

Not Able to Hear God's Word

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[Scripture quotations taken from the NASB](#)

So many will present the Gospel message as being one that every individual who has ever been born may hear and accept or reject as they decide for themselves. However, Jesus taught that many are in fact not able to hear His words.

In John 8, we see that Jesus was teaching in the temple at Jerusalem. Many heard His words and came to believe in Him, but others did not believe, and they questioned Him. Jesus answered them, saying: "Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is *because you cannot hear My word.*" You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father..." (John 8:43-44, emphasis added.) A few verses later, Jesus said: "He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them, because you are not of God." (John 8:47)

Jesus taught in these verses that there are basically two categories of people: those who belong to their Father God, and there those who belong to their father the devil. Those who belong to God are Jesus' sheep, and they hear God's words (again, John 8:47). These are God's elect; they are those whom the Father has given to His Son (John 6:37). These are the ones to whom it has been granted to hear and understand the Gospel message (John 6:65). They will hear Jesus' voice as He calls each of them out by name, and they will follow Him (John 10:3-4). However, all the others "cannot hear" His word (John 8:43); they are not able to hear and understand the words of the Gospel message.

Jesus again taught of the inability of unregenerate men to hear His words and come to Him, unless they are numbered among those whom He referred to as His sheep. In John 10:24-26, we read that some Jews had gathered around Jesus and asked Him not to keep them in suspense, but to tell them plainly if He was indeed the Christ. Jesus replied to them saying that He had already told them, and that the miracles He had done in His Father's name among them bore witness to His claim that He was in truth the Christ, and then Jesus said to them: "But you do not believe *because you are not of My sheep.*" (John 10:26, emphasis added). It has only been given to God's elect, or those whom Jesus referred to as His sheep, to believe in Him.

Notice that Jesus did not say to them they were not His sheep because they had decided for themselves not to believe, but conversely, He said that the reason they did not believe in Him was because they were not His sheep. Only those who belong to God, or those whom Jesus calls His sheep, will hear His voice (John 10:3-4, 10:27). *All the rest will not be able to hear* (John 8:43-47, 10:24-26).

Jesus, being the Son of God, knew that these individuals to whom He was talking were not numbered among His sheep. Only God's elect, or those whom Jesus referred to as His "sheep", will hear His voice. These will be called to faith in Christ, and they will therefore believe in Him (John 6:37, 44). All the rest will not be able to hear and understand Jesus' words, and will therefore be left in their sins.

As we consider Jesus' teachings about those who are not able to hear His words, we might also call to mind His teaching in Matthew 13, where a large crowd had gathered to hear what He had to say. He began by giving them the parable of the sower in verses 3-9.

Afterwards His disciples came to Him and asked Him why He spoke to the people in parables. Parables are stories that use figurative language to convey spiritual truths, and such figurative or symbolic language is often not easily understood. His disciples may have reasoned that surely Jesus must want everyone to understand His teachings, and they may have wondered why He did not communicate His message in plain language that could be more easily understood.

Jesus answered His disciples' question about why He spoke to the people in parables by saying: "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, *but to them it has not been granted.*" (Matthew 13:11, emphasis added). It has been granted to every one of God's elect to know Jesus

and to be able to hear and understand His words, which is “to know the mysteries of the kingdom heaven”. However, to all the others it has not been granted.

It has only been granted to God’s elect, those who are symbolized by the “good soil” in the parable of the sower, to be able to hear and understand the word of God, the Gospel message. As a result, they will all come to faith in Christ and bear fruit (Matthew 13:8-9, 23).

Jesus taught that only God’s elect, those whom God has chosen (Matthew 22:14), those whom the Father has given to Him (John 6:37), those whom the Father draws or calls to faith in Him (John 6:44, 10:3), those to whom it has been granted by the Father to come to Him (John 6:65), only these will be able to hear and understand the word of God, and through that hearing be saved. All the others will not be able to hear.