

Romans 10:17 - So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

This morning, Catherine led our team in a time of preparation focused on hearing the voice of God. God speaks to us in many ways: through His written Word, the Bible; through circumstances in our lives and in elements of nature; through other believers in Christ; through His still small voice that we know to be the Holy Spirit. But we must choose to act on what we hear in order to increase in faith, which is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things unseen.

The Hebrew word meaning "to hear," *shema*, also means to obey. In other words, we don't just let God's word drift into our ears, but we take action and do what He says. Our scripture for today, "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God," implies that faith is the active by-product of listening to God's word, however He chooses to express it.

One of the most graphic illustrations I have ever experienced of this truth happened in early March of this year. As many of you know, I was in the process of being diagnosed with a significant recurrence of endometrial cancer - and I was tempted to fall into fear. But one night as I was soundly asleep, with a Christian radio station playing very quietly next to my bed, the Holy Spirit quickened my spirit at the exact moment to hear these words being read at 3:33 am: "The punishment that purchased our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed."

These words from Isaiah 53:5 were life to me and I nearly catapulted out of bed! I wept and laughed and praised God, for His word that I heard and trusted had brought faith to see me through whatever I would encounter. Faith came by hearing the word of God and trusting that it was and is true.

Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts; let the voice of Truth move you to a place of greater faith. Let your faith find a resting place, near to the heart of God.