

## *Hearing*

*“Ears to hear and eyes to see – both are gifts from the Lord.” Proverbs 20:12 NLT*

We’ve all said it, “He hears when he wants to hear.” Sometimes people seem to hear and understand without difficulty and other times they seem not to hear anything. We often assume that it is selective listening but it is usually more than just ‘not listening.’

When hearing is lost, a great deal of energy and time goes into trying to understand what is being said. A person can be totally exhausted by the end of a day spent struggling to hear. Hearing aids help make conversation better – not perfect. Even with hearing aids some things will be missed. Most people with good hearing miss things but fill in the blanks. To ensure that one who doesn’t hear well, will hear what you say: Face them so they can see your lips and your facial expression – be sure the light is not behind you as your face will be in the shadows

Try to eliminate as much extraneous noise as possible

Don’t shout – use a normal voice

Try not to drop your voice at the end of a sentence

Enunciate your words without exaggerating them

Remember that speaking rapidly makes you difficult to understand so slow down

When you are not being understood, try rephrasing what you are saying. It often gives more clues to meaning.

Don’t say “Never mind; it wasn’t important.” The person might feel that they are not important enough for you to repeat the statement.

Hearing impairment is complex. Get a person’s attention first and you have a better chance of being understood. Be patient and keep trying. If the hearing impaired appear aloof or disinterested, they may not be aware of your presence or be able to understand what you are saying. Don’t assume that hearing aids will help since adjusting to them can be difficult. This especially impacts older people who have lived in a very quiet world for a long time and suddenly experience painful, loud, and disruptive noise. Time and patience are needed to make the adjustment as the person must gradually increase both the wearing time and noise level before being comfortable with the aids.

If you are having difficulty hearing, ask for help. God is good and has provided many advances to help the hearing impaired. There may be no need to be isolated by hearing loss. Check with your doctor.

*(Source: National Institutes of Health [www.nih.gov/](http://www.nih.gov/))*

*References / Resources:*

<http://nihseniorhealth.gov/hearingloss/toc.html> - National Institute of Health – consumer information on hearing issues

[www.nia.nih.gov/HealthInformation/Publications/hearing.htm](http://www.nia.nih.gov/HealthInformation/Publications/hearing.htm) - National Institute on Aging – fact sheets on hearing problems

[www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/hearing/hearingaid.asp](http://www.nidcd.nih.gov/health/hearing/hearingaid.asp) - National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication disorders – information on hearing aids

[www.agbell.org](http://www.agbell.org) - Alexander Graham Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing – information for parents, professionals, and adults on hearing detection, advocacy, client information, and insurance issues

