

How to Hear God – 2

John 8:47

“He who is of God hears God’s words.”

The Bible says that those who are of God hear God’s voice. Yet, the number one question asked by believers is, “how can I hear God?” or “how can I tell that God is speaking to me?”

The facts are that God is not silent, has never been silent. It is His nature to speak.

- God speaks to our spirits. His Spirit bears witness with our spirit.
- In this new series will look at the ways God still speaks to His people today.

John 10:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

Some Christian leaders insist that God has stopped speaking today or only speaks through His word, the Bible.

Two things we need to settle

- Scripture is finished
- The Holy Spirit still guides and prompts, convicts and leads
- He may not speak audibly
- Yet He still speaks!

John 10:4 (NKJV)

⁴ And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

- When we enter into relationship with Jesus we instantly recognize His voice
- Even though we can pray instantly as believers, we can also learn to pray as we grow in our faith

As we mature we learn that it's less about giving God a list and more about hearing Him for direction, instruction, correction, etc.

1 John 5:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.

Every person who has ever heard the voice of God has had to act in faith

- See Hebrews 11 “hall of faith” Chapter
- And some of these people had Scripture too

Moses had the law

The New Testament believer's had the Law, Psalms and the Prophets

- They were constantly quoting from Scripture
- It is written, it is written, it is written
- Yet God spoke specifically to them beyond that
- Probably not in a loud, booming voice

Elijah's journey to Horeb (40 days on 2 meals)
Jezebel has just threatened to kill him

1 Kings 19:9–13 (NKJV)

⁹ And there he went into a cave, and spent the night in that place; and behold, the word of the LORD *came* to him, and He said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” ¹⁰ So he said, “I have been very zealous for the LORD God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life.” ¹¹ Then He said, “Go out, and stand on the mountain before the LORD.” And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, *but* the LORD *was* not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, *but* the LORD *was* not in the earthquake; ¹² and after the earthquake a fire, *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice. ¹³ So it was, when Elijah heard *it*, that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. Suddenly a voice *came* to him, and said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

- Not a booming voice
- Not a strong wind or earthquake
- Not in a fire
- A still, small voice – “a gentle whisper” Vs. 12 NIV

Look at Gideon

- God spoke to him
- He was so unsure if it was God he tested God twice by putting out a fleece
- His uncertainty is very clear

Judges 6:12–13 (NKJV)

¹² And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him, and said to him, “The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor!”

¹³ Gideon said to Him, “O my lord, if the LORD is with us, why then has all this happened to us? And where *are* all His miracles which our fathers told us about, saying, ‘Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?’ But now the LORD has forsaken us and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.”

- Gideon has questions
- If the Lord is with us, why?
- Where are the signs?

Judges 6:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Then the LORD turned to him and said, “Go in this might of yours, and you shall save Israel from the hand of the Midianites. Have I not sent you?”

- Gideon – I am the weakest, least likely
- Many of us question how God could use us
- That’s why it takes faith

Judges 6:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Then he said to Him, “If now I have found favor in Your sight, then show me a sign that it is You who talk with me.

- God probably didn’t speak with a loud, booming voice
- God probably spoke in a still, small voice
- Perhaps an impression upon Gideon’s heart
- Just like He does with us
- Whichever the case Gideon had to hear and trust God by faith

Gideon sets up an altar and worships and the Lord accepts his offering

- He destroys the altars of Baal
- He gathers the tribes of Israel together

Judges 6:36–40 (NKJV)

³⁶ So Gideon said to God, “If You will save Israel by my hand as You have said—³⁷ look, I shall put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor; if there is dew on the fleece only, and *it is* dry on all the ground, then I shall know that You will save Israel by my hand, as You have said.” ³⁸ And it was so.

When he rose early the next morning and squeezed the fleece together, he wrung the dew out of the fleece, a bowlful of water.

³⁹ Then Gideon said to God, “Do not be angry with me, but let me speak just once more: Let me test, I pray, just once more with the fleece; let it now be dry only on the fleece, but on all the ground let there be dew.” ⁴⁰ And God did so that night. It was dry on the fleece only, but there was dew on all the ground.

- You see this over and over again in scripture
- God calls His anointed
- They answer – by faith
- They worship and honor Him
- They have conversation
- The Lord answers and does mighty things through their obedience

When God speaks to you today it will probably not be with a loud, booming voice

Instead God will speak to you through the moving of the Holy Spirit

John 16:12–13 (NKJV)

¹² “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear *them* now. ¹³ However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

We must Learn to go to the Bible

Ultimately, God’s word shows us that He is a person

- In the Bible, God reveals His identity
- He reveals His love, grace and mercy for us
- He reveals His overall purpose and plan for our lives
- He reveals His character, intentions and actions
- How he walks, talks, moves, breathes
- How he acts when He moves on something
- If you want to get to know God you have to get to know the word
- God’s word will illuminate our way

Psalms 119:105 (NKJV)

¹⁰⁵ Your word *is* a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

- If we feel confused about our situation the first thing we must do is turn to the light of God’s word

God's word will overcome darkness in our lives

- If you have a problem with a specific sin or habit
- God's light will dispel darkness
- The Bible is the lamp that gets rid of the darkness

God's word saves us and cleanses us from sin, and His voice guides us in other areas as well

Have you ever lost something valuable?

- A friendship, a relationship, a marriage?
- An investment or your health?
- Have you lost direction or focus?
- Maybe one of your children or grandchildren have lost their way
- Maybe you're in a season of doubt or depression or grief
- Maybe your relationship with God isn't where it used to be
- Your faith feels lost

The answer when you need to move forward in life is God's word

Luke 15:8 (NKJV)

⁸“Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds *it*?

- Light the lamp of God's word
- Sweep your house
- Look in every nook and cranny
- You will find treasure in God's word

Do you need wisdom in life?

Daniel 12:3 (NIV)

³ Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

James 1:5 (NIV)

⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

Read the Bible with your heart wide-open in prayer and communion with the Holy Spirit

Read and pray at the same time

Joshua 1:7–8 (NKJV)

⁷ Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. ⁸ This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

- Meditate – run scripture through your mind and heart regularly
- God’s word cleanses our hearts and minds
- His word sheds light on and darkened corners or shady pathways

Many people will question if Gods word is for us
They say that it was for only those to whom it was given

Psalm 119:89 (NIV)

⁸⁹ Your word, LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.

Psalm 90:2 (NKJV)

² Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You *are* God.

- God is timeless and His word is eternal
- Even if it was written thousands of years ago
- It can still apply to you and I today

Malachi 3:6 (NKJV)

⁶ “For I *am* the LORD, I do not change.

Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV)

⁸ Jesus Christ *is* the same yesterday, today, and forever.

I am not saying that we don’t need to interpret scripture properly

The Bible can be both literal and metaphorical at the same time

- When Jesus turned the water into wine – **John 2:1-11**
- It truly happened
- That doesn’t mean He turns water to wine at our weddings
- It does show us that Jesus works miracles
- It also shows us “a way” in which he might work
- Jesus takes cold, dead cisterns and fills them with life

Logical steps for hearing God through His word

Enter God's Presence

Psalm 100:4 (NKJV)

⁴ Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, *and* into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, *and* bless His name.

- Yes, God is omnipresent
- The action of entering God's presence still applies
- Cultivate a “deliberate awareness” of the reality and nearness of God
- Find a place of peace and quiet
- Play some worship music
- Sing and pray and worship until you sense His presence

Philippians 4:6 (NKJV)

⁶ Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

- First: Pray, praise and worship
- Second: Ask
- If there's something on your heart tell Him about it
- If you have a request, make it
- If you want to talk about concerns, tell me
- Maybe right them down – keep a journal

Philippians 4:7 (NKJV)

⁷ and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Read in a logical place

I believe it is important to follow a daily bible reading plan to become familiar with scripture

- Also, ask the Lord what to read
- Bring Him into the conversation
- A scripture or book in the Bible might come to mind

Healing, finances, relationships, marriage

Maybe you're a woman with a challenge in your marriage

- Read about Abraham and Sarah – **Genesis 12 & 20**
- Abraham was godly yet, made many mistakes in marriage
- He lied twice about Sarah to save his own neck
- Yet Sarah still called him lord – **1 Peter 3:6**
- Ask: Lord what do you want me to see here?
- How should I apply this?

Maybe you're a man and your wife is nagging

- You read about Martha serving and complaining – **Luke 10**
 - Sometimes women who love Jesus get intense
- Husbands are told to love their wives – **Ephesians 5:25**
- You keep prayerfully reading
- Martha is also a woman of deep sorrow and concern over Lazarus – **John 11**
- You then read in **John 12** where Martha is still serving yet not complaining
- Holy Spirit – *“it's my job to grow your wife, it's your job to love her” “I've got this!”*

Get a word from God directly from Him to you

We must get out of the habit of wanting other people to hear from God for us

Story about moving our family to help plant a church
– Mario Murillo was preaching

“When will you stop relying on others to speak to you for me?”

James 1:5 (NKJV)

⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ Let us therefore come *boldly* to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

There are times we need to ask godly leaders for counsel, but if you want a word from the Lord, don't depend on anyone hearing that for you

- God is a good, wise father that loves for His children to come to Him
- He loves to guide and direct our paths

Psalms 119:32 (NIV)

³² I run in the path of your commands, for you have broadened my understanding.