

LISTEN AND LEARN GOD'S WILL

Sermon/Study by Terry Lortz

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INTRODUCTION

Why seek guidance from God in **our daily life** by praying or by reading the Bible? We talk to God in prayer but how often do we **stop talking long enough to listen** to responses from God? Or, God has been speaking to us for sometime now and we have **failed to realize** the whole time that He is talking to us about an issue in our life.

Proverbs 20:24 "A man's steps are directed by the LORD, **how then** can anyone understand his own way?" NIV

Psalms 85:8 "I **will hear** what God the LORD will say; For He will speak peace to His people, to His godly ones; but let them not turn back to folly." NAS

Proverbs 3: 5-6 "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; **in all your ways acknowledge (submit) to him**, and he will make your paths straight." NIV

Opening Prayer

Before we review God's Word on this subject, let us first ask a quick prayer for God's blessing and inspiration on both the speaking and understanding.

Specific Purpose Statement

My purpose this morning is to quickly review God's Word regarding:

- 1 – How God speaks to us today,
- 2 – How God gets our attention when we are not listening,
- 3 - How to tune our spiritual ear so we know how to listen to God,
- 4 - How to identify that the voice we are hearing is indeed the voice of God.
- 5 - What hinders or poisons us from hearing the voice of God and an antidote.

Body

I. HOW GOD SPEAKS TO US TODAY:

- A. Through the **Word of God**: Read it, Meditate on it, what verses come up often?
- B. Through the **Holy Spirit**: Who talks to our hearts and minds
- C. Through **Other people**: Knowingly and Unknowingly sent/used by God
- D. Through **Circumstances**: Failures, Successes, Disappointments, Tragedies

II. HOW GOD GETS OUR ATTENTION WHEN HEADED IN THE WRONG DIRECTION

- A. **A Word from Others:** Nathan sent to David – **2 Sam 12:1-14** (Criticism and Reproof)
- B. **Unanswered prayer:** Wrong selfish reasons – **James 4:3** (For Pleasures Only)
- C. **Unusual Circumstances:** Burning bush not consumed - **Ex. 3:1-4**, (Attention Getters)
- D. **Failure:** Success at Jericho, then failure at city of Ai – **Joshua 7:4-5** (Hearts Melted)
- E. **National, Social and Financial Collapse:** Midianite Oppression – **Judges 6:1-6** (Evil)
- F. **Tragedy:** Israel complains against God & His Servants – **Numbers 21:4-7** (Impatient)
- G. **Sickness and Affliction:** Hezekiah's proud heart – **2 Chron. 32:24-26** (His Response)
- H. **Disappointment:** Israel's Contempt and Unbelief – **Numbers 14** (Promise Land Delay)

OTHER NOTES: Three ways that people can be heading in a positive direction or heading in a negative direction are: **1)** to be in obedience or disobedience - **1 John 3:22**; or **2)** to be in God's will or out of God's will - **1 John 5:14**; or **3)** to be in a intimate praying marriage or in a hindering praying marriage - **1 Pet 3:7**. This can be revealed to a person if they have a **restless spirit** that causes uneasiness in their heart or causes troubled feelings with no other obvious trouble in life. If this is the case, **it is time to stop and think and pray.**

III. IDENTIFYING THE VOICE OF GOD VERSUS SATAN OR SELF:

- A. It will be **Consistent with the Word of God** and **not contradict it**
- B. It will often **Conflict with Human Wisdom:**
 - 1. It Clashes with a natural, reasonable course of action and known physical laws.
 - 2. "My thoughts are not your thoughts; my ways are not your ways."**(Isaiah 55:8)**
- C. It **Clashes with Fleshly Nature**; it will not tell us to gratify our flesh
- D. It will be for the **Good of Everyone not just myself**
- E. It **Requires Courage** to do what we hear: "Joshua be of good courage" – **Josh 1:-6-9**
(Jesus did all of the above as recorded in **Matthew 16:21-23** and **John 14: 24b, 31**)
- F. It will often be a **Challenge to My Current Level of Faith.**
- G. It **Doesn't Require a Rushed Decision**, Saul offers sacrifice before Samuel comes
- H. It **Considers the Consequences** – they should be positive and not negative – i.e.
Abraham and Hagar or when David numbers the people
- I. It **Will Lead to Getting Godly Counsel** from other believers, including Senior Pastor
- J. It **Will Stimulate Spiritual Growth** to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ
- K. It **Will Give Peace - Calmness in the Spirit** "And the peace of God that transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and mind in Christ Jesus" **(Philippians 4:7)**

IV. HINDRANCES TO HEARING (9 things that hinder or poison and their antidote):

- A. **We Don't Know God Personally** - We study God's Word to know Him and His will
- B. **We Have a Poor Self-Image** "I am not a ____" - Realize God wants to speak to us
- C. **We Have a False Sense of Guilt** – forgiven but may feel guilty by Satan bringing up the past, and then we might feel un-forgiven and say, "God won't hear me" but the TRUTH IS that we have His Grace through Jesus Christ!
- D. **We Do Too Much Business / Busyness** – hectic full daily schedules, we don't stop to listen or study so the key is to be "Be still and know that I am God" (**Psalm 46:10**)
- E. **We Have Unbelief That God Will Answer Prayer** – Today is still Bible Times.
- F. **We Have God Directed Anger** out of rage at God because of a tragedy or Disappointment – Express the anger and begin to listen right away
- G. **We Are Harboring Sin** that we know about and just will not let go of - Confession
- H. **We Are Feeding a Rebellious Spirit** where we do not want to hear God, don't really want to do what God wants us to do when it comes to personal weaknesses or evil desires – Seek forgiveness, a clean heart and a generous giving life and spirit
- I. **We Reject God's messengers** – Listen to Senior Pastor, Parents, Spouse, Children

V. HOW TO LISTEN (5 ways):

- A. **Anticipate God speaking** – **Hebrews 13:8** Jesus Christ is the same **yesterday** and **today** and **forever!**
- B. **Ask questions** – "God what are you trying to tell me" - expect & wait for God's reply
- C. **Respond to what we hear** – move in the direction God tells us to go
- D. **Be alert to confirming events** – Sometimes God confirms his message through events after He has instructed us through His Word, His Servants or Life-Changing Events
- E. **Ask God to speak to us** – At any quiet time, ask God to speak to you and that you are available to hear – like Samuel, "Speak, for your servant hears" **1Sam 3:4-10**

Conclusion

So in conclusion, we suggest that we **each make some personal time this coming week** to further review these notes and scriptures for more understanding of this important subject.

Let Us Sit Before God Expectantly, Quietly, Patiently, Actively, Confidently, Dependently, Openly, Attentively, Carefully, Submissively, Gratefully, and Reverently and **We Will Hear And Learn God's Will For Our Lives!**