

Jesus exhorts us to take care how we hear the Word of God so that we bear fruit with endurance.

How can we take care in hearing the Word?

1) Fruitful hearing requires a gracious disposition (8:15).

- a) “an honest and good heart” is a gift from God (cf. 8:10)
- b) Larger Catechism (LC) 160: “receive the truth with faith, love, meekness, and readiness of mind, as the Word of God”
- c) John 8:43-47 “If I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? Whoever is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God.”
- d) John 10:25-27 “You do not believe because you are not part of My flock. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.”

2) Fruitful hearing requires perseverance (8:15).

- a) “Hold it fast . . . with patience”
- b) LC 160: “meditate, and confer of it; hide it in their hearts”
 - i) Meditate means conversing with yourself about what you’ve heard.
 - ii) Confer means conversing with others about what you’ve heard (Deuteronomy 6:7—home; Colossians 3:16—church).
 - iii) Hide it in the heart (Psalm 119:11) means keeping it in central command (Proverbs 2:1-5).
- c) Hebrews 2:1 “Therefore we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it.”
- d) Jude 3, 21 “I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. . . . Keep yourself in the love of God.”

3) Fruitful hearing requires obedience (8:16-17).

- a) “No one after lighting a lamp covers it with a jar or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light.”
- b) LC 160: “and bring forth the fruit of it in their lives”
- c) James 1:22 “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”

4) Fruitful hearing requires care (8:18a).

- a) “Take care then how you hear”
- b) LC 160: “that they attend upon it with diligence, preparation, and prayer; examine what they hear by the Scriptures”
 - i) Diligence means ordering life with discipline to responsibly hear the Word. Proverbs 8:34 says, “Blessed is the one who listens to me, watching daily at my gates, waiting beside my doors.”
 - ii) Preparation involves the whole person—mental, physical, and moral. 1 Peter 2:1-3 says, “Therefore, putting aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, like newborn babes, long for the pure milk of the word of God.”
 - iii) Prayer for both your reception (Psalm 119:18) and for the minister’s delivery (Ephesians 6:19).
 - iv) Examination of the preaching of the Word by the standard of the Word (Acts 17:10-11).

5) Fruitful hearing is blessed with bountiful knowledge of God (8:18b).

- a) “for to the one who has, more will be given”—The love of God matures His children, which involves increased knowledge of God and His grace, leading to increased love for God (Ephesians 1:17-19; 3:18-19)
- b) “and from the one who has not even what he thinks he has will be taken away”—Hypocrites will be judged for careless hearing of the Word.