

Am I Hearing God's Voice or Satan's?

Have you ever wondered if you are hearing God's voice or the devil's in your life? In the Garden of Eden, Satan came to deceive the first humans, and he is still up to his tricks today. I've had many people tell me, "I think I'm hearing God, but I'm not sure. I'm scared it's the devil." Well, you don't have to wonder. You can know for certain whether the impressions you receive are from God or not. Here are five biblical truths to strengthen your relationship with Jesus as you learn to listen with faith and wisdom.

1. God's voice sets you free.

The voice of the devil can come in many forms. He can tempt us through the media, through a friend or acquaintance and even by throwing a thought at us that he hopes we will grab onto and believe as truth. However, there is a characteristic his voice carries that gives him away. His words always push us into bondage. The devil points us toward sin cycles, shame and condemnation, but God directs us to true freedom.

When God speaks, He breaks the chains of sin and shame.

2 Corinthians 3:13-17 says, "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."

Directly before this, the Scripture contrasts freedom with a hardened or dull mind that is not open to the New Covenant work of the Holy Spirit. Are the words you are hearing sending you back into sin or works-righteousness? That's the devil. Are the words you are hearing setting you free and keeping you free? That's God.

It sounds straight forward, but let's dive a little deeper.

2. God's voice does not change.

Another one of the devil's tricks is to misrepresent truth. He has the audacity to tell us that what is clearly labeled as sin in the Bible does not really count as sin for us. In 1 Timothy 4:1, Paul mentions that as we approach the return of Jesus, many will be deceived by doctrines of demons. The good news is that we don't have to be deceived. We can trust God when He says He never changes.

Hebrews 13:8 says, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today, and forever."

The words God inspired in Scripture are still true today, and we can verify that we are hearing God's voice when it lines up with the Bible.

It is important to study the Word in context and to note which covenant a commandment falls under. However, even the commandments in the Old Testament can still speak truth to us today. Even if the letter of the law no longer applies, the principle God used to create the commandments are still in play. To understand how to live, we must know more than commandments. We must get to know God's character. It takes a personal relationship.

Thankfully, both truth and grace were revealed through Jesus. That means that, even if you have fallen into a deceptive trap laid out by the enemy, there is grace and forgiveness available right now. All you have to do is return to the good Shepherd who loves you and died for you.

3. God's voice produces life.

Jesus says in John 6:63, "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh provides no benefit. The words that I have spoken to you – they are full of the spirit and life."

Jesus warns us in John 10 that the devil comes to steal and

destroy. Following Satan's words ultimately leads to death. This death can be mental, emotional, physical or spiritual. In contrast, the words of God are life-giving. Jesus definitively promises us abundant life as we follow Him.

So how can you tell if life or death is occurring? Jesus said His spiritual words are life, so we simply need to examine the works (or fruit) of the Spirit.

I encourage you to read Galatians 5:16-26. Paul lists many of the differences between spiritual fruit and fleshly fruit. As you read, let the Holy Spirit speak. The places in life you see the fruit of the Spirit, you can trust you are being led by His voice.

Remember, it's not up to you to change in your own strength. When you rely on the grace of God, the work of the Holy Spirit and the beautiful message of the gospel, you will see godly fruit.

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