philippians 2:5).”

We must listen to people as *individuals*. Some people’s voices go up to a high pitch, they get emotional, they might even scream at you—but that’s maybe just the way they are. Maybe it’s the culture they come from. I’ve dealt with so many different nationalities. I’ve learned to listen to people in the Philippines and Fiji. Even people in Australia and New Zealand, though they speak English, speak a little different. I’ve learned to listen to the people in India. They all have a different way of expressing themselves with the English language. South Africa’s the same. You can’t just say, “Well, I don’t agree with that.” Sometimes they don’t even know the right *words* to use, so you need to listen. What are they trying to say? What is it that they need help in?

Here are some points on this subject.

### GOD IS THE PERFECT LISTENER

*The Last Hour* reads, “Jesus Christ came in human form and understands the pulls of the flesh. He knows the weaknesses of the human spirit and the flesh. With that experience, He can help us get through to the Father in every detail. He has experience the Father doesn’t have. And the Father WANTS TO HEAR HIS POINT OF VIEW. They both want to be absolutely just. The Father says to Christ, *I want to hear you tell me about my son. We want to be as fair and loving and compassionate as we can be.* THE FACT THAT WE HAVE AN ADVOCATE SHOWS GOD’S GREAT LOVE AND PASSION FOR JUSTICE. What a wonderful Father we have, who will sit down and talk with our Husband about how to remove our sins” (emphasis mine).

The Father “is *living*, deeply sensitive to every important detail in our lives. ... He is a Father who has perfect love for each and every son. How can a Father with perfect love not be equally involved with each Family member? Our Father has no favorites in His Family” (ibid.).

God takes His communication with us very seriously. He tells us to pray about an hour a day—and He just LISTENS.

Revelation 5:8 and Revelation 8:3-4 depict God’s throne room, where angels are carrying INCENSE mixed with *our prayers* right up to the golden altar before God’s throne.

On top of all that, we have *the second most powerful being in the universe* serving as our ADVOCATE!

This structure is in place to ensure that OUR REQUESTS REACH HIM—and in perfect form. God isn’t going to bungle this. There won’t be any miscommunication. God is a *perfect* listener.

Mortimer J. Adler wrote this about listening: “The mind of the receiver must somehow penetrate through the words used to the THOUGHT THAT LIES BENEATH THEM.”

That’s exactly what God does. He can discern the thoughts and intents of our heart. True empathetic listening is about much more than understanding WORDS.

So the government we’re part of has a PERFECT LISTENER at the Head. The whole government, even on the human level, flows down from that. Mr. Flurry is very respectful of those who serve under him and open to their ideas. He has said he wants a “robust dialogue” with them. Yet—there is no question as to who is in charge! In God’s government, the one in charge has authority, but he doesn’t need to have all the ideas.

Listening is a GODLY SKILL that a minister for God MUST master!

### LISTENING SHOWS RESPECT AND BUILDS RELATIONSHIPS

In *The Magic of Thinking Big*, the author writes, “Big people monopolize the listening. Small people monopolize the talking.”

Ever been guilty of that? I have been. Do we really listen to our people? You know, some people hurt so deeply, and they struggle with so much pain from, maybe, a long past of hurt and pain and suffering. Do we listen to them? Are we impatient with them sometimes? We must teach our ministers to love the people of God, and you don’t love anyone if you don’t listen to them.

We all have a basic emotional need to be HEARD. As Stephen Covey wrote in *Principle-Centered Leadership*,

“What happens when you truly listen to another person? The whole relationship is transformed: ‘Someone started listening to me, and they seemed to savor my words. They didn’t agree or disagree, they just were listening, and I felt as if they were seeing how I saw the world. And in that process, I found myself listening to myself. I started to feel a worth in myself.’”

Often, counseling is simply glorified listening. Don’t listen primarily to criticize or advise. Listen to UNDERSTAND. See the whole picture before you respond.

Good listening fosters mutual respect, promotes cooperation, reduces tension, defuses conflict and builds trust.

We talk about that within marriage and family, but what about in the Church family? Minister to brethren, minister to deacon, minister to deaconess. It works all ways, but it works up, too.

What about the listening we should be doing when Mr. Flurry talks? Are we really *listening* to him? When Mr. Flurry makes a suggestion, to me *that’s a command*. To me, that’s a direction from Jesus Christ, and he’s not suggesting it because he’s got time to waste. He *means* it. He *loves* us as ministers. He doesn’t want us to get hurt out in the field. He doesn’t want us to hurt God’s people. He is responsible to Christ, and he listens!

If we, as senior ministers, are listening, we’ll teach the men under us to listen. And then the junior ministers under that, they’ll listen and they’ll respond. And the people will know that we’re listening, and they’ll respond. And we’ll have a team that’s coordinated by Jesus Christ, a trained team of Spirit-led ministers.

### LISTENING INCREASES KNOWLEDGE

Doug Larson said, “Wisdom is the reward you get for a lifetime of listening when you’d have preferred to talk.”

Proverbs 25:2 says “the honour of kings is to search out a matter.” A good leader will use all means to search out truth, to be able to judge correctly. Sometimes we must WORK to get to the truth. It means we have to be willing to hear criticisms from those under us.

Proverbs 18:13 states, “He that answereth a matter before he heareth [Hebrew: *understands*] it, it is folly and shame unto him.” We must *listen* to all sides of a matter before we can UNDERSTAND it. Adler said, “Do not say you agree, disagree or suspend judgment until you can say, ‘I UNDERSTAND.’”

Listening helps us develop the “ear of the wise” (verse 15).

James 1:19 tells us to be “swift to hear, slow to speak.”

The January 1976 *Good News* wrote this about hearing a matter: “One of the worst temptations any conversationalist faces is the URGE TO GIVE ADVICE. And



one of the wisest pieces of advice ever dished out by an experienced counselor is the following: ‘Whenever possible, I avoid telling [people] what to do and what not to do. Even when they ask for it, I postpone giving instant advice. I try to find out what they think about the situation and what alternatives they have considered. I encourage them to talk about their fears and hopes and to risk stating opinions and making decisions.’

Remember, God will judge us in the same manner in which we judge.

Good listening is not only an act of *selflessness*, it’s an act of HUMILITY. It is an acknowledgement of the fact that we don’t know it all.

By listening, you’ll learn from people. You’ll learn how to love them. There’s nothing more delightful than sitting down with a member of God’s Church and learning. One thing I thoroughly enjoy about Spokesman Club is the first speech. You can learn more from a man in his first speech about his life than from, maybe, three years in the congregation. You think, *Wow! I didn’t know he was educated in that!* Or, *He’s got ability, this man here.*

One of the biggest dangers we could fall victim to is thinking we have all the answers. It’s too easy to think, *I don’t really need to bother Mr. Flurry with this; it’s not such a serious problem.* If you even have a DOUBT, get on the phone, send an e-mail, fax, whatever you need to do. Even though you may have dealt with a similar situation, you don’t know it all! Only the *Father* does! Mr. Flurry talks to Christ, because he knows he doesn’t know it all. And Christ goes to the Father.

“Believeth thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works” (John 14:10). The Father is the Head; He knows it all! Christ doesn’t even know the time or the hour when He’s returning—that’s the Father’s prerogative! He knows it all! So don’t think you know it all.

Good listening reveals new information, sparks smart action, inspires honesty, energizes the speaker and educates the listener.

### LISTENING BUILDS LOYALTY

If you consistently listen to others, valuing them and what they have to offer, they will develop loyalty. This is the bottom line of what the ministry is trying to do: build loyalty to this Family in the people of God. Build bridges within the congregation! We can make even those on the fringes feel much more a part of the Fam-

ily of God—just by listening.

Sometimes our teenagers need to be listened to, and we’re just *too busy*. Often they’re crying out for help! It builds loyalty in our young people when we listen to them as ministers. Don’t put yourself so far on a pedestal that you can’t be reached. Take time to listen to little children. You can learn a lot from them and about the families they come from. They are potential sons of God! They must to be listened to as well!

This ties us back to the first point. Remember, we all have a desire to be heard—to receiving a willing ear especially from those over us. If we give that to those we lead, this will engender loyalty in God’s people.

Effective listening requires more than hearing the words transmitted.

Effective listening demands that you find meaning and understanding in what’s being said. Here are some listening skills that we must develop in ourselves and the men under us:

- Look at the speaker.
- Do not interrupt. Let people finish their thought.
- Focus on understanding and having empathy.
- Check your emotions, and suspend your judgment.
- Ask questions for clarity.
- Make listening your priority.

It sounds easy, but it is so difficult. We don’t *naturally* want to listen to someone else. Humanly we want to talk and take the floor. But Christ is the greatest example of being a listener. He listens to us every day. If we don’t let Christ lead us in these areas, how can we develop the bride of Christ?

Often I’ll be in the field, and I’ll see a need. I listen for the needs of people. Do you listen for them? Do you hear what’s being said? And what is *not* being said?

If we can’t listen to the people of God, we can’t work with them, we can’t teach them.

A good minister is an *intense, interested listener!* Make sure the people God has put in our care don’t feel uncomfortable talking with us. Initiate conversation. Make sure they understand their ideas are important.

Seek God’s help. We are all carnal, naturally selfish, and we are subject to prejudice, ignorance and judging by appearance. We need the mind of God, who is the perfect listener. We need that humble, selfless attitude to implement this kind of listening. If we can take on the mind of Christ in this area, this Family will GROW in God’s love, and this Work will move forward with greater might!