

Listening  
*to* God  
*Day by Day*

SHARON JAYNES



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## LISTENING TO GOD DAY BY DAY

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# Old Enough to Learn

*Teach me your way, O LORD,  
and I will walk in your truth.*

PSALM 86:11

The little girl bounced up and down, trying to see over the bank counter as her daddy made a deposit. She was about three feet tall and not quite big enough to get a clear view.

“How old are you?” the teller asked.

The little girl stood up straight and tall and said, “I’m four years old, and next year I’m going to be five, and then I’ll be old enough to learn!”

Of course we know she’d been learning her entire life. Being five just meant she could go to school.

Then God reminded me that sometimes His children put off learning about Him until...well, later. When the kids go off the school. When a big project is completed. When retirement rolls around. But the time for learning about God is *now*. All day God speaks to us through creation, other people, and our circumstances, but the primary way we learn about Him is through the pages of the Bible. He has written us an incredible love letter filled with precious promises, comforting commands, and godly guidelines just waiting to be discovered. The Hebrew word for “Bible” actually means, “The calling out of God.” He is calling out to us from the pages of our Bibles. And we’re never too young or too old to learn.

Because you’re holding this book in your hand, I’m thinking you have decided that now is the time to learn. I’m right there with you, locking arms with you in this journey to become a woman who listens to God day by day to discover the abundant life Jesus came to give.



*Dear Lord, thank You for teaching me. Help me to become a diligent student of Your Word who uncovers treasures on every page of Scripture. Open my eyes to discover Your truths and my heart to apply them. In Jesus' name, amen.*

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE READING: PSALM 86:1-17

## The Spelling Train

*When I am weak, then I am strong.*

2 CORINTHIANS 12:10

**M**y hands were clammy. Beads of sweat formed on my brow. A familiar knot in the pit of my stomach threatened to push me toward the restroom, and my dry tongue began cleave to the roof of my mouth. It was 10:25 a.m. In just five more minutes the dreaded event would begin.

When I was in the first grade, the one academic exercise I feared more than any other was the spelling train. It was sheer torture—at least for me.

“Okay, students,” Mrs. March would say. “Everyone pick up your chairs and move them over to the chalkboard. It’s time for the spelling train.”

Twenty first graders slipped their munchkin-sized chairs from their desks to form a semi-circle around our chief engineer. I always put mine at the end.

“Now remember the rules,” she explained. “I am going to hold up a flash card. If you read the word correctly, you get to go to the front of the train. If you miss it, you have to go to the caboose.”

She held up the cards one by one, and the class chugged along at a quick pace. Dog. Sally. Dick. Jane. Spot. Red. Blue. Mother. Stop. Run. Then it was my turn.

“Sharon, what is this word?”

Pause. Giggles.

Well, more often than not I had no idea. And when that happened, I would either guess wrong or sit in silence. I spent most of my time in the first grade spelling train in the caboose.

As the year progressed, I did move up into the passenger cars a few times, but usually I didn’t stay there long enough to keep the seat warm.

There was one particular word that kept me from ever visiting the front of the train: T-h-e. So Mrs. March decided she was going to help me. For two weeks she made me wear a name tag that read “THE” plastered on my chest like the scarlet letter. I can still remember kids coming up to me on the playground, pointing at THE on my chest, and saying, “Hey, what’s that? Why are you wearing that? Is your name The? Are you stupid?”

Eventually I did learn how to spell the word t-h-e, but that’s not all I learned. I learned that I was stupid, not as smart as everybody else, and just not good enough. But you know what? That wasn’t true. Those were lies from the enemy. And it took many years for God to hold me by the hand and help me see myself as He sees me: a uniquely created, dearly loved, completely forgiven, and totally accepted child of God who is capable of doing everything He has called me to do by the power of the Holy Spirit.

That was more than forty years ago, and now one of my greatest joys is stringing written words together. I’ve noticed that life has many unusual twists and turns when God is at the helm. He takes our greatest weaknesses and turns them into our grandest strengths. That’s what happens when we turn our lives over to Him—we get out of the caboose and get to ride up with the Chief Engineer to places we never imagined possible. When we are weak, then He is strong.

Where are you in the train of life right now? If you’re hiding in the caboose, listen closely and you just might hear God calling you up front where you belong.



*Dear Heavenly Father, it’s amazing to think of all You have done in my life. You have taken my greatest weaknesses and turned them into my greatest strengths. When I am weak, through the power of the Holy Spirit I am strong. Thank You for working in me and through me. And help me never to believe the lies of the enemy that say “I’m not enough” again. In Jesus’ name, amen.*

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE READING: 2 CORINTHIANS 11:1–12:10