

Clear Signs God Is Saying Yes to Your Prayers

I love to hear from God! There have been times when He has spoken to me so clearly that to doubt would be sin. Sometimes He speaks to me through a verse in Scripture. It will almost literally jump through the pages at me. I remember one time when I sensed God was speaking to me concerning a particular chapter in the Bible. It was a mighty word of blessing and favor.

I asked, "Lord, are you really speaking to me through this chapter? Can I really claim these words?" I recorded all of this in my prayer journal. That evening we visited a church service and the pastor preached a sermon based on a verse-by-verse study of the very chapter I had read that morning. I sat in tears as I was ministered to by God in a powerful way.

Some of His words have come through others, maybe through a sermon or a song. There have been times when others have shared a "word from the Lord." How I appreciate it when brothers and sisters have obeyed the leading of the Lord and shared these messages with me. But I can honestly say that the times I've heard the Lord's voice the most was in the quiet of my prayer times alone with Him.

Sometimes the words come with a sense of His presence so strong that I don't want to move. I hardly want to breathe. Other times His voice is just a knowing, an awareness. I don't hear from the Lord every time I pray, but when I do, it is more than special to me. When He speaks to me it's often through what people describe as that "still small voice" (1 Kings 19:12). It's an awareness of information. I just know that I know! Scripture teaches that "His sheep ... know His voice" (John 10:4). I recognize His words, be they ever so soft!

I remember when we first moved to Houston. We were doing church planting, so needless to say our money was more than tight! About a quarter of a mile from our house was a small strip mall with a large corner room for rent. The Lord began to minister to me to claim this place as our place of ministry. I remember arguing with the Lord that it was impossible. "Are You sure I'm hearing You? Are You sure?" I have to confess that I doubted God in this. It was so far beyond what we were able to do. However, I shared this information with my husband and we began praying for this place and claiming it as ours. For the first few weeks I regularly drove into the parking lot, either alone or with others, and thanked the Lord for it, praying for protection for the building and blessing for our future ministry.

As the weeks turned into months, my times of prayer for this possible opportunity began growing farther and farther apart. Soon I was barely praying and in several months, I gave up. One day, as I drove by, the Holy Spirit spoke as clearly as if He was sitting next to me: "When did I tell you to stop praying for this building?" I confessed my sin of unbelief to Him and began claiming it again. Within six months we were renting this property. What a blessing it has been in our ministry! I have to tell you, the best part was not the building, but seeing the miracle of how God provided and knowing He spoke it into my life! What a joy to hear from the Lord!

There are times when we need to pray in faith without constant reassurance from God that what we're praying for is in His will. As I pray, I ask the Lord for guidance. Many times He confirms His leading through Scripture, agreement from another Christian brother or sister, or another way of His choosing.

There are those times, though, when I need to pray solely according to how I sense He's leading me. During these times, I trust Him to redirect me if I'm not praying on the right path. I remind myself that His strength is made perfect in my

weakness, that He knows my flaws and human boundaries, and that His ability to work things together for good far outweighs any of my human limitations. The important thing is that I want His will, I'm fully surrendered to Him, and I understand my role is that of a tool in His hands. My desire is to completely follow His leading. The answer depends on Him and Him alone!

It's as if we're coming before the Lord with our prayers and leaving them at His throne. We're saying, "God, this is what I believe You want done in this situation. I trust you to answer as You see fit. I trust You! Show me if there's something I'm not seeing. This is all about You." That, my friend, takes both faith and hearing from Him, as we lift our requests to the Lord.

I believe every person who serves Christ should hear from Him. I have seen this principle misused, however. I was in one meeting where "the voice of God" spoke through nonbelievers giving direction for the church. This was not only accepted but encouraged. I've been in other meetings when a person was "spoken to from God" and frankly humiliated in front of the church body. There have been times when a brother or sister has shared a "revelation" they've received from God that I knew was not His voice. I knew this either from the content of the message or because of the details I knew about the person's life. I have to tell you I seriously doubt the validity of these "messages from God."

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