

How to Hear God – 4

John 8:47

“He who is of God hears God’s words.”

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 – **John 16:12-13**
- 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.

Hearing God's Voice Through Worship

Exodus 25:22 (HCSB) Holman Christian Standard Bible

²² I will meet with you there above the mercy seat, between the two cherubim that are over the ark of the testimony; I will speak with you from there about all that I command you regarding the Israelites.

- Singing of songs is not merely the singing of songs
- It is not merely a “warm-up” for the sermon
- Singing is actually a vehicle by which we can worship the Lord and connect with His person
- Worship should never be treated as a routine exercise
- Worship can happen anywhere

Three Things That Happen When We Worship God

1 – God “Meets with us” and “Speaks with us”

2 – During Worship We Gain Perspective

Psalm 16:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Acts 3:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

3 – During Worship We Are Empowered and Receive Boldness

God can speak to us during times of worship

- When we enter His presence we get a fresh glimpse of Him
- When we worship the Lord we look intently at Him
- We see Him as He is
- We listen to His voice
- We learn from Him

Revelation 3:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

- Jesus is not talking about food
- He is talking about communion with God

We need to turn aside and draw near

Exodus 3:3–5 (NKJV)

The Angel of the Lord appears to Moses at Mt. Horeb as a flame of fire in a bush

³ Then Moses said, “I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn.” ⁴ So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.”

⁵ Then He said, “Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.”

- Stop what you’re doing and focus on God
- Our minds can wander
- We must focus our thoughts and hearts on God in worship

When we behold the Glory of the Lord it changes us

2 Corinthians 3:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.

- Set aside our thoughts of the world
- The project that's due
- What we heard on the news
- We hear best when we focus

When our kids were little, we would always get down to their level and make them look in our eyes when we had something important to teach them

When we are deliberate about setting in the Lord's presence we are much more likely inclined to listen to Him

Psalms 103:7 (NKJV)

⁷ He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel.

- To know God's ways, we must draw near
- Many times things in life don't make sense
- Challenges and difficulties can seem unfair
- If we are going to have the victory, we need to understand God's ways
- We need to see clearly, beyond the trouble we are facing

Psalm 73:1–3 (NKJV)

¹ Truly God *is* good to Israel, To such as are pure in heart. ² But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped. ³ For I *was* envious of the boastful, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

- They live painless lives
- Nothing bad ever happens to them
- Why am I keeping my heart pure?
- I get nothing but trouble all day long!

Psalm 73:17, 21-28 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end.

²¹ Thus my heart was grieved, And I was vexed in my mind. ²² I was so foolish and ignorant; I was *like* a beast before You. ²³ Nevertheless I *am* continually with You; You hold *me* by my right hand. ²⁴ You will guide me with Your counsel, And afterward receive me *to* glory. ²⁵ Whom have I in heaven *but* You? And *there is* none upon earth *that* I desire besides You. ²⁶ My flesh and my heart fail; But God *is* the strength of my heart and my portion forever. ²⁷ For indeed, those who are far from You shall perish; You have destroyed all those who desert You for harlotry. ²⁸ But *it is* good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, That I may declare all Your works.

- Worship is more than just singing songs
- Worship is an encounter with God
- It continues as we hear a message
- We see God for who He is and respond accordingly
- That's worship!

4 Practical Steps to Hear the General Word of God

1 – Set an appointment with God

How much time in your daily routine have you allotted for hearing God's voice?

If you want to hear God set an appointment with Him every day

- Schedule God in

We arrange our schedules around the things that are most important

- If it's important we make it a priority
- We schedule our most important meetings
- We schedule important phone calls
- We schedule vacations
- We schedule time with our...
 - Doctor, dentist, attorney, CPA
- When we schedule God in, it prioritizes Him

Exodus 19:10–11 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes. ¹¹ And let them be ready for the third day. For on the third day the LORD will come down upon Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.

- God is setting an appointment to meet with His people
- God comes to a prepared people in a prepared atmosphere
- He said, “Get them ready. In three days, let them hear the word of the Lord.”

Exodus 19:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice.

When you look through the Bible you will find that quite often when people had encounters with God, there was some preparation

Think about Church service

- What if no one greeted you?
- What if there wasn't anyone to take your kids to in Children's Church?
- What if there were no teachers?
- What if the lights weren't even on?

You come into the sanctuary

- No chairs were set up
- The worship team hadn't rehearsed
- No one had even picked songs to sing
- No one was qualified to run the soundboard
- There were no ushers to help you find a seat
- The pastor hadn't prepared a sermon

Certainly the Holy Spirit can work through anything, anywhere, anytime and anyplace

- The Holy Spirit is never disorganized
- He often works best through prepared soil

Order in Church Meetings

1 Corinthians 14:26, 33 (NKJV)

²⁶ How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification.

³³ For God is not *the author* of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

- This is a picture of organization and planning
- Everyone is prepared and orderly

If we don't set an appointment with God, then we'll miss our time with Him

- Pick the best time for you
- You want to be alert and give God your best
- It's more important that you spend time with God than what time you meet with Him
 - If you like mornings, set a morning appointment
 - Choose to meet with God at lunch time
 - Maybe after all the kids are in bed at night

Make it a consistent place

- A place of sanctuary
- A place where you can focus and not be interrupted

2 – Be Still and Worship

Psalm 46:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Be still, and know that I *am* God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!

- **ASV** – “*Cease striving and know that I am God*”
- Either version reflects a posture of listening with expectancy
- Casting our anxieties and fears at His feet

Psalm 55:22, 1 Peter 5:7 (NLT)

²² Give your burdens to the LORD, and he will take care of you. He will not permit the godly to slip and fall.

As the children of Israel are facing the Red Sea and the armies of Pharaoh are chasing close behind

Exodus 14:13–14 (NLT)

¹³ But Moses told the people, “Don’t be afraid. Just stand still and watch the LORD rescue you today. The Egyptians you see today will never be seen again. ¹⁴ The LORD himself will fight for you. Just stay calm.”

- Do not fear
- Stand still and watch God rescue you
- Just stay calm!

2 Chronicles 20

(3 armies are surrounding Israel)

- The people are terrified
- They stood before the Lord wondering what to do
- The Spirit of the Lord speaks through Jahaziel

2 Chronicles 20:15–17 (NIV)

¹⁵ He said: “Listen, King Jehoshaphat and all who live in Judah and Jerusalem! This is what the LORD says to you: ‘Do not be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. For the battle is not yours, but God’s. ¹⁶ Tomorrow march down against them. They will be climbing up by the Pass of Ziz, and you will find them at the end of the gorge in the Desert of Jeruel. ¹⁷ You will not have to fight this battle. Take up your positions; stand firm and see the deliverance the LORD will give you, Judah and Jerusalem. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged. Go out to face them tomorrow, and the LORD will be with you.’ ”

2 Chronicles 20:21–24 (NIV)

²¹ After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying: “Give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures forever.” ²² As they began to sing and praise, the LORD set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated. ²³ The Ammonites and Moabites rose up against the men from Mount Seir to destroy and annihilate them. After they finished slaughtering the men from Seir, they helped to destroy one another.

²⁴ When the men of Judah came to the place that overlooks the desert and looked toward the vast army, they saw only dead bodies lying on the ground; no one had escaped.

- That's the way to win a battle
- Lead everybody in singing and worshipping God
- God will take care of the rest

You see this same pattern in Acts 13 and 16

Acts 13:2 (NIV)

² While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

Acts 16:25–26 (NIV)

²⁵ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.

²⁶ Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose.

- Everyone fights battles
- In your health, job, family
- First – **stand** still!
- The Lord will bring freedom and deliverance
- The Holy Spirit will show you what to do

Set and appointment to meet with God

- Quiet your heart and worship
- Pray, read, reason and dialogue together

3 – Pray and Read

Mark 1:35 (NKJV)

³⁵ Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed.

Psalms 119:147 (NKJV)

¹⁴⁷ I rise before the dawning of the morning, and cry for help; I hope in Your word.

When we pray like this what do we pray for?

- Talk to God
- Read the Bible
- Pray what's on your heart
- The answer to your prayer is in God's word

2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NKJV)

¹⁶ All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

All scripture is inspired by God and good and useful for everything and anything

- Read the old testament
- Read the new testament
- Read from the Prophets or Psalms
- Read the Gospel
- Read a proverb a day

4 – Listen and Write

Listening to God is one of the hardest things to do
If we learn to listen, then we will learn to hear God's voice

When we write down thoughts and prayers we have a record

- It helps us pick up where we left off and move forward
- Helps us stay focused and discern which verse may apply to our situation
- Write down what you believe God's answers are from scripture
- You can look back and see how God has directed your life

1 Chronicles 28:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ “*All this,*” said David, “the LORD made me understand in writing, by *His* hand upon me, all the works of these plans.”

Habakkuk 2:2 (NKJV)

² Then the LORD answered me and said: “Write the vision and make *it* plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it.

Jeremiah 29:13 (NKJV)

¹³ And you will seek Me and find *Me*, when you search for Me with all your heart.

- Develop a regular time to meet with the Lord
- Set an appointment
- Be still and worship Him, pray and read the bible
- Write down your prayers
- Listen to His response