

8 Biblical Ways to Hear God's Voice

God is always speaking! Did you know that Jesus died on the cross not just to forgive your sins, but ultimately to bring you into a relationship with Himself? Communication is probably the single greatest vehicle of any relationship. Although some people have a problem believing God wants to talk to everybody, most believers understand that true prayer is not just petitioning heaven with a list of requests, but it is communicating with our Father in heaven as a true friend.

Jesus said, "My sheep hear My voice" (John 10:27)a. Prophecy, in its simplest form, is merely hearing from the Holy Spirit and repeating what He said. Paul put it this way, "For you may all prophesy one by one" (1 Cor. 14:31a).

Knowledge is power, and God doesn't want the prideful to be the powerful; therefore, God hides His word so only the hungry and the humble have access to His voice. In other words, God's voice is hidden from the arrogant and the proud.

Luke 10:21 (NASB) says, "At that very time He [Jesus] rejoiced greatly in the Holy Spirit, and said, "I praise You, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent and have revealed them to infants. Yes, Father, for this way was well-pleasing in Your sight."

The fact is, God is always speaking. The question is, are we in tune with His voice?

Do You Have Ears to Hear God?

Many people believe Jesus told parables to reveal truth, however, this is simply not biblical! Matthew 13:10-13 says, "And the disciples came and said to Him, 'Why do You speak to

them in parables?’ Jesus answered them, ‘To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. For whoever has, to him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.’”

If we have not heard the Lord speaking to us in the past 24 hours, we probably missed His voice. Remember, it is the glory of God to hide things, but it is the glory of His royal sons and daughters to search out the mysteries of the kingdom (Prov. 25:2). God does not hide things from us; He hides them for us.

The challenge comes when we don’t recognize the different ways God communicates with His people. So then, how does God speak?

8 Ways God Speaks to Us

Here are eight common ways God speaks to His children. This is not an exhaustive list, but simply a jumping-off point. As you read these, I pray that you would be enlightened to recognize the distinctly personal and powerful ways that God speaks to you.

1. **Visions:** Visions of the mind occur when the Lord projects images and pictures onto the screen of our imagination. Most often, this is how the Holy Spirit speaks to us. Visions often appear like hieroglyphics—pictures that require interpretation. So as the Holy Spirit speaks to us through these pictures and images of the mind, we must turn around and ask Him what the pictures mean (Acts 2:17-18).
2. **God’s Still Small Voice:** At times, the Lord speaks to us in a still small voice from within our spirit. We may underrate the power of God’s whispers and even ignore

these inklings when we expect to rather hear a booming, audible voice. God's still small voice can be heard as a passing thought, sudden impression, or internal "sense" of something God is saying. We see this illustrated in the book of 1 Kings. In this account, God is not in the strong wind or the earthquake, but rather He is in the gentle blowing (1 Kings 19:11-13).

3. **Angels:** Angels are another avenue that God uses to communicate with us from the heavenly realm. Throughout the New Testament, angels spoke to people and gave them instructions for their lives (see Luke 1:26-38 for a famous example when the angel Gabriel visited Mary, the mother of Jesus). It's important to remember that while angels deliver messages, the source of the instruction is God.
4. **Creation:** Creation itself is a voice from the Lord that speaks to us in many ways, specifically by echoing to us the truth about who God is. The mountains speak of His strength, the rivers of His provision and the flowers of His beauty (Ps. 19:1-2). Another way creation speaks to us is when God causes nature to do things that are actually prophetic acts. Here's a wild story for you: One year, every time we would meet at Bethel Church to pray, a roadrunner would show up outside the glass door with a lizard in its mouth! This went on for months until we realized the Lord was calling us to go out to the roads, the highways and the byways and compel the lost to come in. One day the roadrunner managed to find his way inside the church. In a desperate attempt to get out of the building, he hit a window and died. The Lord showed us through this event that if we did not reach out to the lost, to "go outside of our four walls" so to speak, that our church and movement would die.
5. **Scriptures:** The Lord can speak to us in our daily reading of the Bible by highlighting a verse or story that speaks to us about our present circumstances. Have you ever had a single word or specific verse jump off of

the page at you or beckon for it to be read over and over again? The words come to life as you reflect, and suddenly, you have clarity, revelation or comfort for your life.

Sometimes, it may even seem as if God is taking a Scripture verse out of context. It is vital for us to have a basic knowledge of the context of the Scriptures so we understand the full counsel of God. God will never violate His Word, but He will often violate our understanding of His Word. The Holy Spirit may grant us fresh insight or application as we are reading through the Bible. If God gives us fresh insight or a new understanding of a verse or portion of Scripture, it is important that it fits within the rest of the context of the Scriptures. It also cannot be in disagreement with the foundation of God's revealed nature and character (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

6. Impressions: Many prophetic people experience discernment through impressions without even realizing it. Often, we can sense an evil spirit on someone just by sitting down next to a troubled person. The evil spirit that is harassing them will begin to trouble us in the same manner. For instance, if a spirit of fear troubles a person in a close geographic area, we can begin to feel fearful as well. If we do not realize our prophetic ability and discernment in this area, it's easy to feel very confused or think we are crazy (1 Cor. 12:10). It's imperative to treat these impressions as information the Lord is sharing with us instead of a burden we have to constantly live under the weight of. It's entirely possible, and I'd propose, healthy, to say in your spirit, "Message received" and then move on unless the Lord gives you further instruction on how to pray or act.

7. Circumstances: God can speak to us and direct us through the circumstances of our lives. This dynamic occurs as

God opens and closes the doors of opportunity. It is easy to misunderstand this principle and think anytime we come up against an obstacle in our lives, we are out of the will of God. However, keep in mind that often when we are doing something for God, the enemy will oppose us! Even in times of intense opposition, we must remember that Revelation 3:8 says, "I know your deeds. Behold, I have put before you an open door which no one can shut, because you have a little power, and have kept My word, and have not denied My name."

8. **Spiritual Happenings:** These are supernatural incidents that correlate with natural events. Notice that in the book of Numbers, Aaron's rod came alive after being dead, and bore blossoms and ripe almonds as a sign from God that he was anointed to be a leader of Israel (Num. 17:2-8).

Some time ago, every time I entered a worship service, I noticed my watch gained an hour. After purchasing three different watches, all of which gained an hour during worship, I finally asked the Lord what this could mean. He said, "It's later than you think."

What's God Saying?

Today I want to encourage you to think back on your life and take stock of times when God has spoken to you in these ways. Often, we miss the profound power of His voice because we're unconsciously ignorant of the manner in which He speaks. So how do you hear God's voice? In what ways would you like to grow in learning to hear from the Lord? {eoa}

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