

## A Cricket in the City

Cleveland, Tennessee, is the last Eastern capital of the Cherokee Indians. The council house and grounds, from which the Cherokees conducted negotiations with the federal government to maintain their lands in the East, were located at Red Clay Springs, about 12 miles south of Life Care's corporate headquarters. It was from this site that the infamous Trail of Tears began.

As you would expect, there is Cherokee blood flowing in the veins of many people in our population today, and this area is proud of its Indian heritage. My interest was naturally attracted to a story that I came across recently about a Cherokee Indian in downtown New York City, walking with a friend who is a New Yorker. Suddenly the Cherokee said, "I hear a cricket."

"Oh, you're crazy," his friend replied.

"No, I hear a cricket. I do! I'm sure of it."

"It's the noon hour," the friend exclaimed. "There are people bustling around, cars honking, taxis squealing, noises from the city. I'm sure you can't hear it."

"I'm sure I do," the Indian insisted. He listened attentively and then walked to the corner, across the street, and looked all around. Finally, on the corner, he found a shrub in a large cement planter. He dug beneath the leaves and found a cricket. His friend was astonished.

But the Cherokee said, "No. My ears are no different from yours. It simply depends on what you are listening for. Here, let me show you."

He reached into his pocket and pulled out a handful of change -- a few quarters, some dimes, nickels and pennies. And he dropped the coins on the concrete. Every head within a block turned. "You see what I mean?" the Cherokee asked as he began picking up his change. "It all depends on what you are listening for."

And so, the natural question of the day is: To what are you attuned? Is it the ring of material gain, or the sweet melody of relationships?

Spiritually speaking, not only must Christians have "ears to hear" (Matthew 13:9), but they must learn what to listen for.

--Beecher Hunter