



It's Not About the Nail

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Over 18 million people have seen this [video](#) since 2013, but I saw it for the first time this week. You have probably seen it, too. In this YouTube video, a woman with a nail in her forehead, is talking to her husband, about the pain and pressure she is feeling and how she can't sleep, how she doesn't know if the feelings are ever gonna stop. He seems to listen to her for as long as he can, but 30 seconds into the video, he says, slowly, "You have a nail in your head." Frustrated, she responds, "[it's not about the nail!](#)" She tells him he should stop trying to fix it, just listen. There is some anger and frustration, but it is a great depiction of how we communicate. In total, the video is 1 minute and 41 seconds, but many thoughts crossed my mind. One thing I thought about was the scripture advising us to "be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry." (James 1:19)

The maker of the video, Jason Headly, posted a short comment, "Don't try to fix it. I just need you to listen.' Every man has heard these words. And they are the law of the land. No matter what." I know that there exist differences in how men and women communicate, but I don't think the need to be heard is solely feminine. Years ago, an uncited study revealed that women speak an average of 20,000 words per day compared to men's 7,000. [Newer research](#) casts doubt on these numbers, indicating that we could speak more similar numbers of words per day, depending on our setting. I believe men need to be heard, too, they have things on their chest, and they need a good listening ear--they just don't want to share it when the game is on.

To be a good friend, we must be a good listener. To be a good spouse, we must be a good friend. Even when the solution is obvious, we must maintain our listening ear. This is hard for man--and by *man*, I mean woman, too! I did a Google search for how to be a better listener, and found the following [tips](#).

- Listen to learn, not just to be polite. If we are truly a friend, we must be committed to the investment of time it takes to listen.
- Quiet your agenda. Listening is a time commitment; we must focus on the person speaking and quiet our own thoughts (and phone) while we listen.
- Ask Questions. To truly engage, we must ask clarifying questions repeating back what you heard, "so what I hear you saying is..."
- Wait until they are done before you respond. When we do this we have the whole story, not just the main idea.

The Bible tells us to pray without ceasing. (1 Thessalonians 5:17) When we talk to the Lord, we know He is listening. We know He has the solution. We know He knows our heart. We must be careful, however, that we do not continue talking when we should be listening for His gentle whisper. (1 Kings 19:12)

A few more scriptures about listening:

~Psalm 18:6

In my distress I called to the Lord; I cried to my God for help.
From his temple he heard my voice; my cry came before him, into his ears.

~Psalm 5:3

In the morning, Lord, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly.

~Jeremiah 33:3

Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.'

~1 John 5:14

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us.

AMEN!

Have a blessed week!

Kim