[Impacters]
MISSIONARIES OF PROCLAMATION

A POSTURE OF PRAYER

9 November 2025

Summary:

This message emphasizes the importance of actively listening to God through intentional prayer and a posture of the heart. Building on a previous message about prayer as a way of life, Emma explores how Christians can move beyond merely going through the motions of spiritual disciplines to truly hearing God's voice. The message stresses that while practices like attending Mass, personal prayer, Scripture reading, and acts of mercy are essential, they must be accompanied by a heart that genuinely desires to hear from God. Using the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, the sermon illustrates the difference between religious routine and authentic spiritual openness. The core message is that hearing God requires a deliberate decision to posture one's heart with readiness, alertness, desire, and eagerness to receive what He wants to communicate.

Key Points:

- Prayer is not just a practice but a way of life that anchors us in God's presence throughout the day
- The "rule of prayer" is a spiritual rhythm that guides rather than restricts our relationship with God
- We can participate in all spiritual disciplines yet still miss God's voice if we lack intentionality
- Active listening to God requires positioning our hearts, not just our bodies, in a posture of openness
- A posture of prayer communicates: I'm ready, I'm alert and attentive, I desire to hear from You, and I'm eager
- Physical expressions of worship (raising hands, kneeling, standing) should flow from genuine heart posture
- Hearing God's voice requires a deliberate decision and intentional orientation of our daily lives
- We must be aware of God's presence wherever we go and whatever we do
- When we intentionally posture our hearts, all spiritual practices come alive with God's presence

Scripture Reference:

- Luke 18:10-14 (The Parable of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector)

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SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Overview

This guide is designed to help your small group dive deeper into the message about developing a heart posture that actively listens for God's voice. The message emphasized that while prayer routines are important, we need an intentional heart that says, "God, I'm listening."

Opening Prayer

Begin by asking someone to pray, inviting God to speak to your group and asking for hearts that are ready, alert, and eager to hear from Him. Pray the IMPACTERS prayer together as a group.

Ice Breaker

Question: Share about a time when you were trying to talk to someone, but you could tell they weren't really listening. How did that feel? What made the difference when someone truly listened to you?

Key Takeaways

1. Prayer as a Way of Life
    - Prayer is not just an activity but a rhythm that anchors our daily life in God's presence
    - The "rule of prayer" is a guide, not a restriction. It helps us stay connected to God

2. The Core Rhythm of Prayer
    - The Eucharist (Mass)
    - Personal prayer (15 minutes daily)
    - Scripture and spiritual reading
    - Community prayer
    - Worship and teaching services
    - Mercy in action

3. A Heart Posture That Listens

We can do all the right "prayer activities" but still miss God's voice if our hearts aren't positioned to listen. A posture of prayer means:

- **I'm ready** (hands out, prepared to receive)
- **I'm alert and attentive** (watching for God at any moment)
- **I desire to hear from You** (hungry for God's voice)
- **I'm eager** (keen and waiting.

4. The Pharisee vs. The Tax Collector

- The Pharisee did everything "right" but had no heart openness
- The tax collector came humbly, ready to receive
- God responds to humble, open hearts

Discussion Questions

1. Emma mentioned that we can do all the right spiritual practices but still miss hearing God's voice. Why do you think this happens? Have you experienced this in your own life?
2. What struck you most about the comparison between "active listening" in conversations and "active listening" to God?
3. Looking at the "Core Rhythm of Prayer," which practices are currently part of your life? Which ones do you find most challenging?
4. Emma shared about asking God to use her at work and then being alert throughout the day. Have you ever done something similar? What happened?
5. When you think about the four aspects of a prayer posture (ready, alert, desiring, eager), which one resonates most with you right now? Which one do you struggle with?
6. Read Luke 18:10-14 together. What specific attitudes made the Pharisee's prayer ineffective? What made the tax collector's prayer powerful?

Practical Applications:

This Week's Challenge

Choose at least one of the following to practice this week:

Option 1: Morning Intention

- Each morning this week, before getting out of bed or during your first quiet moment, say: "God, I'm ready to hear from you today. I'm listening."
- Keep a journal of moments when you sensed God speaking or when you were alert to His presence

Option 2: Prayer Walk

- Take a 15-20 minute walk this week with the specific intention of listening to God
- Before you start, pray: "God, I'm alert, I'm attentive, I'm eager to hear from you"
- Notice what God brings to your attention

Option 3: Active Listening Audit

- Before each of your regular prayer practices this week (Mass, personal prayer, Scripture reading, etc.), pause and check your heart

- Ask yourself: "Am I just going through the motions, or is my heart truly postured to listen?"
- Adjust your heart posture before proceeding

Option 4: Workplace/Daily Life Awareness

- Like Emma's pharmacy experience, start one day this week by praying: "God, use me today. I'm ready."
- Stay alert throughout the day for opportunities to hear from God or be His presence to others
- Journal about what happened

Group Accountability

- Share which challenge you're committing to this week
- Exchange contact information to check in with at least one other person mid-week

For Next Week:

- Come prepared to share one experience from your chosen challenge
- What did you hear from God this week?
- Were there moments you were alert to His presence?
- How did having an intentional heart posture change your week?

Additional Resources

- Rewatch the sermon and share it with someone who might benefit
- Review the "Who We Are" booklet, particularly the section on the rule of prayer

Closing Prayer:

Lord, we thank you that you are a speaking God and a listening God. Help us to be a people with hearts postured to hear your voice. Make us ready, alert, desiring, and eager to encounter you every day. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.