

Listen

Or Hear With...

Your heart. I discovered long ago the best way for one to obtain business for one's company, was to listen to the customer. I was not the type of salesperson after my first year or two that 'pitched' what my company had to offer. Customers or potential customers already knew who the world's largest paper company was. So instead of 'selling', I listened. I wanted to find out if the customer had a problem that needed solving. I was unbelievably graced to have as a partner in the business who was the most creative designer ever. For about two years he and I roamed Michigan listening and solving. He is still my best friend and a brother after forty-six years. He painted the cover for the book 'Faithful', the transcription of an interview my Dad gave in 1981.

Today, my full time job is different. It's about physical therapy on a daily basis, supervised two to three days a week because we do 'stuff' that goes with the line, "Do not try this at home!" It's about belonging to a support group for Parkinson's patients (I NEVER liked support groups until this one!) It provides a tremendous opportunity to listen to people who are really hurting, or their caregivers that may be hurting even more, because they feel powerless to help so many times. It's about being an errand boy for others. It's about saying yes when somebody asks a favor. Every time you are physically capable.

As I make my way from appointment to appointment in (gasp) 'town', many times you run into people who just want to start a conversation. I used to be polite but then move on somewhat quickly because I was 'so busy'. Then I learned (again) you are never too busy to stop and listen to a person's story. So the goal in life is to listen to other people.

With not just your ears but your heart.

We are here for two reasons. To love our Lord in all His magnificent Triune-ness. And to love every single one created in His Image in Likeness, every one of us, whatever 'kind' we are.

When you listen to a person with your heart, you automatically love them.

And what is more important than that?

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Footnote: I found this quote in the book *Welcome to the Secular Order of the Discalced Carmelites*, page 116. Whoever wrote or said it does not lay claim to it. It is the last quote in the book.

The justice that exists in the Bible is not the justice that you and I say, as Americans, when we say justice is going to be done. We mean justice as punishment. We mean justice as revenge. This is not at all evangelical. This is not at all spiritual... Justice is to lookout for the poor, justice is to make sure people eat, justice is to make sure people are clothed, justice is to make sure people have what they need to be human and to live humanely. Justice is to forgive. Justice is to love.

And I would add... Justice is to listen.