

Hearing the Voice of God

10 Ways God Speaks To Us

God is constantly speaking! Scripture gives us a long history of his interaction with His people. Hearing God's voice is important for followers of Jesus to know, to practice, to seek. This section seeks to highlight a few of the ways that God speaks to us today.

John 10:27 - My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

1. The Bible

- This is the the most common way that God speaks to us today.
- When you are reading the Bible and something jumps out at you, it is God quickening it to you as you read.
- God speaks through memorized scripture. If, for example, you are in the shower and thinking about a verse you memorized and suddenly you know it applies to a situation - this could very well be God speaking to you!
- 2 Tim 3:16-17 -An Angel appeared to Mary regarding the birth of Jesus (Luke 1:26-28) All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

2. Audible Voice

- Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3:1-17)
- Samuel when he was a boy (1 Samuel 3)
- Paul at his conversion (Acts 9:1-19)

Although this is not a very common way today, there is certainly plenty of scriptural evidence for this. We see it in the 3 examples listed above, as well as plenty of times that the Prophets heard from God. As with all the ways God speak to us today, we should make sure that anything we or others claim to have heard from God in this way, is in alignment with the word of God.

3. People

- The Gifts of the Spirit include speaking (words) gifts. God freely gives out his gifts, which is why Paul encourages us to seek these gifts from the Lord, and then for us to exercise in them. 1 Corinthians 14:1
 - The gift of prophecy, words of wisdom, words of knowledge, are often used by God to speak to us.
 - Any word given through this means, should be weighed up against scripture, as well as weighed up in prayer before the Lord.
 - There is a lot more to be said about prophecy, and the gifts of the Spirit, but for now, know that God has lavished his gifts on us for our benefit, and for the benefit of those around us.
- Ordinary Conversations
 - God can speak to us through any conversation, whether with a Jesus follower, or not. Something a person says just strikes, or resonates with you - take this and pray into it.

4. Dreams

People dream a LOT more than they let on. Some people may have already been tuned into the fact that God speaks to them through dreams, but in our experience, many people dream and just write it off as interesting, or weird. Scripture shows us many examples of how God spoke to his people through their dreams.

- Pharaoh's dream (Gen 41:1-35)
- Joseph, the husband of Mary dreams (Matt 1:20)

5. Visions.

There are so many scriptures about seeing visions in the Bible, however here are 2 examples. The Book of Daniel is an excellent study on how God speaks through Visions:

- "The visions of my head ... " (Daniel 4:10)

- "I saw in the visions of my head ... (Daniel 4:13)

John 5:19 So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise.

6. Angels

Scripture records hundreds of references to angels, and how God has used angels through generations to send his messages, do his work, minister.

An angel appeared to Zechariah regarding the birth of John the baptist (Luke 1:11-23)

7. Music (songs)

We can be praising and worshiping God and suddenly we are undone by a line in the song. 2 Chronicle 20:21 talks of how the army sang a song of praise to God, declaring the goodness of God.

8. Circumstances

Numbers recounts a moment where God had been trying to talk to Balaam, and what seemed to be circumstances was God working through the animal, and angels to change the path of Balaam and get his attention. Number 22:22-41 tells this story.

Many times God speaks to us through circumstances. Often we will call these "closed doors", or "open doors", or "I was in the right place at the right time", but we need to be aware of how God is often directing our steps, and lighting our path. He will often make this clear through circumstances

9. Nature / God's Creation

In many of the parables told by Jesus, he would use nature to explain a spiritual truth.

God has chosen to reveal himself to all mankind through his creation. Romans 1:20 explains that all men are without excuse: "For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the

creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse."

10. Hearing the Inner Voice of God

Hearing the voice of God is often an internal voice. Thoughts, ideas, seemingly random thoughts that come to mind. How we discern these has been an often asked question. Is it God speaking to me? Is this just my own voice? Could it be the devil speaking to me? How do I know?

When we hear His voice, things awaken in us, and it is different. A "Rhema" word is the "now word", the "Logos made alive", and we can know the voice of God!

Some thoughts to help us in this discerning process, because not all thoughts in our mind are ours. Our thoughts can come from three places:

1. Spontaneous Positive Thoughts = The Holy Spirit:

Thoughts that line up with the Holy Spirit who is called Councilor, Comforter, Truth, Teacher, Helper, Healer, Giver of Life. These thoughts point towards God, and cause our hearts to turn towards God - to do His Will!

2. Spontaneous Negative Thoughts = Demons:

Thoughts that line up with satan who is described as Liar, Accuser, Adversary, Condemning, Murderer and Thief. The goal of these thoughts are to pull us away from the Lord and His Life for us.

3. Analytical Thoughts = Self:

Come from self, from our own reasoning processes and are sensed as cognitive, connected thoughts - like a strong one after the other. They are limited by our own knowledge, wisdom, understanding and abilities. These CAN be from God, CAN be positive, or they can be very crushing.

The following table can help you discern these Inner thoughts:

Enemy / Self	Thoughts from God (The Good Shepherd)
Drives you: The enemy will drive you; cause you to be driven	Draws you: The Lord draws you, he knocks on the door, he goes ahead and calls you out.
Condemns you: It may even sound like scripture, very legalistic, but doesn't lift a finger to help you. It points out your faults.	Convicts you: Contained in His voice, is the ability you need in order to fulfill what He has just said. Points to potential, encourages you.
Harasses you: It torments you, leading to anxiety.	Harnesses you: Causes you to focus.
Boils up: The word for false prophecy is “ ziyd ” which means to ‘boil up, to seethe, to act proudly, arrogantly’. These words and through will cause pressure and explosion.	Bubbles up: The Hebrew word for prophecy is ‘ naba ’ or ‘ nabiy ’, it means to bubble up. To cause bubble up, hence to pour forth with words, abundantly as is done with those who speak with divine emotions of mind.
Hurries you. Always rushes you.	Unhurried: God does not hurry you. Urgency is not the same as hurry, the differences is felt internally.
Makes you Sin Conscious: When Adam and Eve ate from the tree, they became Sin Conscious. the devil seeks to condemn,	Makes you God Conscious: Fixes your eyes on Jesus.
Fear: “We heard your voice... we were afraid, so we hid”. Adam and Eve’s response to listened to the devil - the consequence of sin.	Faith: Romans 10:17 “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.” The response to hearing God’s voice is Faith, not fear!
Isolates you. The desire to be in isolation: Gen. 3: “We were afraid so we hid...” was Adam and Eve’s response to listening to the devil. Proverbs 18:1 “Whoever isolates himself seeks his own desire; he breaks out against all sound judgement.	Drawn to solitude with Him. Jesus had a practice of drawing aside to spend alone time with God - this is different to isolation, drawing away from community, or from wisdom. Mark 6:31 “Come away by yourself to a desolate place and rest a while.” Matt 6:6 “But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret.

Knowing that God speaks today, that He speaks to you all the time, and knowing that you are able to know His Voice is perhaps one of the most important revelations for us to have. THIS is how we walk with Him, THIS is how we hear the Holy Spirits leading and guiding, THIS is how we minister to those around us ... by walking with God, communing with him, talking, listening, working, flowing with Him.

Practical points to strengthening God's inner voice in your life:

1. Know God's desire to speak with you, to be with you. It was His idea.
2. Know your position, you are secure in Christ.
3. Strengthen the Spirit within you: 1 The 5:23-24)
 - **Presence.** Like any relationship, requires time.
 - **Prayer.** Pray for others, write down. Real prayer, pushing past the analytical mind that tries to stop us.
 - **Praise.** Worship in Spirit and in Truth.
 - **Listen** to the voice of your conscience
 - **Fasting** puts off the flesh
 - **Discernment** comes from the Word, which is our safety.

Your Spirit contains your conscience, fellowship and intuition. The more you have fellowship with God, and listen to your conscience, the stronger your intuition becomes. **The inner voice of God speaking to you will become very loud.**

4. Be submitted to the authority that is in your life.
5. Watch what goes through the eye and ear gate.
6. Cut out other voices... distractions (cells phone, busyness, the next attraction...)

The bible gives us the responses to the three voices:

- **God: Receive** (Comes by grace).
- The enemy - **Resist** (Sometimes this needs to be spoken out loud)
- Man - **Reckon yourself dead to sin but alive to God.**

