



The other day I was sitting in my living room doing my cross stitch embroidery. Apart from some cars driving past every now and then, it was all lovely and peaceful. Suddenly there was a loud noise from a pneumatic drill where a patch of the road was being dug up nearby. The noise was so loud that the vibrations caused one of the pictures on the wall to tilt at an angle. Shortly after that a car was driven past; the driver had the windows down and the noise from his music even drowned out the sound of the drill!

With the modern P.A. equipment the volume of music has increased dramatically over the years. Do you find that sometimes it is extremely difficult to find a spot where there is silence? I suppose that I am particularly aware of noise since I was brought up way out in the country where the only sounds you would hear would be:-



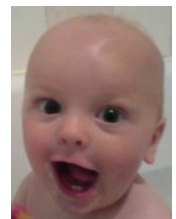
I have been thinking about God and silence. Sometimes we can pray and pray and pray about something and yet not get an answer to our prayers. This can often cause people to come to the conclusion that God is not listening or even maybe that God does not exist. I suppose that because He is God He can choose whether and when to answer. It can sometimes be quite a puzzle to us as to why God answers the prayers of some folk and remains silent to the requests of others.

We can read about Job in our Bibles, who was a very rich man who had a large family, servants and lots of animals. There came a day when all of them were destroyed and he himself was left very ill. He had a real pity-party but would not speak against God, even though he felt that God was not listening to him. His wife did not seem to share his very strong faith because she told him to curse God and die! After very little consolation from his three friends, God eventually talks to Job and Job replies by saying, "I know that you can do all things and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.....I had heard of you with my ears but now my eyes see you." Job's life had a happy ending because God restored to him twice as much as he had had before and he had more sons and daughters.

Someone else who had a time when he felt rather sorry for himself and that maybe God was silent and not listening to him, was Elijah. God's answer to Elijah was to send strong winds, an earthquake and a fire but still did not answer him. Then we read that God answered Elijah in a 'still small voice'. God probably answers our prayers in a 'still small voice' much more often than in a loud voice in the noise and bustle of our busy lives. The trouble is, we are often so busy that we do not always notice when God is trying to speak to us or show us something. It is not that God is silent and does not speak, but that we have not heard Him.



I have heard it said that God gave us two ears but only one mouth so that we are expected to listen to Him twice as long as we are expected to talk. Can I ask you to test something out? Next time you pray, notice how long you are talking and what length of time you are listening. Is your silent listening time twice as long as your talking time or is God not able to get a word in edgeways?????



Some modern equipment may be making sound louder but have you noticed that some of it is sending us into a world of silence? We are able to communicate by email very quickly - but there is no verbal conversation. Couples sit opposite each other in cafes but they spend their time texting others rather than having a conversation with the person sitting the other side of the table.



Taking more time to listen to God rather than filling it up with talking will reveal to us a God who is not silent but One who wishes to talk to us and guide us and who wants us to make use of the two ears that He has given to us.

Quotes:

The word 'listen' contains the same letters as 'silent'. Alfred Brendel

Listening to God is like listening to anyone – before you can hear Him, you must be ready to listen. Anon.

Related Bible readings:

Job 1: 13 – 22 Job's disasters

Job 42: 1 – 6 Job answers God

1 Kings 19: 9 – 15 God speaks to Elijah

Garden revamp: I recently wrote a Doodle about revamping my little garden. Here are a few pictures to show you the results!

