

How to Hear God

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.

- Even though God warns us not to add or detract from the written word
- I believe God still speaks to His followers individually in their spirit
- He will never contradict His word, the Bible
- When God directed us to start this Church He spoke to my spirit

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!

“Friends, the good news is that we don’t need to go through life blindly. We don’t need to rely on our own understanding. That truth that God still speaks today offers us hope and reassurance and confidence. You can learn to hear God!”

—ROBERT MORRIS DALLAS, TEXAS

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
- We pray to Him
- He listens to us
- He speaks to us
- We listen to Him
- A very real dialogue

We are to live by every word that proceeds out of His mouth

Matthew 4:4 (NKJV)

⁴ But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.*’ ”

What is the main difference between a person who believes in Jesus Christ and one who doesn't?

- We have a personal relationship with Him
- It is like a relationship between a husband and wife
 - **Ephesians 5:22-33**
- A relationship must involve communication
- Communication cannot be one sided
- God speaks and the pattern is played out throughout scripture
 - Adam & Eve, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob
 - Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel
 - Deborah, Ruth, Mary, Peter, Paul, Jude, James and John
- A Christian can hear God's voice and discern God's will and direction for their life

Hearing God's voice is really a question of identity

- Who are you at your core?
- Hearing God's voice is not about something we do
- It's someone we are
- We are sheep
- Hearing God is about behavior
- A reflection of your identity

John 10:8, 10-11 (NKJV)

⁸ All who *ever* came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly. ¹¹ "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

Sheep by their very nature need a guide, it's something we are designed to do

John 10:1–5 (NKJV)

10 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. ² But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. ⁵ Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”

- Jesus enters the sheepfold by way of the door
- He doesn't sneak around and climb over the fence
- His identity is the good shepherd
- He has familiar and direct access to the sheep
- He speaks to us and we hear His voice
- He calls us by name
- It's something individual and all inclusive
- He leads them out
- He walks before them and they follow
- They wouldn't follow a robber because they wouldn't know his voice
- Not only for the Jews or early believers

John 10:16 (NKJV)

¹⁶ And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock *and* one shepherd.

Galatians 3:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

John 10:27 (NKJV)

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

Where does Jesus lead us?

Psalm 23

- To green pastures
- Provision and rest
- Safely through dark valleys (troubles and uncertainty)
- He goes before us with His rod and staff for guidance and comfort
- He prepares a bountiful feast in the presence of our enemies
- Right in the face of opposition
- Ultimately leads us to heaven to dwell with Him forever

Jesus is the good shepherd and we are the sheep

- He guides us with His voice
- We are to live listening to Jesus' voice
- Our life is dependent on hearing His voice regularly and clearly

Animals don't hear words but humans do

- We are born with the ability to speak and listen
- We are made in God's image
- To follow His leading
- Our ability is innate as well as learned
- God hears us as new believers
- Yet, the language of prayer deepens with maturity
 - As we study the word
 - As we listen to His direction
 - We pray and pray and pray
 - He speaks and speaks and speaks

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.

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.

- We gradually learn the ebbs and flows of listening
- It's like any relationship

Everyone has major decisions to make in life and we need to hear God

He will give us general counsel as well as specific counsel

Why hear from God?

John 15:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.

- God desires a friendship that is close and intimate
- Not just casual friends
- He is not some great cosmic Santa Claus
- He wants to get to know us
- He desires for us to get to know Him

Psalms 37:4-5 (NKJV)

⁴ **Delight** yourself also in the LORD, and He shall give you the **desires** of your heart.

⁵ Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He shall bring *it* to pass.

- It's not just about "How to hear God"
- But rather, "Why hear from God?"
- What is your motivation?

Never forget our relationship with God should never be casual or irreverent

- We are not equals
- God is higher than anything we can think of
- Superior, immense and unequalled
- God is both high above all
- As well as "God with us"

Psalm 97:9 (NKJV)

⁹ For You, LORD, *are* most high above all the earth; You are exalted far above all gods.

Isaiah 55:9 (NKJV)

⁹ “For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.

Matthew 1:23 (NKJV)

²³ “*Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,*” which is translated, “God with us.”

- Our relationship with God is one of transcendence and immanence
- The most powerful being in the universe doing His job
- Yet, allows us to be close enough to Him to have a loving relationship with Him
- We can approach Him at any time

Show picture of JFK and JFK Jr.

https://iconicphotos.files.wordpress.com/2010/09/a_first_sons_1223.jpg?w=700

The Friends of God

James 2:23 (NKJV)

²³ And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “*Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*” And he was called the friend of God.

If we want to hear from the Lord we must stop what we are doing and come near to God

Genesis 18:22–23 (NKJV)

²² Then the men turned away from there and went toward Sodom, but Abraham still stood before the LORD. ²³ And Abraham came near and said, “Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked?”

- Abraham is having a true dialogue with God
- He initially talks to 3 visitors (one the Angel of the Lord)
- They are talking about God’s promise to Abraham
- They share a meal together
- Followed by a long visit and conversation
- God is going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah

Genesis 18:24–25 (NKJV)

²⁴ Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare *it* for the fifty righteous that were in it? ²⁵ Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?”

- He is seemingly reminding God of His goodness

Genesis 18:26–28 (NKJV)

²⁶ So the LORD said, “If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.” ²⁷ Then Abraham answered and said, “Indeed now, I who *am but* dust and ashes have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord:

²⁸ Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would You destroy all of the city for *lack of five*?” So He said, “If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy *it*.”

- We see familiarity with God yet, reverent and respectful
- Then Abraham asks for forty
- And God says okay, forty
- Then Abraham asks for thirty
- God says okay, thirty
- Then Abraham asks for twenty
- God says, okay twenty

Genesis 18:32 (NKJV)

³² Then he said, “Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there?” And He said, “I will not destroy *it* for the sake of ten.”

- Will I intercede for my family, coworkers, friends and neighbors?
- For my job?
- For my health?
- But God, sir, doesn’t your word say?

2 Corinthians 1:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ For all the promises of God in Him *are* Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.

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

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

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 6:17 (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

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.