

Lutheran Women in Mission



Listening to God's Voice by Gretchen Gebhardt

Opening

Sing together "Speak, O Lord, Your Servant Listens" (LW 339, TLH 296), "Oh, that the Lord Would Guide My Ways" (LBW 480) or "Open My Eyes, that I May See" from *The Other Song Book*.

"Kathy, why are you eating donuts? You've followed your diet faithfully since your surgery. What happened?"

"It's ok," Kathy answered. "I knew I'd be tempted to eat sweets at today's meeting, so when I prayed this morning I asked God to eliminate the sweets for today's snack unless He wanted me to eat them. There are donuts today, so it must be God's will for me to have one."

Whose Will?

Sometimes we fool ourselves into believing our will is God's will. But if the voice we hear inside doesn't come from God, where does it come from? Read the following verses and note your answers.

- **Matthew 7:15**
- **Mark 7:21-22**
- **1 Peter 5:8**

Show Us Our Sin/Show us Our Savior

King David responded to the lust in his heart and committed adultery with Bathsheba. He tried to cover up his sin by arranging to have her husband, Uriah, killed. David tried to shut out God's voice, but He would not be silenced. Read **2 Samuel 12:1-14**.



How did the Lord bring David to repentance?

What had to happen before David could be forgiven?

Does God work with us in the same way?

Think of a time when you could be a "Nathan" and speak God's Word to someone who needs to see both their sin and their Savior.

Too Many Voices

When God led the wandering Israelites through the desert He made His presence known with a cloud by day and a fire by night. How convenient that must have been! They just had to look for the cloud or the fire, and they would know God was leading them. Unfortunately, it did not keep their hearts from going astray. God does not lead us in quite the same way today. We hear His voice in the Bible, but too often the wisdom of the world speaks louder. We rely on "Well everyone knows " instead of "God's Word says " How can we focus on what God wants? Read the following Bible verses and note how God makes His will known to us.

- **Psalm 51: 10-11**
- **Matthew 26:41**
- **John 8:31-32**
- **God's Words to Guide Us**

As we hear God speaking to us in His Word, the Holy Spirit works faith in our hearts. As our faith grows, we become more eager to hear God's Word and to live according to it. Read the following verses and discuss how they can be used as a guide in your life.

- **Psalm 50:15**
- **Matthew 25:40**
- **Ephesians 2:8-10**
- **1 Peter 2:9-10**
- **1 John 4:10-11**

Can you share a favorite Bible verse? When is this verse especially helpful to you? Why?

Closing

Close by singing together "Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word" (*LW 334, TLH 261, LBW 230*).

Gretchen Gebhardt is the Bible study editor of the Lutheran Woman's Quarterly and author of "A Single Thread in God's Tapestry." She lives in Charter Oak, Iowa with her husband who is pastor of St. John Lutheran Church.
