

You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak.

—James 1:19

Making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding.

—Proverbs 2:2

## WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16

I started my Christian walk late in life. When I turned toward God, I immediately felt God's intense love for me. It was a little overwhelming, but I wanted it, I needed it and I felt a responsibility to it. My early days in church and Christian community saw me saying yes to any request to join a ministry. All good stuff: I was with God and God's people, but I was not yet in dialogue with God or my fellow Christians. I could hear, but I was not listening.

Ministry burnout and prayer valleys soon followed. Fast-forward and the last few years in my Christian walk have evolved into a spiritual practice of listening, both in my prayer life and in ministry. I discovered that I had to start really listening to what God wanted me to know. In listening, I learned about God, about me and about God's people. Christian maturity started when I learned to empty myself and listen for God's voice. Now being able to recognize God's voice, I am able to answer yes to ministries that glorify God and decline those God is not calling me to. Listening is where I give and receive love, listening is where I connect with God and with God's people. Listening may sound like a one-way, lonely, contemplative action, but it is not. Try it! For a long time. You may find, like I did, an active, life-giving spiritual practice.

—Christian Kassoff