

Watch in the Ice House

In "Directions," author James Hamilton gives this account:

Before refrigerators, people used ice houses to preserve their food. Ice houses had thick walls, no windows and a tightly fitted door. In winter, when streams and lakes were frozen, large blocks of ice were cut, hauled to the ice houses and covered with sawdust. Often, the ice would last well into the summer.

One man lost a valuable watch while working in an ice house. He searched diligently for it, carefully raking through the sawdust, but didn't find it. His fellow workers also looked, but their efforts, too, proved futile.

A small boy who heard about the fruitless search slipped into the ice house during the noon hour and soon emerged with the watch. Amazed, the men asked him how he found it.

"I closed the door," the boy replied, "lay down in the sawdust, and kept very still. Soon I heard the watch ticking."

Hamilton's illustration is cause for reflection. Often the question is not whether God is speaking to us, but whether we are being still enough, and quiet enough, to hear.

--Beecher Hunter