



ordinary  
time



lectionary  
reading

## Cycle C

### Third Sunday of Ordinary Time

Lectionary #69

#### Reading I: Nehemiah 8: 2-4a, 5-6, 9-10

As the people of Israel come out of exile in Babylon, they wish to hear the Law of Moses. In this passage, we see that the people have opened their hearts in prayer with a renewed **attentiveness** to God's law. The people are so **attentive** that they weep because of their past sins and because they have realized that the law was given to them not as a punishment but so that they can be taught and led. We experience this need to be **attentive** so that we can also hear, learn, seek to change our behaviors, and be joyful for the opportunities that we are given.

#### Reading 2: 1 Corinthians 12: 12-30

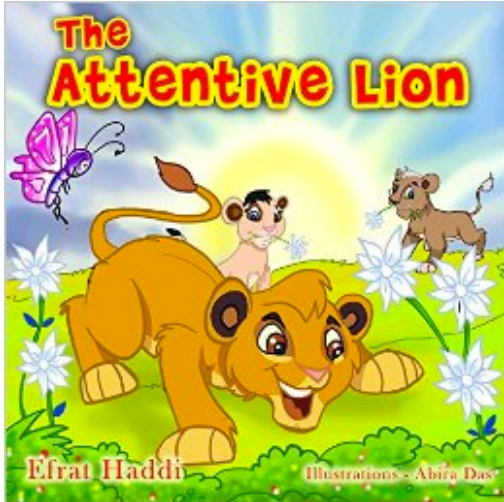
In today's passage from 1 Corinthians, we meet a community that has been fractured through various controversies, including some individuals believing that their gifts are greater than the gifts of others. Saint Paul calls the community to be **attentive** to the richness that comes when all gifts are appreciated for the way that they build a community. He uses the analogy of the body by saying that many parts make up the body, and that none of these parts are greater than the others. Instead, they all are necessary for the body to function. He invites the community to be **attentive** to the collaboration that is needed for the healthy and holy function of any community founded in Christ's love.

#### Gospel: Luke 1: 1-4, 4: 14-21

In today's Gospel, Saint Luke speaks about how he and many people have begun compiling a record of events to teach about Jesus Christ. Saint Luke invites the listener to be **attentive**, to listen not only with their ears but also with their heart. Later in today's Gospel, Jesus reads aloud from the scroll of Isaiah and announces words of great hope. He finishes the reading by saying *Today this Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing*, thus highlighting the importance of the **attentiveness** of those who listen to the Gospel.



children's  
story



### *The Attentive Lion*

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Illustrated by Abira Das

Publication: CreateSpace Independent  
Publishing Platform (Nov. 1, 2014)

ISBN-10: 1503052370

ISBN-13: 978-1503052376



character  
education  
activity

**Just remaining quietly in the  
presence of God, listening to  
God, being attentive to God,  
requires a lot of courage and  
know-how.**

**-Thomas Merton**

## The Attentive Lion

*The Attentive Lion* tells the story of a young lion named Leo who lives in Africa with his family and friends. Rose and Crown are two of his good friends who he loves to play with. However, Leo has a difficult time paying attention to his friends when they tell him things, such as how to get to the magical flowers at the top of the mountain. Throughout the story, Rose and Crown help Leo listen and be **attentive** to important instructions.

## The Rain Game

Step One: Explain how important it is to listen to instructions so that tasks can be accomplished. If possible, have the students sit in a circle. Have all the students rub their hands together for ten-seconds. Then, have the students snap their fingers for ten-seconds. In ten-second intervals, have the students clap softly, clap loudly, pat their chests, pat their legs, stomp their feet and clap their hands at the same time. Finally, invite the students to make crashing and whooshing noises with their mouths while they stomp their feet and clap their hands.

Step Two: Now, have the students stop making the noises with their mouths, then have them stop stomping, then have them stop clapping. Move backwards through the noises until the students are just rubbing their hands together again. At the end of the activity, explain to the students how they were able to create a rain storm by being **attentive** to the directions.

**Attentiveness is being  
heedful and carefully  
aware what is being  
said and showing care  
for the needs of others.**



**case study**

**Look.  
Feel.  
Know.  
Act.**

## What could you do today?

Learning to be still is something that requires patience and practice but that is beneficial for everyone. Try following these instructions, but be patient with yourself if you find that it is more difficult than you expected.

1. Sit as still as you can in a comfortable chair.
2. Center your attention on remaining still and monitor yourself to make sure you don't begin to move or fidget.
3. Try to remain still for three minutes, then take a break. Slowly increase the amount of time that you are sitting still until you are able to comfortably sit still for five minutes.
4. As you become more comfortable with this process, imagine that you are in the arms of God.
5. See this process as a way for you to be **attentive** to God speaking and being present with you. We are often so busy that we do not realize that God is always with us.

## Look Feel Know Act

When you are in the midst of a busy place, take a moment to notice all the things that you see, hear and observe with your senses. Oftentimes, we can feel just as chaotic and busy on the inside as things are when we're standing in a busy place. This business can make it difficult for us to enjoy the wonderful things that God has given us.

Make a conscious effort to see and hear what is going on around you. Try to concentrate on one thing at a time and focus on how God might be reaching out to you. During hectic times, take the opportunity to focus on one thing and feel God's nearness to you as you strive to be **attentive** to God and God's presence in all that you do. Try to make a daily effort to be **attentive** to God.

In the readings for this Sunday, we see how joyful people can become when they are **attentive** to God's messages for them, even if that message is one that challenges them to change. For example, in *The Attentive Lion*, Leo learns what can be accomplished if he listens and is **attentive**. Each day we can experience wonderful things if we are **attentive**, especially if we are **attentive** to God's word and presence in our lives.



closing  
tool

Loving God, open my ears and my heart so that I may truly listen to you. Help me to be attentive to your presence in my life in each and every part of my day. Amen.



**Santa Clara  
University**

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