



**Green Pond  
United Methodist**

## Study Guide

# Faith in the 5 Senses

Sept. 24, 2023  
“Listen & Hear the  
Lord is Good”

### **Opening Prayer:**

O Merciful and Loving God, We thank you for our sense of hearing that so often keeps us from danger and enables us to converse with our loved ones and friends. We thank you too for music and the way it can uplift our spirits and move us toward a deeper relationship with you. So often, you ask us to be still and listen for your voice, but we confess that we find it hard to be still. Listening well is hard. Speak to us once more, as we long to know how to live in your Kingdom, treasuring the weak and marginalized, over all the things the world tells us to value. Help us to truly listen and treasure one another's thoughts and stories as we learn together this week. In Christ's name, we pray. Amen.

### **Scripture:**

#### **Psalm 81:1-5a (NRSV)**

**Sing aloud to God our strength;  
shout for joy to the God of Jacob.  
Raise a song; sound the tambourine,  
the sweet lyre with the harp.  
Blow the trumpet at the new moon,  
at the full moon, on our festal day.  
For it is a statute for Israel,  
an ordinance of the God of Jacob.  
He made it a decree in Joseph,  
when he went out over the land of Egypt.**

#### **Mark 4:23-24 (NRSV)**

**23 If you have ears to hear, then hear!” 24 And he said to them, “Pay attention to what you hear; the measure you give will be the measure you get, and it will be added to you. 25 For to those who have, more will be given, and from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away.”**

#### **John 5:24-25 (NRSV)**

**24 “Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life. 25 Very truly I tell you, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live.**

## Introduction:

As we continue our study of “Faith in the Five Senses,” today we consider “hearing.” Hearing is what enables most of us to enjoy conversation, be warned of danger, and enjoy music. It’s also the sense we are most likely to lose as we age. In this study, we will explore why Jesus asks us over and over to “have ears to hear” in a spiritual sense. What is it that prevents us from hearing from God? What is God calling on each of us to hear? In a world full of noise and distractions, the practice of listening to one another and listening to God can be very challenging. In this study, we will explore how to be a better listener or “hearer” of God.

## Questions:

1. Pick just one song that you really love. It may be, but does not have to be a religious song or hymn. What is it you love most about this song?
2. First Kings 17 describes a crazy time when the prophet Elijah was literally running for his life. He had killed the false prophets and now Jezebel wanted to murder him. Elijah was disheartened. The “voices in his head” turned into a pity party, as he lamented his situation. Eventually, he safely reached a cave in Mt. Horeb. While in the quiet of the cave, Elijah heard from God. **Read 1 Kings 19:11-12.** What kind of “noise” makes it hard for you to hear from God?
3. **Read Mark 4:1-20.** The farmer scatters the seed generously, not knowing where the seed will land. Do you think the farmer’s actions are wise or foolish? Who does the farmer represent? As you consider the parable in our world today, what do you see as the rocky soil? The thorny soil? The good soil?
4. **Read Mark 4:21-25.** How is “hearing” like what happens to the seed in the soil? What does Jesus mean when he says, “the measure you give will be the measure you get”? Does that feel threatening to you or reassuring?
5. **Read Psalm 81:1-5a and Psalm 95:1-8.** Why do you think music has been a part of worship since ancient times? Music styles are often a source of contention in churches. As you study these passages, what do you think God cares most about when we worship?

## Application:

Put together a “playlist” of your favorite most uplifting songs—you can write them down or put them together on Spotify or another app. They may be different styles or similar, have Christian themes or not. If you have never done this before, aim for 10 songs. During the week, experiment with playing this music first thing in the morning, then maybe when you are driving, exercising, or times when you are bored or feeling low. Write down a few thoughts about when listening to music is most helpful to your spiritual life. How does music help you hear from God?