



Ghosted

Would you rather only be able to text, or only be able to talk on the phone?

There are an estimated 7.21 billion smart phones in use around the world. For reference, there's roughly 8.02 billion people on earth. It's no stretch to say people are more capable of communicating than ever before. We could also agree that we now expect a response almost instantly, like watching the little thinking bubble icon on messenger. There used to be so many factors contributing to communication that it wasn't uncommon for a message to not go through. Think of the Pony Express, delivering messages across the country from St. Joseph, Missouri. Nasty weather, hostile people, lame horses, dangerous animals, all inhibiting a message getting through. Sometimes in our lives, as well as our spiritual lives, we just can't get in touch with who we want. God can feel very mysterious and far away, yet other times you can just feel the Holy Spirit and talking with God is like talking to someone right beside you. The title of this sermon series was called "Ghosted" because we will all, at times, feel like God's just not answering us. So tonight we're going to talk about our role in this two-way communication with our God.

In the first week, we took a look at the first chapter of Malachi. Malachi was an Old Testament prophet who was relaying a warning to Israel from God. To sum it up, God had shown favor on the nation of Israel, yet the people were in spiritual decline. The priests were starting to offer unfit sacrifices. The people were beginning to forget the "why" behind their worship of God. After Malachi's prophecy, God's people wouldn't hear from God for 400 years. When we stop hearing from God we have to remind ourselves that God is steadfast.

So if God stays the same, what's changed on our end?

1.) The people of Israel were not giving God their best. Have you ever let a little spiritual laziness get in the way of your spiritual disciplines?

2.) How can remaining humble and thankful affect our relationship God?

In this next scripture we find Paul speaking before a council in Athens, Greece. Paul had recently departed from Silas & Timothy when troubles in other towns needed their attention. When Paul arrived in Athens he was troubled by all the idols he saw there. He then used some debates that aroused attention in order to teach the people how our God, The God who can't be seen, wants us to reach out to him.

Read Acts 17:22-28

At the end Paul uses a special Greek word to explain Gods intentions for us. The word is psēlaphaō (say-lah-fah-o). It means to handle, touch, feel, or Verify by contact. Mentally seek after tokens of a person or thing.

3.) We don't have to fully understand God to feel him, and it's definitely easier to hear him when we're not far apart. What do you do to feel closer to God?

Read John 10:25-30

Followers of Jesus(his sheep) hear his voice. A question we have to ask ourselves is if we're not hearing his voice, how closely are we following him?

4.) How can we make our communication a habit?

5.) Harboring hard feelings can put a lot of tension in a relationship. In most cases it will keep you from wanting to come to the table and talk. Have you ever let any resentments toward God push him away?

The last week we looked at the account of Mary and Martha.

Read Luke 10:38-42

When Jesus came to their home, Martha busied herself with all the housework, Mary however, sat at the feet of Jesus. Martha was distracted and probably didn't hear a word, yet Mary heard every word.

6.) It's hard to communicate with someone when they're distracted. What are some things, good or bad, that you find distracting you from talking to God?

7.) We can easily be distracted by our own wants and desires. Have you ever asked God for something, and maybe got a response you weren't expecting? How do you reconcile that?

Big Takeaway

- When we move closer to God, He makes His presence known to us.
- Seeking God helps us find the answers we are looking for.
- Stick with it & Remain Patient