

Friendship Deeds, From A-Z



Understand With A Listening Ear!

Proverbs 18:2

***“A foolish person doesn’t want to understand.
He takes delight in saying only what he thinks.”***

Do you remember going to the doctor for your yearly well-checkup—you know, the one where you get shots if you need them, get your vision and hearing checked and so on....? Well, think back to the hearing test: the nurse puts headphones on you and asks you to raise your hand or push a button every time you hear it beep. Sometimes you even get to repeat two-syllable words or move on to a room where they can test you even more thoroughly with soft sounds and louder sounds. Whatever the case, you pay close attention so that you can hear and pass the test, right?

When was the last time you had a hearing test with your friends and family-- Not by raising your hand when they speak, but by REALLY listening to them? I guess the real question is, do you want to understand them, or do you care more about being understood yourself? Ouch! The verse above, as well as many other verses in the Bible encourage you to put others first, and that means in your conversations, too!

Do you know how to become a better listener? One way is by looking the person in the eye when they are talking. Another way is by letting him finish his sentence before you chime in. Also, asking someone questions about what she just said will help you understand her better. Finally, take a moment to think before you respond to what your friend just said. You don’t always have to agree or disagree with their conversation, and you don’t always have to respond to them. James 1:19 writes that *“everyone should be quick to listen and slow to speak.”* As you do this, the Holy Spirit will lead you in your words.

The letter “U” to Understand is one of the most difficult letters of all, but once again, if you go back to letter “A” and ask for the Lord’s help, He will help you--and no one understands you OR your friends better than He does.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Do not depend on your own understanding. In all your ways remember Him. Then He will make your paths smooth and straight.”

Proverbs 3:5-6

Discuss the following questions with your parent/s:

1. Do you think you listen well to your friends and family? If so, can you write down 3 things each of them said in your last conversation with them?
2. Do you look people in the eye when they talk to you? Think of a person other than family that you talked to today....what color was his or her eyes?
3. How do you feel when you are talking and no one seems to be listening?

Even if you’re still stuck on “U,” “V” will help you understand better, too!