

Are We Listening?
Pastor Keith Richard
Immanuel, Belvidere

But Jesus said, “Do not stop him, for no one who does a mighty work in my name will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me. For the one who is not against us is for us. Mark 9:39-40

The disciples once again didn't get it. They tried to stop someone who was driving out demons in the name of Jesus because that person was not one of the disciples. Jesus basically told the disciples to chill out. You have to scratch your head sometimes and wonder how the disciples didn't understand. Were they even listening to anything Jesus was saying? Were they paying any attention to anything he was doing?

I often wonder if Jesus thinks the same thing about me today. I have grown up in the Church and yet I often still do and say things that don't sound very Christian. Jesus must scratch His head and think, “Child, have you listened to anything I have said? Have you watched anything I have done?” I have heard those convicting words of Law from God and from other Christians. There is no doubt I need to spend more time with Jesus in the Word to learn from Him as I listen to what He says and watch what He does. I feel a great amount of shame and guilt when I “Don't Get It” and act just like an enemy of God instead of a child of God. I begin to doubt my own faith, and I begin to doubt whether or not I am “good enough” to be a Christian.

But that is when Jesus comes to me once again through the Word with His great Gospel promises. He grabs me by the shoulders and says, “Didn't you hear what I said? YOUR SIN IS FORGIVEN! Didn't you see what I did? I LIVED, DIED, AND ROSE FOR YOU!” He reminds me of my baptism, feeds me with His Word, and shows me the life He has for me. I hope today that you can see all Jesus has done for you, and hear the great Gospel Promises He speaks to you.