

A. NEW WINE

- Our understanding of New Wine is build upon these foundational verses:
 - Matthew 9:13—Go and learn what *this* means: ‘I desire mercy and not sacrifice.’ For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”
 - Hosea 6:6 NLT—I want you to show love, not offer sacrifices. I want you to know me more than I want burnt offerings.
 - Heb 4:16 NIV—Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.
- Jesus’ challenge is to “go and learn.” We’re learning to approach Him to receive New Mercies to find His grace that enables us to connect to a New Way Forward.
- Insights:

B. DAILY GRACE

- God provides grace to us on a daily basis. Jesus teaches us to ask for our daily portion in the same way God sent manna each day: Ex 16:4 NAS-The LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day’s portion every day, so that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction.
- While it is valuable to store up God’s Word in our hearts, this daily communion of listening and finding grace is meant to be something we pursue each day: Prov 8:34-36 NIV-- Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. For whoever finds me finds life and obtains favor from the LORD; but he who sins against me wrongs his own soul
- The Lord instructs us over and over in Scripture, both Old and New Testaments, to listen to Him! Let’s “go and learn” how to grow in this kind of relating!
- Insights:

C. LISTENING TO GOD

- Knowing God requires developing spiritual ears that listen to His instructions: Rev 2:7— He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.
- Here are solid biblical principles for developing listening skills:
 - 1) Believe God’s promise to reveal His thoughts to His people:
 - Jn 10:27-- My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.
 - Amos 4:13 NIV-- He who forms the mountains, creates the wind, and reveals his thoughts to man, he who turns dawn to darkness, and treads the high places of the earth - the Lord God Almighty is his name.
 - Is 30:21— Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left.
 - 2) Personally receive that the promise of hearing from God for yourself: Jn 14:21 NLT- Because they love me, my Father will love them, and I will love them. And I will reveal myself to each one of them."
- LISTENING EXERCISE:
Take a few moments to examine your heart’s deepest conviction on this promise. Where are you in terms of truly believing that God will communicate with you personally?

- Developing listening skills takes practice. The Lord is 100 percent pleased with *wherever* you are right now. In fact, “knowing about God” can be a hindrance to truly listening.
- He is much more interested in you knowing Him better than in lots of head knowledge or even you having a powerful command of Scriptural knowledge!
- Start with these suggestions as you go and learn to know God more:
 - 3) Acquire and develop a taste for God’s word: 1 Pt 2:2-3— As newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.
 - 4) Build your baseline of spiritual hearing by establishing a firm foundation of Scripture knowledge: 2 Tim 2:15 KJV— Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.
 - 5) Meditate on portions of the written word until they become “yours.” Ask God to speak faith-bearing personal words into your life and trust Him to do so:
 - Rom 10:17—Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
 - Principle + Meditation = Personal Word
- The more you practice, the more your connection with the Lord will grow. You will gain the ability to discern the difference between other messages and the Holy Spirit.
- These skills develop best when you maintain the attitudes of faith and expectation:
 - 6) Wait on the power of the Holy Spirit to make God’s word “living and active”: Acts 1:8-- But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you
 - 7) Ask and expect the Holy Spirit to apply God’s word to your specific situation: Jn 16:13-14— When He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth...He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.
 - 8) Anticipate that God will give the appropriate amount of light based on your current set of circumstances and stage of development: Jn 16:12--I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.
 - 9) Look forward to sharper discernment as interfering signals from your flesh decrease: 1 Cor 3:1-3 AMP— Brethren, I could not talk to you as to spiritual [men], but as to nonspiritual [men of the flesh, in whom the carnal nature predominates], as to mere infants [in the new life] in Christ [unable to talk yet!] I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not yet strong enough [to be ready for it]; but even yet you are not strong enough [to be ready for it] for you are still [unspiritual, having the nature] of the flesh [under the control of ordinary impulses].
 - 10) Give Wholehearted Attention to the revelation of God with your entire being: Ps 119:16-17 AMP— I will delight myself in Your statutes...I will observe Your word [hearing, receiving, loving, and obeying it].
- LISTENING EXERCISE:
Which of these principles about listening to God presents the most challenge to you?

Journal briefly about 1 or 2 of these principles (items F- J):

Ask the Lord to “have mercy” here and help you find His enabling grace to experience newness in this part of your relationship with Him:

D. SHARPEN YOUR LISTENING

- Keep a journal to write down your communications with God. Examine them in light of what Scripture teaches about how God communicates.
- If you're new at this, it can help to ask 1 or 2 mature and trustworthy believers to weigh in when in doubt! Be assured that His personal words to you will:
 - 1) Agree with the whole counsel of Scripture:
 - 2 Tim 2:13 AMP— He remains true (faithful to His Word and His righteous character), for He cannot deny Himself.
 - Acts 17:11-- they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.
 - 2) Lead progressively, so that you will have enough light to do your "Next Right Thing":
 - Ps 37:23-- The steps of a man are established by the Lord, and He delights in his way.
 - Pr 4:18 NLT--The way of the righteous is like the first gleam of dawn, which shines ever brighter until the full light of day.
 - 3) Invite you to closer fellowship and relationship with Jesus: Rev 3:20— Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.
 - 4) Correct and convict gently and without condemnation: 2 Cor 7:9-10 NIV— For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way...Godly sorrow brings repentance...and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.
 - 5) Offer confirmation and reassurance of God's revelation: Jn 7:17— If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God
- We can experience dry spells in our communication with the Lord. Sometimes it's just a matter of waiting in faith on what He's already revealed.
- At times the problem may be on the receiving end. These questions are intended to help you identify receiver issues:
 - 6) Am I practicing listening consistently? Heb 5:14 AMP-- But solid food is for full-grown men, for those whose senses and mental faculties are trained by practice to discriminate
 - 7) Do I move in faith when God gives me a personal word, acting upon the light given? Heb 4:2—The word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith
 - 8) Have I processed and applied the revelation I have received? 2 Tim 2:7 AMP-- Think over these things I am saying [understand them and grasp their application], for the Lord will grant you full insight and understanding in everything.
 - 9) Have I been disobedient to the light already given? Jn 12:35 NIV-- Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going.

LISTENING EXERCISE:

Look back over the last 4 questions. Ask the HS if any of these things might be contributing to any lack of connection you may be experiencing:

Holy Spirit, come and reveal anything that is underneath the obvious here. Is there fear, unbelief, lack of surrender or any other root issue?

- In our busy lives full of information overload, issues with our priorities can crop up quickly and undetected. It's good to do frequent checkups on how we're prioritizing time with God:
- 10) Am I too hurried and distracted to hear clearly? Mk 4:19 NIV--The worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful.
- 11) Is my focus on earthly answers instead of knowing God more? Ps 27:4 MSG-- I'm asking God for one thing, only one thing: To live with him in his house my whole life long. I'll contemplate his beauty; I'll study at his feet.
- 12) Have I been stingy with my time? Mt 26:40--He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "What! Could you not watch with Me one hour?"
- 13) Do I have a wholehearted commitment to having the Holy Spirit take the lead in my life? Phil 3:15 MSG--So let's keep focused on that goal, those of us who want everything God has for us. If any of you have something else in mind, something less than total commitment, God will clear your blurred vision--you'll see it yet!
- LISTENING EXERCISE:
Lord, please show me anywhere I may have allowed my focus and my priorities to drift away from knowing You more:

- Insights

E. PERSONAL APPLICATION

- ONE THING
 The One Thing that I'd like to take away from today's class and believe God to accomplish in my life is:

- PONDER THE TRUTH
 Which verse or principle stood out to you this week? Write it below taking some time to review it often. Be still in God's presence, alert for new insights. Record them here.

- PROCESSING THE TRUTH
 Prayerfully consider the questions presented, asking the Spirit to guide you into a deeper understanding of the truth and to reveal His pathway for growth. Write down your insights.