

A man went to the doctors to get some advice about his wife. He said, "My wife doesn't hear me, and she refuses to get her hearing checked. What can I do about this?" The doctor said "When she is not looking, say something to her and see if she hears you. Then see how close you have to get before she hears you. Let me know what happens."

So the man went home and into the kitchen. His wife was at the kitchen counter getting dinner ready with her back to him. He stood at the far end of the kitchen, and asked in a reasonable voice, "What's for dinner tonight, honey?" As usual, she didn't respond. So he took a few steps closer and said again "What's for dinner tonight, honey?" Again, no response. So he gets right up behind her and shouts, "What's for dinner tonight, honey?" At this point she flinches, clenches her ears, turns around, and says "For the THIRD time, it's Beef Stew!!!!"

Hearing and speaking to God

Everyone wants to know what others truly think and feel, and we want others to know what we think and feel. How many people are there in marriages or relationships who feel like they either don't know what the other person is thinking and feeling, or don't feel like they are being heard? How many feel like this at work (bosses and colleagues), our families, friends, and when we are out and about? How many people feel that God always hears and speaks to us, and/or know how we can hear and speak to God?

In the Gospel, Jesus makes a deaf person hear and speak. Jesus enables that person to hear and speak with other people and with God.

I believe there is someone here who is so lonely. They are desperate to be heard and to speak with God. The Good News is, you can. No matter how "religious" or "not-religious" you are. In Jesus, you can KNOW that God hears and speaks to you; you can KNOW you can hear and speak to God.

Don't take my word for it. In a moment, I'm going to invite Laura / Anna / Maiya to come forward to give their testimonial (testimony) about their experience at alpha. Alpha is a place to explore freely (open discussion and no cost) who Jesus is. People can freely *hear* about Jesus, *hear* what other people think/feel about Jesus, and learn how to *hear* and *speak* with Jesus personally.

It's not easy to speak publicly about this very personal experience, so I can invite you to give Laura / Anna / Maiya encouragement as they come forward now.

Thank you Laura / Anna / Maiya.

I want to honour the bravery to give their testimony.

Prayer

Lord, thank you that in Jesus, I know that I can speak with you and you hear me.

Thank you for speaking with me, and that I can hear you.

Jesus, come into my heart now.

Hear what I am saying to you.

Let me hear you speak to me.

Help me to listen and speak to others with the same love and compassion.

In Jesus' name, amen!