

Devotion, Week of June 14, 2026

Rev. Jeanne Simpson

We looked at the “*Shema*” in Sunday School this past week. It is “Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone,” from Deuteronomy 6:4. The word “hear” in Hebrew is “*shema*.” The author of our study book said this: “Hearing is critical to the life of faith, even more important than seeing, as the apostle Paul noted when he said, “faith comes from what is heard.”

Well, that sorta bothered me. Why is hearing more important than seeing? I’m reminded of Thomas, who said he would not believe that Christ had appeared post resurrection unless he saw the wounds in his hands and feet. And Jesus came back to that upper room to show him! Christ performed miracles of healing, brought people back from the dead, fed the 5,000 – these were all signs that involved seeing. I almost always do better when I can see something as well as hear it. I trust my sight better than I trust my hearing.

Is hearing more important because we can’t see God? Is it because God spoke the world into existence? Or because Jesus emphasized believing the word, not just looking for visual special effects? He tells Thomas, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.” John tells us that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. We read the Bible for guidance and inspiration. We have no physical manifestation of Jesus anymore to personally guide us. So maybe hearing is a more constant presence than seeing.

I do know that when I look at the world around me – the birds, flowers, clouds, and lakes - I see evidence of God’s creation. But I read and hear and preach the written Word of God, so I will continue to appreciate both gifts of seeing and hearing.

Jeanne