

3 Mental Barriers to Hearing God's Voice

“Get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls” (James 1:21 NLT).

We’ve all noticed that the reception quality on a cell phone varies widely. The same is true with you. You must be positioned correctly to hear God speak.

Sometimes we don’t give God a chance to talk to us. We’ve made up our minds. We want to do what we want to do, not what God wants us to do. Our hearts are hardened, and we’re unwilling to listen.

When you have a closed mind, of course he’s not going to talk to you!

But if you really want to hear from God—and what believer doesn’t?—you have to understand what is keeping you from hearing from God. Here are three mental barriers that keep your mind closed to God’s message.

1. Pride. If you think you don’t need God in your life and you want to handle things yourself, you’re probably not listening for God to speak. Pride keeps you from being open to the possibility that God might want to say something to you.

2. Fear. A lot of people can’t hear God because they’re afraid to hear God speak. Maybe you think that hearing God’s voice or sensing his leading makes you some kind of religious fanatic.

3. Bitterness. When you hold on to hurt, resentment or a grudge, you’re not going to be able to hear God, because your heart is hardened. It has grown cold and made you defensive, even to God’s love.

Perhaps you have been hurt badly, maybe this week or even years ago, and you're still holding on to it. I want to tell you that you've got to let it go. Not for another person's sake, but for your sake. The resentment is killing you. Resentment is a self-inflicted wound that allows people from your past to continue to hurt you today. You need to let it go, not because they deserve forgiveness but because you need to get on with your life. You need to get rid of the bitterness, fear and pride that keep you from hearing God's voice and living out His purpose for your life.

James 1:21 says, "Get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls" (NLT).

"Humbly accept" means you let go of your pride and stop trying to figure it out on your own. This is the key to opening your mind and heart so that you can hear from the Lord.

Talk It Over

- How do you hear God's voice or sense his leading? In what ways has he spoken to you?
- What changes do you need to make in your life so that you can get rid of the "filth and evil" and hear God's voice?
- Why do we sometimes equate hearing God's voice with religious fanaticism? {eo}

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