

HEARING GODS VOICE *The Heart That Can Hear*

LEARNING TO HEAR GOD: THE FOUNDATION OF PROPHECY

Hearing God's voice is the foundation to experiencing the spiritual gift of prophecy. Paul said to The Corinthians, ***Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. 1 Corinthians 14.1***

GODS WANTS TO TALK TO US

Hearing God's Voice is life's great wellspring of joy

- Every day of creation began with the voice of God. He created by speaking all of this beauty and wonder into existence.

Your life is meant to flow out of not just The Word of God, but The Voice of God as well

- Knowing that God wants to talk to us and that we can actually hear His voice is one of the most exciting parts of our spiritual lives

"Listening means an unhurried time when God really can have a chance to imprint His thoughts in your mind. Some days it is simply a series of luminous thoughts of things God wants me to do that day. Some days it is just a sense of peace and rest and one or two outstanding things. Other days, it is a sense of need for intercession on behalf of certain people. It takes all the fret, strain, and worry out of life. This listening to God is not the experience of a few people...it is the most sane, normal, healthful thing a person can do..." (Frank Buchman, founder of the Moral Rearmament Movement)

THE BOTTOM LINE OF HEARING GOD

There are three 'voices' that we can listen to: God's voice, Satan's voice, and our own voice. The key to recognizing the 'inner voice' of God: knowing how to eliminate the other two voices.

We need to make sure that we don't value certain methods of guidance over others - say, visions over godly counsel - lest we become legalistic about hearing God or become spiritually proud where a person's spirituality is measured by how supernatural his/her guidance is.

- Those who may not "hear" as directly from God as others must never be made to feel spiritually unqualified.

"We mustn't frame divine guidance in such a way as to place sincere Christians on the outside looking in. It is not necessarily that their experience is lacking, but [that] they do not know the language or how the experience works. This leaves them confused and deficient...it undermines their confidence that they are fully acceptable to God." (Dallas Willard, former Director of The School of Philosophy USC)

Most of the time, God wants to speak to us in an inner voice.

1 Kings 19.11-12: *And God said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks 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.*

BUILDING A HEART THAT CAN HEAR GOD WELL

Just like we would build a house, so we yield to The Holy Spirit in building an 'inner' structure of truth principles that actually creates a heart that can commune with God and listen to His voice.

(1) God wants to speak to us.

Psalm 32:8 *I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you.*

Isaiah 50:4-5 *Morning by morning he awakens; He awakens my ear^[L-1]_[SEP] to hear as those who are taught. The Lord GOD has opened my ear, and I was not rebellious.*

Isaiah 30: 20-21 *And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher will not hide himself anymore, but your eyes shall see your Teacher. And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.*

(2) Recognizing God's Voice Is not hard.

John 10.2-4; 14-15, 27: *The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice... 14 I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, 15 just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep... 27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me."*

From John 10 we glean these principles:

- (2.1) The basic characteristic of God's voice is gentleness.
- (2.2) The emphasis is not on our ability to follow, but on His ability to lead.
- (2.3) The Shepherd calls each sheep by name. God will speak uniquely to you in a way that you will recognize.
 - The way God speaks to a person often corresponds to the way He has wired them.
- (2.4) The sheep want to follow: His voice comes with the power to obey.
 - Confusion about hearing God's voice may show that we are listening to the wrong voice

(3) We must have a thorough understanding of grace.

- (3.1) Hearing God can become a pressure if it becomes the measure of whether or not we're close to God
- (3.2) Your freedom from the pressure to hear God's voice comes from the truth that God loves you unconditionally.

(4) The heart that can hear is a heart that loves The Scriptures

- (4.1) The more Scripture we get into our minds, the better we'll discern God's voice, and filter out our own voice.
- (4.2) Your ability to hear the voice of The Lord consistently and accurately is directly proportionate to your hunger for the Scriptures.
- (4.3) To hear God well, the first thing to develop is the habit of meditation in The Scriptures.

(4.4) If you learn to listen to God in and through The Scriptures, you will be far more able to discern God's voice from Satan's voice or your voice.

(5) Be rightly related to authority

- (5.1) If your will is never crossed, you will never be able to trust that the impressions you receive have actually come from God
- (5.2) If we are not accustomed to accountability, if we haven't become comfortable with being told "no", we will not have developed the ability to discern the ways our flesh can so easily "sanctify" our desires. For our rationalizing can

convince us that what we want is what God wants - when all the while we are doing what we want to do and slapping God's name to it.

(6) Seeking God with *all* your heart is more than a discipline; it is key to your freedom.

Jeremiah 29.13: *You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart.*

Hebrews 11.6 *Anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

“God answers the diligent seeker, not the casual inquirer.” (Joy Dawson, *Ruined For The Ordinary*)

(7) Don't let 'hearing God's voice' define who you are

(7.1) Don't take your identity from how accurately you hear. That sets up pressure on you to maintain your accuracy.

(8) We will be able to discern what is God's voice, what is Satan's voice and what is our voice, to the degree we are loving one another.

(8.1) Your ability to hear the voice of The Lord consistently and accurately is directly proportionate to the depth of your love for believers in your immediate church community.