

4 Keys to Recognizing God's Voice

Question – Is it *really* all that important to use the four keys to hearing God's voice? I mean, some people have five keys, and some have three keys, and some just say do it. This whole formula thing doesn't really work for me. I can hear God's voice without using any keys—I just listen and hear. The vision and journaling doesn't sit too well with me either...

Answer – I believe these four keys were given to me through divine revelation and that they make hearing God's voice easy for naturally analytical people to do, while at the same time making it possible for more naturally intuitive people to communicate to others what they instinctively do. And yes, since God can do anything, He can also speak through other means; I am simply saying this is an easy way for all believers to daily hear God's voice.

When you begin to intentionally use these four keys, you should give yourself a couple of weeks to become **fully comfortable** with purposely using them. If you do, you **will** hear God's voice daily and easily and so will those to whom you teach the four keys. Let me explain why.

The Night God Chased Me Down

In 1979, the Lord woke me up with a booming bass voice (the *only* time I have ever heard God as a booming bass voice!) and said, "Mark, get up, I want to teach you how to hear My voice." This was after six months of intense searching to answer the question of how I could hear God's voice. I sat bolt upright in bed, wide awake. Then I lay back down and said, "You can teach me here." He again said, "Get up and go to your office! I am going to teach you to hear My voice."



So I got up, went to my office, and He showed me that **Habakkuk** did four specific, simple things to hear God's voice (Hab. 2:1,2). They are: stop, look, listen and write.

1. **Stop – *Become still*** – “Went to my guard post” means he quieted himself down to listen and hear.
2. **Look – *Look for vision*** – “Kept watch to see” means the prophet was looking for vision.
3. **Listen – *Recognize God's voice as spontaneous thoughts*** – “What He will speak to me” means he recognized God's voice. We define God's voice as flowing or spontaneous thoughts, because John 7:37-39 says the Holy Spirit within is sensed as **flow**. Likewise God's vision is flowing pictures.
4. **Write – *Two-way journaling*** – “Record the vision” means he wrote down the flowing words and flowing pictures (visions) that were coming to him.

If you think about it, this is what we naturally do when conversing with a friend. We stop thinking about other things and put our focus on them; we look at them; we listen carefully; and when it is important, we write down what they are saying so we don't forget it. It is completely normal and accepted to record words that we consider important, as for example, a stenographer would do in a courtroom. We are simply saying why not apply these steps to our conversations with God? Are not the words of our Lord to us the most important words we will ever hear?

So Who Else in Scripture, Besides Habakkuk, Used These Four Keys?

It is now 35 years later, and I hear the Lord speaking within me that I should take note that the four keys that Habakkuk

used were used by others **throughout Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation**. So let's take a look at a dozen individuals in the Bible who used these four keys.

The Apostle John used the same four keys when he wrote the book of Revelation. In Rev. 1:9-11 we see:

1. **Stop** – “I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day”
2. **Listen** – “I heard a voice behind me saying”
3. **Write** – “Write in a book”
4. **Look** – “what you see”

King David was a man after God's own heart, and he certainly used the same four keys:

1. **Stop** – “Be silent my soul before Him” (Ps. 62:1).
2. **Look** – “I have set the LORD continually before me; Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken” (Ps. 16:8); “I saw the Lord always in my presence; for He is at my right hand” (Acts 2:25) means he saw the Lord with the eyes of his heart, with him constantly.
3. **Listen** – After King David would quiet himself (i.e., *Selah*), God would speak. “Hear, O My people, and I will speak; O Israel, I will testify against you; I am God, your God” (Ps. 50:7).
4. **Write** – David journaled out the details of the Tabernacle, and as he did, he said it was the Lord's hand upon him (1 Chron. 28:19). In addition, he recorded many of his prayer times in the Psalms.

How about the Apostle Paul, did he also use these four keys?

1. **Stop** – “... appeared to Paul **in the night**” (Acts 16:9)
2. **Look** – “Was caught up into Paradise” (2 Cor. 12:4)
3. **Listen** – “Heard inexpressible words” (2 Cor. 12:4)
4. **Write** – Paul prayed for revelation (Eph. 1:17,18; Col. 1:9), and then wrote Ephesians and Colossians which are both FULL of divine revelation. I am convinced his epistles record the revelation Paul received from God

during his prayer times.

How about Abraham, the Father of Faith – did he use the four keys?

1. **Stop** – “A deep sleep fell upon Abram” (Gen. 15:12,13)
2. **Look** – “The word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision...” (Gen. 15:1)
3. **Listen** – “Now the LORD said to Abram, ‘Go forth from your country...’” (Gen. 12:1)
4. **Write** – Since Genesis 15 was written by Moses, I am going to assume that Abraham recorded it in some way so it was available later for Moses to draw upon.

Moses used the four keys (Ex. 3:1-5).

1. **Stop** – Moses said, “I must turn aside...”
2. **Look** – He looked, and behold the bush was burning.
3. **Listen** – God called to him from the midst of the bush and said...
4. **Write** – Moses wrote out this experience in the book of Exodus.

Did Isaiah use the four keys when he heard God’s voice?

1. **Stop** – He wakens me morning by morning (Is. 50:4)
2. **Look** – “The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz concerning Judah and Jerusalem, which he saw” (Is. 1:1)
3. **Listen** – For the LORD speaks... (Is. 1:2)
4. **Write** – Obviously he is writing it down, as that is how we got the book of Isaiah.

Jeremiah used the four keys to receive from the Lord.

1. **Stop** – Jeremiah was a priest who was ministering before the Lord (Jer. 1:1)
2. **Look** – “What do you see, Jeremiah?” ... “I see a rod of an almond tree.” (Jer. 1:11)
3. **Listen** – “The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying” (Jer. 30:1)

4. **Write** – “‘Write all the words which I have spoken to you in a book'” (Jer. 30:2)

Ezekiel used the four Keys (Ezek. 1:1-4).

1. **Stop** – “While I was by the river ...”
2. **Look** – “As I looked, behold, a storm wind was coming ...”
3. **Listen** – “the word of the LORD came expressly to Ezekiel ...”
4. **Write** – He wrote the book of Ezekiel.

Daniel used the four keys.

1. **Stop** – As he lay on his bed (Dan. 7:1)
2. **Look** – “I was looking in my vision by night” (Dan. 7:1)
3. **Listen** – “I approached one of those who were standing by and began asking him the exact meaning of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things” (Dan. 7:16)
4. **Write** – He wrote the dream down (Dan. 7:1)

Peter used the four keys.

1. **Stop** – “I was in the city of Joppa praying” (Acts 11:5)
2. **Look** – “I saw a vision, an object coming down like a great sheet” (Acts 11:5)
3. **Listen** – “I also heard a voice saying to me, ‘Get up, Peter; kill and eat.’” (Acts 11:7)
4. **Write** – We have a biblical record of his encounter.

These biblical writers composed 663 chapters of the 1189 chapters in the Bible (over 50%). That is not to say that the rest of the writers didn't also use these four keys. If we explored the Minor Prophets and discovered they also used the four keys of stop, look, listen and write that would add another 68 chapters to the total.

Should We Be Using the Four Keys?

If God models a behavior from Genesis to Revelation, is that something we are to do? If God is a God who hides himself, and it is the glory of a king to search a thing out, then we have searched this thing out and found that these four keys are prevalent in Scripture, which means we ought to be following this pattern.

We stop, look, listen and write. Not too hard to comprehend. We teach our children to stop, look and listen before crossing a road. Now we need to teach ourselves to stop, look, listen and write. If we do, we will receive daily revelation from the Lord just as these did: Habakkuk, Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, John, Paul and Peter. I know there are many others from Scripture whom we have not even mentioned in this article.

Will YOU Use These Four Keys?



How many of these keys can we neglect and still expect to receive the fullness of God? My guess is none! So let's take the time to train ourselves and our people that hearing God's voice is as easy as quieting yourself down, fixing your eyes on Jesus, tuning to spontaneity and writing.

Isn't it time for you to stop, look, listen and write? Isn't it time for the church to train its people to stop, look, listen and write? God certainly puts a huge emphasis on writing (Deut. 17:18,19). Rather than saying, "I can't write," we should be saying, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me!" (Phil. 4:13).

Rather than saying, "I can't see," how about if we say, "God heals the blind with just a touch. Lord, I ask for You to

touch my blind eyes and heal them so I can see. I command blindness to go, in Jesus' Name. I command the eyes of my heart to see in Jesus' Name! Muscles in these spiritual eyes, be strengthened in Jesus' Name. Lord, I receive Your healing touch. I look and I see (Dan. 8:2,3; Rev. 4:1). It is Your will for me to see (Acts 2:17). Thank You, Lord."

It is time for the church to arise and be the church and receive revelation knowledge and divine visions on a daily basis.

We Saved the Best for Last – The Example of Jesus

"Jesus is perfect theology" according to Bill Johnson, and I certainly agree. Jesus did nothing of His own initiative, but only what He heard and saw the Father doing (John 8:28).

1. **Stop** – Jesus went alone to pray (Matt. 14:23)
2. **Look** – "I do only those things I see the Father doing" (John 5:19,20; 8:38)
3. **Listen** – "I do only those things I hear from the Father" (John 5:30; 8:26)
4. **Write** – While there is no record that Jesus Himself wrote what He heard, He shared it with His disciples who wrote it down for us. (And remember, John said that Jesus did so many other things that the whole world would not have room for the books that would need to be written to record it all. (John 21:25)!

Make this golden pattern a part of your daily life!

Which Leaders Down Through Church History Used the Four Keys?

We haven't even started this discussion, so let's begin it...

1. Stop –
2. Look –
3. Listen –
4. Write –

Would you help by adding to this blog (below) an additional example from either Scripture or church history of individuals who used the four keys to hear God's voice? Thank you for the additions you provide. Let's let this blog grow. Let's be doers of the Word! Let's stop, look, listen and write.

Closing Prayer – Lord, bless and anoint Your church as they follow this biblical pattern, found in hundreds of chapters of Scripture, and modeled by essentially all great spiritual leaders from Scripture and from church history. Lord, we thank You for patterns and examples in Your Word which instruct our lives. Thank You for this pattern that has taught so many of Your children to hear Your voice in recent years. YOU are restoring truth to Your church. You are restoring our lives! You are taking us back to the pattern in the Garden of Eden where in the cool of the day You appeared, and walked and talked with Adam and Eve. You are our Wonderful Counselor. We worship You. To God be glory forever and ever, amen!

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