

Sermon by Bob Brown on Sunday AM 12/7/08
Whispered Promises Jeremiah 29:11-12

Many years ago Maria and I learned a startling, yet valuable lesson in parenting. We, as all parents do, tried everything we could to get our children to listen to our godly advice and obey us, knowing that the fifth of the Ten Commandments says in **Exodus 20:12**, "*Honor your father and mother so that you may live long in the land your God is giving you.*" As with all parents, our motives were pure, thinking only of the spiritual growth of our precious children.

Yet, we found ourselves somewhat exasperated at times and raising our voices over the clamor of their combined voices, in order to get their attention. It worked for a while, we (mostly me) would yell; they would get scared and stop their obvious disobedience. But after a while we found that yelling didn't work, they seemed to be able to yell louder and not hear us.

Then we discovered a mysterious, biblical answer to all of our problems. If we lowered our voices to a whisper, suddenly the stillness became almost deafening. Children, who had not seemed to hear our voices in years, now developed super-hero hearing. They could hear us whispering three rooms away with two doors shut!

They now behaved much better, knowing what our planned punishment for their brazen acts of disobedience would be. But there were also now no surprises at birthdays or Christmas, when we whispered, they heard it all. Apparently God had created our children with a special ability to hear the still, small, voices around them.

This really should be no surprise to us, God has instilled this special ability to hear His voice, in the midst of all the noise around us. Look at this passage from **1 Kings 19:11-12**. God is speaking to Elijah who has just single-handedly defeated 450 prophets of the devil, and now he is afraid of one woman, so he ran to Mt. Horeb, where God speaks to him. "*Then he was told, Go stand on the mountain at attention before God. God will pass by. A hurricane wind ripped through the mountain and shattered the rocks before God, but God wasn't found in the wind; after the wind an earthquake, but God wasn't in the earthquake; after the earthquake fire, but God wasn't in the fire; and after the fire a gentle and quiet whisper. When Elijah heard the quiet voice, he muffled his face with his great cloak, went to the mouth of the cave, and stood there. A quiet voice asked, So Elijah, now tell me, what are you doing here?*" (MSG)

Isn't it interesting that for us, those who say we know the Word of God, who know Jesus personally, that we have to keep being reminded of the verses that we started with this morning, **Jeremiah 29:11-12**, "*For I*

