

What makes the difference in reception? The answer is in the Lord's admonition to the disciples, "Take heed how ye hear" (Lk. 8:18). If you've been a Christian for fifteen-minutes (figuratively), you've most likely heard someone say, "I just don't get anything out of the sermon." The questions should be, "What did you bring to put it in?" Attitude toward the occasion is a major factor. Here are just a few factors to consider: the scriptures inform the disciple that...

1. "when ye received from us the word of the message, even the word of God, ye accepted it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God, which also worketh in you that believe" (1 Thess. 2:13). It matters little what the subject might be, the hearer, listener, or doer's reception thereof will affect the outcome. If an individual is interested in the subject then nothing will keep them from walking away from the experience having learned something.
2. "as newborn babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation; if ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious" (1 Pet. 2:2-3), and the disciple is assured of satisfaction: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." (Matt. 5:6). A proper desire will bring about positive results, i.e., "I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word" (Psa. 119:16).
3. "putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls" (Jam. 1:21). Jesus spoke of the necessity of having a mindset to receive that which has been sown: "And those are they that were sown upon the good ground; such as hear the word, and accept it, and bear fruit, thirtyfold, and sixtyfold, and a hundredfold" (Mk. 4:20).
4. The disciples "delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night" (Psa. 1:2). Approaching the word of God with delight will produce positive results. Reading the word of God with a mind ready to meditate thereon will see positive results: "I will meditate on thy precepts, And have respect unto thy ways" (Psa. 119:15).
5. A love for the word of God will produce positive results. David said, "Oh how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day" (Psa. 119:97). I've yet to find a man, who had a love for what he believed, that was not anxious to talk about it, and learn more of it.
6. A desire to obey what is right will have positive results: "For if any one is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a mirror: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth away, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But he that looketh into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and so continueth, being not a hearer that forgetteth but a doer that worketh, this man shall be blessed in his doing" (Jam. 1:23-25).
7. The problem of not getting anything out of the sermon, of not finding pleasure in worship, or not growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ is best summed up, in these words, "because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (2 Thess. 2:10).

Think on these things.