

10 Keys to Hearing God's Voice

I walked into my favorite grocery store. I was tired. I hadn't eaten that day and it was close to 5 pm. I had just made the decision to eat sugar-free and gluten-free that morning. I was going to the store to buy something healthy to fix for supper.

I had not thought about the looming obstacle I would encounter. I knew it was there. It's always there right as I head down the main aisle. Today, it seemed to be larger and more intimidating than ever—the bakery case.

My downfall has always been the combination of sugar, flour and cinnamon. The large cinnamon rolls called to me. The voice in my head was urgent and loud, "You haven't eaten today. You need to eat something. You need energy. You might drop dead if you don't eat."

I listened to the voice and added my own rationalities. "I do have a long evening ahead and I haven't eaten. I do need energy. I could grab these now and start that healthy eating thing tomorrow." I was telling myself this as I took a plastic baggie, grabbed the tongs and had my two choices in the bag.

Gods' Voice

As I was tying the bag, I heard another voice in my head. This one was soft and quiet. It simply said, "What are you doing?"

The still, small voice arrested me. I had been on autopilot listening to the voice of the tempter who sided with my fleshly desires. All of sudden, I knew what I was doing was everything I had vowed I would not do.

I put the bag back in the bakery case and went to choose my skinned and deboned chicken breasts, salad ingredients,

broccoli and fruit. That was in 2011. That was the last time I willingly listened to that overt voice.

The Tempter's Voice

For years, I listened to it all the time. See, the voice of the tempter always has an element of truth to it. What he tells me is half-truth, half-lie. In the past, he hadn't needed to be too subtle. He just put the bait out there and like a hungry, naive fish, I'd bite and gobble it up and more and more and more. He would sit back with a smug smile. Mission accomplished.

Part of the reason I always listened to him was that it sounded so logical to me. My rational mind agreed with him because my flesh wanted something sweet and carb-laden with all the unhealthy fats.

What the tempter didn't take into account was that this time I really meant it. I had made a firm decision. I was going to listen to the voice of God. I had invited God to tell me when I was making a wrong decision.

How God Speaks

Because I had asked Him to, God spoke to me. It was different than the voice of evil. Instead of asking me to mindlessly do something, God asked me to think about what I was doing.

God believed in me. He believed if I would use the brain He gave me, I would recognize the lie and go with the truth.

This one instance, and many others throughout the years, taught me a lot about distinguishing the voices speaking in my head. I only want to listen to the voice of God. These days, I can tell which voice is His.

10 Things About God's Voice

1. He will lead me to the whole truth, not a half-truth.
2. He will not violate Scripture, but fulfill it.
3. He will lead me toward my destiny, not away from it.
4. He will redirect me according to His ultimate will.
5. He will cause me to think rather than act on impulse.
6. He will lead me away from fulfilling fleshly desires and towards fulfilling my ultimate kingdom purpose.
7. He is loving, kind, understanding, soft and gentle.
8. When I argue with Him, He doesn't argue back. He simply states a truth.
9. He is always speaking to me and speaks my language.
10. I know His voice.

Destiny-Bound

Beginning to fulfill my destiny really began with learning to take care of my body by eating properly. I couldn't go toward the purpose and plan God had for my life when I was morbidly obese and could barely walk. His desire was that I would become healthy so I could move to the next part of His plan for my life.

The evil one knows this. He always hits at my weakness. As with everyone, my weakness will be something fleshly. For others it might be drugs, alcohol, sexual addiction, pornography, gambling, cigarettes, over-spending or any number of things. These become things that pull God's children away from focusing on the main thing: God.

Jesus said it this way. "The thief does not come, except to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). Satan's No. 1 mission is to steal, kill and destroy my destiny. So if he can, he will lead me off-course.

Every time he would do this, I would have the nagging suspicion the voice speaking to me wasn't God. However, I rationalized it because it was just what I wanted. After all,

didn't God want me to be happy? This kind of rationalization would always propel me to listen to the wrong voice, even though I knew it was wrong.

My I-Want

My mind is not bad. When I became a Christian, I received the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16). Learning to exercise it is another thing. I must be tuned in to God's station so my mind is really functioning in conjunction with the Spirit of God. I must be desiring to be led by God rather than by my own desires.

When I want my way, I can have it because I have free will (Gen. 2:16-17; 3:6). I can be just like Eve. My I-want voice can scream louder than the voice of God. The devil will agree with what I want. However, if I want to hear it, God's voice will whisper softly to me. That whisper will speak louder than every other voice combined if I let it.

I choose whom I want to listen to. I really know the voice of God. I know what His purposes are. I know how to discern His voice. I just choose whether or not I want to follow it.

His Sheep Hear His Voice

Jesus said, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" (John 10:27). Why do sheep follow the voice of the shepherd? Because they trust him. He protects them. He feeds them. He finds water for them, shelter when needed and soft places to lie down.

When I really began to understand God wanted only good things for me, not disaster (Jer. 29:11), I asked His advice. I longed for His voice. I began to live my life based on what He said to me

The Sound of His Voice

I began to hear Him everywhere—in the soft giggle of a child; in the soaring flight of a hawk; in the tired, ragged woman asking for a quarter; in the silence; in the click of the computer keyboard; in the voice of musicians and preachers of the gospel; in God's Word; and yes, in the gentle voice I've come to know and love speaking in my mind, heart and spirit. It's a voice that fills all of me. There is no voice like it.

"He said, 'Go and stand on the mountain before the Lord.' And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind split the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. And after the wind, an earthquake came, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake, a fire came, but the Lord was not in the fire, and after the fire, a still, small voice. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood in the entrance to the cave. And a voice came to him and said, 'Why are you here, Elijah?'" (1 Kin. 19:11-13).

"So, God speaks to you?" the journalist queried the well-known pastor. "Is it an audible voice?"

The pastor looked him in the eyes and said, "No, it is much louder than that."

How Does God Speak to You?

If God is speaking to you about your health being a major roadblock to His plans and purposes for your life, run don't walk and sign up today for Sweet Change Weight Loss Coaching and Accountability Group. It is my heart's desire to help you get free of the bondages of extreme weight. No hype here. Just truth. I can tell you unequivocally this is one time I do know what I'm talking about. You know if I am speaking to you. Here's the link: . Don't wait. Your destiny is calling.