

How to Hear God – 6

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.

John 10:4, 27 (NKJV)

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

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

Two things we need to settle

- Scripture is finished
- The Holy Spirit still guides and prompts, convicts and leads
– John 16:12-13

4 Practical Steps to Hear the General Word of God

1 – Set an appointment with God

2 – Be Still and Worship

Psalms 46:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Be still, and know that I am God;

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

The bottom line is if we are going to hear God's voice we must value His voice

- We must listen closely to His words
- Remember them
- Act upon them in humility, faith and obedience

Are we good stewards of God's voice?

1 Corinthians 3:23 (NKJV)

²³ And you *are* Christ's, and Christ *is* God's.

- Our time, treasure, talents and even futures are not our own
- We have a responsibility to God and others for the way we live our lives

1 Peter 4:10 (ESV)

¹⁰ As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace:

Luke 12:35, 42-43, 45-46 (NLT)

³⁵ "Be *dressed for service* and keep your *lamps burning*,

⁴² And the Lord replied, "A faithful, sensible servant is one to whom the master can give the responsibility of managing his other household servants and feeding them. ⁴³ If the master returns and finds that the servant has done a good job, there will be a reward.

⁴⁵ But what if the servant thinks, 'My master won't be back for a while,' and he begins beating the other servants, partying, and getting drunk? ⁴⁶ The master will return unannounced and unexpected, and he will cut the servant in pieces and banish him with the unfaithful.

Mark 4:24 (NKJV)

²⁴ Then He said to them, “Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given.

- Good stewards of God’s words receive more of God’s words
- With the measure you use
- Am I using (living on) God’s word?

Three ways to be good stewards

1 – Am I truly listening to Him?

- We hear so much
- Words and songs from...
- TV commercials, the radio, the internet, movies, music
- It’s hard to discern what’s truly important and truly listen

In order to listen, it’s vital that we see *not only that* God speaks *but also how* He speaks

Ways God speaks

1 – Through circumstances

God spoke to Jonah first with His voice

- When he didn’t heed God used circumstances
- Swallowed by a fish, then a vine for shade that withered
- What’s happening in my life right now?
- What is the Lord telling me?

2 – God speaks through wise counsel

Look at the book of proverbs

Proverbs 12:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ The way of a fool *is* right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel *is* wise.

- God's counsel always compliments scripture
- When we seek godly mentors we don't ask them to hear God for us, but to confirm through wisdom what God has said

3 – He can speak through peace

Colossians 3:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ And let the peace of God **rule** in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.

- Rule doesn't just mean to exist
- It means to reign and be a deciding factor
- If you don't have His peace it isn't the Lord

4 – God can speak through others

1 Corinthians 14:3 (NKJV)

³ But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.

- God brings wise and godly people into our lives and speaks through them

5 – God can speak through dreams and visions

Acts 2:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ *‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams.*

- God spoke this way to Joseph, Solomon, Jacob, Peter, John and Paul
- He speaks to us today

6 – He can speak through our thoughts

Amos 4:13 (NLT)

¹³ For the LORD is the one who shaped the mountains, stirs up the winds, and reveals his thoughts to mankind.

- God spoke to Joseph as he thought about things
– Matt. 1:19-21
- Not every thought in our head is from God
 - Satan can speak through our thoughts
 - Sometimes we just have “Stinkin Thinkin”

When we get a thought take time to judge it!

- Does it align with scripture?
- Does it contradict the character of God?

7 – God can speak through natural manifestations

Romans 1:18–20 (NLT)

¹⁸ But God shows his anger from heaven against all sinful, wicked people who suppress the truth by their wickedness.*

¹⁹ They know the truth about God because he has made it obvious to them. ²⁰ For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God.

- His voice can be revealed through mountains, water, trees, meadows, landscapes and more
- When God spoke to Jesus from heaven many heard it as thunder – **John 12:27-30**

8 – God can speak through super-natural manifestations

He spoke to Moses in a burning bush – **Exodus 3:1-4**

He spoke to Gideon through a fleece – **Judges 6:37-40**

He spoke to Saul through a bright light – **Acts 9:1-5**

He even spoke to Balaam through a donkey – **Numbers 22:1-35**

9 – God speaks through the Bible

Hebrews 4:12 (NLT)

¹² For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.

- All scripture is inspired by Him – **2 Timothy 3:16**

10 – He speaks through a whisper – 1 Kings 19:12

If we are going to hear God *we have got to listen*
We need to tune in to heaven and hear what He is saying

Jeremiah 7:13 (CEV)

¹³ While you have been sinning, I have been trying to talk to you, but *you refuse to listen*.

- They did a number of wicked things
- God repeatedly spoke to them but they didn't listen

Romans 10:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

- If you've ever met a person of great faith, you've met a person of great hearing by the word of God
- We need to truly listen to God
- Once we hear from Him we need to act
- Have you heard the voice of the Lord?
- Now is the time to move with confidence and boldness

Ways to be Good Stewards

1 – *Am I truly listening to Him?*

2 – Am I responding to God's voice in humility

- We can respond in pride or with closed ears
- Sometimes we respond favorably but then the cares of life choke the word

Parable of the sower and the soils

Luke 8:4–15 (NKJV) (Matt. 13:1–23; Mark 4:1–20)

Luke 8:4

⁴ And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to Him from every city, He spoke by a parable:

- “A sower went out to sow his seed.”
- Some fell by the wayside and was eaten
- Some fell on rock, sprang up, yet withered lacking moisture
- Some fell among thorns which choked it
- Some fell on good soil – 30, 60, and 100 fold yield

Luke 8:11-15

¹¹ “Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

¹² Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. ¹³ But the ones on the rock *are those* who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. ¹⁴ Now the ones *that* fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. ¹⁵ But the ones *that* fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep *it* and bear fruit with patience.

- What kind of soil are you?
- Do you have thorns?
- Are you rocky?
- Are you parched and lacking spiritual nutrients?
- Are you receptive?

Luke 8:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him *more* will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him.”

- Jesus is saying, watch how we receive His word
- Make sure our ground is tilled and free of thorns
- Even what we think we have may be taken
- Plenty of Christians fail to produce abundant growth
- Unless we water and weed the word we are listening to, even the maturity that seems to be evident can be lost

The story of Joseph

- His two dreams may have been from God but his reactions may not have been
- He was proud and braggadocios
- We must be faithful with the revelation we receive
- He squandered his dreams
- Mary pondered her dreams – **Luke 2:19**
- His brothers sold him
- God never spoke to him in a dream again
- God is always the God of comeback yet it's important how we receive and react to God's words

James 4:6–7 (NKJV)

⁶ But He gives more grace. Therefore, He says: “*God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.*” ⁷ Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

3 – We are Good Stewards When We Heed God’s Words

Remember Jonah?

- He clearly heard from God yet ran from God’s word to him
- If you’re wondering did God speak to me, look carefully at your circumstances
- What was the last thing you sensed the Lord say?
- Were you obedient?
- Repent, stop going your own way
- Obedience is so important in the life of a believer
- I’m not talking about trying harder
- I’m talking about receiving grace for the journey
- Obedience is mandatory in God’s economy

John 14:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ “If you love Me, keep My commandments.

Luke 6:46 (NKJV)

⁴⁶ “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?

- The Holy Spirit ultimately makes us holy
- His work and power transform our lives
- Our job is to continually align ourselves with Him and yield ourselves to His work and power