

WARM-UP

- What song do you enjoy listening to? What do you like about the song?
- Who are the biggest influences in your life? Why do you listen to them?
- When you give advice or encouragement to others, how do they respond? Recall an instance explaining this.

WORD *“Draw near to me, hear this: from the beginning I have not spoken in secret, from the time it came to be I have been there.” And now the Lord God has sent me, and his Spirit.*

ISAIAH 48:16

(Read also **ISAIAH 48:12-15.**)

Getting to know a person involves drawing near and listening. If we were honest with ourselves, we would admit we are not very good listeners. Some would rather keep talking, while others may get easily distracted and would want to do something else with their time. We also get easily distracted and have an abundance of information available. In Isaiah 48:12-15, God is calling His people to listen and draw near to Him. He wants to be known. The infinite God wants to be intimate with His people. Today, we will look at His invitation and the benefits of drawing near to Him.

1 | We listen to God to know that He is in control.

"Listen to me, O Jacob, and Israel, whom I called! I am he; I am the first, and I am the last." **ISAIAH 48:12**

In the Bible, the word "listen" usually means focused attention. God invites us to actively listen to Him so we can know Him more. As we listen to Him fully and focus on His voice, we are reminded that He is the first and the last. That means He is powerful, trustworthy, and eternal. Whereas many things change and fade, God remains. Why do you think God wanted His people to know He is in control?

2 | We listen to God to know that He loves us.

"Assemble, all of you, and listen! Who among them has declared these things? The LORD loves him; he shall perform his purpose on Babylon, and his arm shall be against the Chaldeans." **ISAIAH 48:14**

God loves His people. Even our unfaithfulness does not nullify God's faithfulness. He fulfills His purpose and declares His love in word and deed. God's love makes a way for us to know Him. It also assures and satisfies us, knowing that His love for us will never fail. What was the apostle Paul's prayer for the church in Ephesians 3:14–19? How did he describe God's love?

3 | We listen to God to know that He is always near us.

“Draw near to me, hear this: from the beginning I have not spoken in secret, from the time it came to be I have been there.” And now the Lord God has sent me, and his Spirit. ISAIAH 48:16

God has been with His people from the beginning and reveals Himself as a faithful God without speaking in secret. Ever since, He has been seeking His people and calling them to Himself. He invites His people to draw near to Him and also promises to draw near to them (James 4:8). How does God invite you to draw near to Him every day?

APPLICATION

- How has listening to God affected your life? How can you draw near to Him every day?
- Take some time to reflect on the things you’ve been listening to. What are some new things you can do to listen to God’s voice more?
- Think of someone who needs to listen to God more. How can you help point him or her back to God this week?

