

Remnant Life Church

October 12, 2025

Is God Trying to Get Your Attention?

Acts 9:1-18

Have you ever considered the significance of how you are made?

- My undergraduate studies at Messiah included courses such as Kinesiology, Exercise and Movement, as well as Human Anatomy and Physiology
 - So, I have studied, at least in a small measure, the human body and how it works
- The human body, created by God is astounding
- A few amazing if not strange facts about the human body
 - i. The largest and longest bone is the femur
 - 1. From the hip to the knee joint
 - 2. And ounce for ounce it is stronger than steel in its ability to support weight
 - ii. Your eyes never change in size from the day you are born till the day you die
 - 1. But your ears and nose never stop growing
 - iii. It is impossible to keep your eyes open when you sneeze
 - 1. I know that many of you are going to want to make a note about that so you can try it and see if that is true
 - iv. In an average lifetime, a human will produce over 6000 gallons of saliva – enough to fill a 12'x 24' swimming pool
 - 1. Think about that mental picture the next time you are ready to jump in a pool
 - v. Finally, it only takes 17 muscles in your face to smile; but 43 muscles to frown
 - 1. So those of you who frown more than you smile, exercise is obviously your passion
- What about how the human body gathers information?
 - vi. The fact is we have 2 ears, 2 eyes, but only 1 mouth
 - vii. Perhaps that should tell us that we ought to listen and observe or watch twice as much as we talk
 - viii. But how many people that you know actually do that?
 - ix. I've known people who I was convinced had only half an ear but 15 mouths

The Bible would seem to support this ratio as well although to an even greater measure -

- The words “hear” and “listen” are found over 2100 times in the NIV version of the Bible
- The words “watch” or “see” found nearly 1500 times
- But the words “speak” or “talk” just over 500 times
- Utilizing this breakdown you should listen and watch 3 times more than you speak

This also addresses then how attentive we should be

- To focus on listening and watching means you are much more aware of what is going on around you
- To talk more than you should means your attention is primarily on yourself and what you are talking about
- Did you ever notice that most people who seem to be sort of clueless regarding their surroundings never seem to stop talking?

And so how attentive are you?

- a. Listening in your daily life is very important
 - i. When you are at work it is very important to listen closely if you are being given a work assignment
 - ii. Not paying attention has gotten many a person demoted or even fired
 - iii. Depending on the type of job you have, not paying attention to your surroundings can also be very dangerous
- b. It is certainly important to listen to your family
 - i. One of the great and consistent complaints in marriages is that the husband or wife does not listen
 1. Men I think this hits us more often because women generally value communication more than men do
 - a. And when we don't listen, we are often told about it
 2. Katerina and I were talking not long ago about this very thing, or something like that...I don't know, I really wasn't really paying attention (NOT TRUE!)
 - ii. And we need to listen to our children when they talk to us
 1. Just as they need to listen to us
 2. But what kind of an example do you set for listening
 3. Whistling to my boys

This morning, I would like for us to look at one of the most intense attention-getting stories in all the Bible

READ - Acts 9:1-18

- Saul of Tarsus was a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee
 - That means he was educated
 - We know that he studied under Gamaliel, one of the greatest scholars of Mosaic law of that day (**Acts 22:3**)
 - He likely came from a well to do family
 - He lived nearly parallel with the time of Jesus
 - Likely born some 5 or 6 years after
 - Saul would do almost anything to protect the Law and purity of Judaism
 - The greatest threat to that in his day was Christianity – at that time called “the Way”
 - Persecution (threats, jail, beatings; occasionally death - Stephen)

- He pursued those who were a threat to the Mosaic law way of life with letters from the priests authorizing him to do whatever he needed to do to accomplish his mission
- Similar to an arrest warrant which is why he was on the road to Damascus in the first place
- In **verse 4** we read that Saul literally got knocked down
 - That may seem to be a bit excessive but most people, at one time or another, have needed to get “knocked down” in order to get their attention
 - We all have many things our lives that occupy a great deal of our time
 - And perhaps a good question to ask yourself is are the things taking your time valuable, important, godly?
 - And perhaps the most important question is how much time does God have of your life?
 - IOW, does your attention need to be adjusted or redirected?
- I think for most people the reason we have such a difficult time giving our attention to God or even focusing on the things that are important is that we claim to be too busy
- But that is not something unique or only a 21st century problem

READ - Exodus 18:13-24

- Moses had an enormous amount of responsibility
 - There very well could have been in excess of 2 million people who left Egypt in the Exodus
 - And while Moses took his role of leadership very seriously, it soon overwhelmed him
 - That is no different than what many of you also experience though in not so grand a scale – but you have...
 - Responsibilities at work
 - At home
 - In your own personal life
 - God does not intend us to be overwhelmed
 - As a matter of fact the need for rest – physical, emotional, mental – is how God created us
 - I wonder this morning , has God been trying to get your attention but you’re just too busy, too overwhelmed to hear Him?
 - Make no mistake, God will not be ignored!
 - Moses showed great wisdom and listened to the council of his father-in-law
 - But the Apostle Paul needed something a little more dramatic to get him focused in the right direction
- We read in **Acts 9:8** Paul was physically blinded by the light of God
 - God will do what He has to do to get your attention
 - **Exodus 4** tells us that God got Moses’ attention with the burning bush

- Why a burning bush?
 - Growing up in the Pharaoh's courts in Egypt Moses had certainly seen physical manifestations by the magicians
 - To make a bush burn on its own was something that likely could have been manufactured by the court magicians
 - But a burning bush of fire that was not being consumed was something not even the sorcerers of that day could do
 - What is most important about Moses was that he heard the voice of God, listened, and obeyed to lead God's people out of slavery
 - And he did it again later when God sent his father-in-law to give him wise counsel
- Jonah was also a prophet of God
 - God gave him an assignment, but one he did not want to do and he mistakenly thought he could outrun God
 - As a result – he was given 3 days, alone, to fast and pray
 - And not in a very comfortable place
 - God disciplined Jonah but he also showed him mercy
 - Because God will not be ignored
- Paul has been blinded, he is led to the city, taken in by a man named Judas and prayed for by Ananias, he is healed and commissioned to preach the Gospel of the One he had been vigorously opposing
- Consider what Paul endured in order for God to get his attention
 - Blinded – God took away his independence
 - There are times when God will remove our capabilities from us for a time so that we recognize how weak and needy we are
 - Pride demands to be fed and that is done most often by what we have accomplished and what we are “good” at
 - *Eph 4:7 - But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.*
 - While Paul is referencing grace in this verse
 - You can also apply this to every aspect of your life
 - We have been given by God all that we have in our lives as well as all that we are able to do
 - Without Him we are and have nothing of value
 - This was the first thing Paul needed to learn
 - Paul is then led to the city
 - Paul's lessons in humility continue
 - He is now fully dependent on someone else
 - Nothing will destroy the pride in someone's life than to be wholly and completely dependent on others
 - When you can't up, can't move around you quickly realize how helpless you become

- But the lesson is a valuable one and many of those God called to serve Him in the Bible had to learn that lesson first
- Taken in by Judas and prayed for healing by Ananias
 - Paul is not only dependent on others, but he is dependent on the very people he came to arrest and persecute
 - Paul was blind for 3 days
 - What is the significance of that time period?
 - Jonah in the belly of the fish for 3 days
 - Abraham traveled with Isaac for 3 days to reach the place where God said he was to sacrifice his son
 - Jesus rose on the 3rd day
 - In each of those events, something significant changed after the third day
 - Jonah preached a revival message that changed an entire city
 - God poured Himself onto Abraham after he proved his faithfulness even to the point of being willing to sacrifice his son
 - And a new nation was born
 - Jesus changed the course of all of history and all of eternity
- Saul was not only healed he was commissioned
 - God gave him his assignment
 - Unlike Jonah he did not run away but toward what God wanted from him
 - He started to preach at once! (9:20)
- Has life become too busy for you to hear God's voice?

In **John 10** Jesus is teaching the people about His relationship with them and the Father using the analogy of shepherd and sheep – a concept they would be able to easily understand

- **John 10:2-5** - *The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.*
 - **John 10:11** - *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep..."*
 - **John 10:14-15** - *"I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep."*
 - **John 10:27** - *My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.*
- How do the sheep know the voice of the shepherd?
 - By being near him
 - By listening for it
 - By being familiar with it