

How God Speaks to Us

Welcome to Harvest Community Church

Series: Knowing God's Voice

Text: Hebrews 1:1, Judges 6:17, Psalm 46:10

If we are going to be frequent hearers of God's voice, then we must value what He says, we must value His voice.

When you really value what God is saying there are three things that you do:

- Listen closely
- Remember what He said.
- Act upon what He tells you in humility, faith and obedience.

Valuing God's voice is actually an issue of stewardship. Stewardship means that we manage well what belongs to someone else. It could be property, resources or time. As Christians our lives are not our own, we belong to Christ. **1 Corinthians 3:23** Our time, talent, treasure and our future are not our own.

Stewardship applies to hearing God's voice as well. God blesses faithful stewards. If we are faithful with our time, talent and treasure and are trustworthy in the little things then He gives us more. If we are not faithful, He doesn't give us more. When God speaks to us if we pay attention and heed His words He will speak more. The reason some people do not hear from God is because they have tuned Him out, so He quit speaking. **Mark 4:24**

There are many specific ways that God speaks to us through the Holy Spirit today – John 16:13

- He speaks through the written Word of God, the Bible. Scripture is always the voice of God because He inspired these precious words. **2 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 4:12** When God uses other means to communicate to us, they will always align and never conflict with His written word.

Diligent study of the Scriptures helps us to apply His principles, strategies, wisdom and will to our lives in many specific ways. Searching the scriptures does not mean applying the flip – flop method of study. This is where you flip open the Bible and flop a finger down like it is a holy fortune cookie. All of God's Word has specific application to many areas of our lives.

- God speaks to us as we pray. Remember prayer is a two-way conversation with God. God most often speaks to us in response to our prayers.

Acts 13:2-3, Matthew 6:10, Exodus 33:13, Psalm 25:4, James 1:5-7

- He speaks through the inner voice of the Holy Spirit – many call this the inner knowing or the inner witness. **Romans 8:14-16** The same way that God communicates to us the fact that we are actually His, is the same manner in which He clearly speaks to us in our inner man. Never mistake this with a gut feeling. **Romans 8:27**

The Holy Spirit often speaks to us through our **thoughts**. **Amos 4:13** It is important that we include the Holy Spirit into our thinking process. True Christians think things through just as much as they pray things through. **Matthew 1:19-21** While Joseph was thinking about things, God spoke to him. We need to remember that not everything that we think comes from the Lord. We can make things up, Satan likes to whisper in our ear imitating the way the Holy Spirit works. This is why it is important to have a relationship with God. To know His character, to recognize His voice and His Word.

- God communicates through **counselors**. This pattern is shown throughout the Bible. God brings wise and godly people into our lives to speak through them. (Good examples of this would be, Nathan going to David or Moses's father in-law Jethro) We can also seek out Godly counsel for ourselves. When we seek out counsel, we can hear God's voice. This counsel will always complement scripture and will usually confirm what God has already been speaking to us. **Proverbs 11:14, Proverbs 12:15**

Good counsel comes from people we can **trust** and who will tell us what need to hear, not just what we **want** to hear. It is important to seek wise counsel from mature Christians and not young or inexperienced Christians. Who you choose to trust to invest and speak into your life will make all the difference in success or failure, pain or progress.

1 Kings 12:3-20 (NLT)

Many Christians have begun seeking out the world's opinions and counsel in many areas. Worldly philosophers will only give unsanctified **opinions**. These are blind guides.

Luke 6:39, Psalm 1:1-3

- God can speak through circumstances. God spoke to Jonah first through His voice and Jonah chose not to obey. So God spoke by creating **opportunities** to clearly understand His will and desire. **Jonah 1:1-17**

God communicates His plans to us through the unfolding of our lives. Nothing occurs in life **apart** from God's knowledge. The hope and promise we have as Christians is that everything that happens to us has a **purpose**. Not everything that goes on in our life is good and not everything is from God. However, God will make sure that **everything** works out for our good. **Romans 8:28**

This is important to understand because we may not comprehend all that God is doing as life is unfolding. There are times we only fully realize what God is doing as He is doing it. Joseph is a perfect example of this. **Genesis 45:5-8, Genesis 50:20**

- God speaks through open and closed **doors**. **1 Corinthians 16:8-9** When God wants us to do something, He will make a way. There will be times we have a good idea that is not a **God** idea and He will close doors that will frustrate our path and redirect us. **Acts 16:6-7** A closed door does not mean that we have missed God's will. It does not mean that it is not in His will for us to do something. Paul later evangelized Asia. Some closed doors are simply there because it is not the correct **timing**. It is important that we do not try to close doors God has opened like Jonah or try to breakthrough doors that God has closed.

- God speaks to us through His **peace**. **Colossians 3:15** We are to let God's peace rule in our hearts. The word 'rule' means to reign or to be the **deciding** factor. If we do not have peace about a decision, then it isn't from the Lord. Refuse to move forward unless you have peace. It is important that we understand our emotions. You can have peace and still be nervous. You can also confuse your desire for something with the peace of God and convince ourselves that our enthusiasm for a thing is the OK from God.

- There are times that God will speak through **angels**. The Births of John the Baptist and Jesus were both announced by angels. Lot was told to leave Sodom because the judgment of God was going to fall on the city. An angel spoke with Gideon and one told Philip to go to Samaria. There are many more.

- God will use miracles and **supernatural** events that are beyond the power of man to perform. **1 Corinthians 14:20-22** God revealed His will to Israel in a way that they could clearly follow Him. **Exodus 13:21-22** He also honored His word to Elijah to convince idol worshippers that He is God. **1 Kings 18:36-39**
 God spoke to Moses from a burning bush and He spoke with Gideon through a fleece. He spoke to Paul on the road to Damascus through a bright light. He even spoke to a disobedient prophet through a **donkey**. **Numbers 22:22-35**

- God speaks through dreams and visions. God desires to communicate with us so much that He even talks to us while we **sleep**. The Bible is full of examples of this. **Acts 2:17, Matthew 2:12-13, Genesis 20:3, Genesis 31:11-13, 1 Kings 3:5** Jacob saw angels ascending and descending from a ladder from heaven. Joseph received a dream that described Him saving Israel. Jesus earthly father was instructed in a dream to take Mary as His wife.
 You will know when a dream is from God. It is important that we do not cross over into the occult and start making every dream a proclamation about life.
 A vision is similar to a dream but differs because you are awake. It is like having a dream without being asleep. It is not daydreaming. Visions may be seen with the spiritual eye as well as the physical eye. Abraham, Daniel, Paul and Peter are just three examples of people who have had visions. **Acts 10:9-16, Acts 18:9-10**

- There are times that God speaks through an **audible** voice. **Acts 9:4-5, 1 Samuel 3:10** The Bible is filled with declarations that God "said", God "spoke" or that God "commanded".

- God speaks to us through the **gifts** of the Spirit. **1 Corinthians 12:4-11**
Prophecy, speaking in other languages with the gift of interpretation, the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge are examples of how God will supernaturally speak to us through other people.

Biblical Keys to understanding God's Direction

In the natural world, keys open doors. In the spiritual world God has provided keys to open the door to His **will**. **Proverbs 3:5-6**

- ✓ **Trust** - we need not fear what God may ask of us. We need to know that His plan is best. Our trust is to be in God and not man. **Jeremiah 17:5**
- ✓ Not leaning on our own understanding, this means we are not to depend on our own human **reasoning**. This does not mean that we are to forsake good judgement or common sense. God is simply saying do not depend only on human reasoning when we are seeking the will of God.
- ✓ In all our ways and in everything we do we are to acknowledge Him; we are to honor Him as there and to **seek** out His advice. When Joshua made a treaty with the Gibeonites he had failed to seek out the counsel of God. **Joshua 9:14-15**
- ✓ We are to seek the way of **wisdom**. **Hebrews 5:12-13, Proverbs 4:7-10**
- ✓ Rely on the inner **assurance** of the Holy Spirit. **1 Corinthians 14:33, Colossians 3:15 (AMP)**
- ✓ Take one **step** at a time. **Matthew 6:34** Plan for tomorrow but do not worry about the future. Live one day at a time. Rarely does God reveal all of His plan at once. He wants us to live each day by faith. **Hebrews 11:8** Nothing builds faith better than walking one step at a time. God desires that we learn to depend on His voice day by day. **Jeremiah 33:3** This is called the great **adventure**.