

Could This Be Drowning out the Holy Spirit's Voice in Your Life?

Over the years, I spent a lot of time flying from place to place to do my job. One of the things you quickly acquire when you fly is noise canceling headphones. The background noise on a plane can drive you crazy. The constant noise makes it especially hard to hear if you are trying to watch a movie or listen to music. The joy that comes from flipping that little switch is remarkable. All of a sudden, your world becomes quieter and you can hear things clearly.

The science behind noise-canceling headphones is actually pretty interesting. Small microphones in each ear of your headphones pick up the background noise, reverse the phase, and then add the phase shifted noise to your headphone mix. Because sound is a waveform, the background noise and the phase shifted noise cancel each other out. You flip a switch and the background noise is gone. If two waves of the same size but opposite polarity hit each other at the same time, the peak of one wave will cancel out the valley of the other wave.

For someone who spends more than enough time in a plane, a set of noise canceling headphones can be a lifesaver. But what happens when you leave the plane? Is it possible to get noise canceling headphones for regular life?

You see, we live in a world of constant noise. It's not just physical noise either, it's also emotional noise and spiritual noise. Physical noise shows up in the form of media, entertainment, life chaos and sometimes airplane seats. Emotional noise comes in the form of stress, anxiety or the weight of expectations in your life. Spiritual noise shows up

in the form of oppression or negativity. All that noise adds up in your life and makes it incredibly difficult to hear the voices that actually matter.

Some of this noise is self-imposed. At times, we are intentionally drowning out noise in our life. We self-medicate through any number of means—entertainment, substance abuse, work. Some of it is just the nature of the lives we live. Every day we are subjected to thousands of advertisements through the internet, television, billboards, street signs and many other sources. All that information is processed by our brains, even if only subconsciously.

No matter what it is, that noise makes it very difficult to hear the things that matter. But what if you could flip a switch and shut out all that noise? What if there was a noise canceling option for all the physical, emotional and spiritual noise in your life? What if you knew that at any point in time, you could get clear direction and clear answers, no matter what the situation?

If you are a follower of Jesus, a born-again Christian, then you have access to the world's greatest leader. That access is not found by going to a church building or talking to your pastor or priest, it's found by listening to the leader who dwells within you.

"To them God would make known what is the glorious riches of this mystery among the nations. It is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27, MEV).

"But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit that lives in you" (Rom. 8:11, MEV).

We have God dwelling in us! That's a pretty remarkable realization. What makes it more amazing is that the spirit of

God that dwells in us was a request from Jesus to His Father.

“The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, for it does not see Him, neither does it know Him. But you know Him, for He lives with you, and will be in you” (John 14:17, MEV).

If this is true, why do our lives seem to be so lacking the ability to hear His voice? Why do so many stumble around as though they don't know what to do? The problem is that all that other noise is blocking our ability to hear from the greatest leader we have available, the leader within. Because we can't hear His voice, the decisions we make lack wisdom and spiritual discernment. When you lack vision and wisdom, you end up reacting to circumstances instead of being led by faith.

The writer of the Book of Proverbs, one of the most remarkable books written on wisdom in history, speaks directly to what happens when we lack vision.

“Where there is no vision, the people perish; but happy is he who keeps the teaching” (Prov. 29:18, MEV).

When we don't have the ability to see the thing God is trying to get us to see, we go astray. We try our own way. We stumble around hoping for the best but never achieve it. A man named Eugene Peterson wrote a wonderful paraphrase version of that verse that says this:

“If people can't see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves; But when they attend to what he reveals, they are most blessed” (Prov. 29:18, MSG).

If we can't see what God is doing, we will end up stumbling over ourselves. If we can't hear what God is saying, we will end up wandering in the wilderness hoping that we are headed in the right direction but never knowing if we are. Our lack of seeing and lack of hearing is not because of a lack of

availability on God's part. God promised us a helper that would be with us forever. He promised a counselor that would teach us all things. He promised us a guide that would lead us into truth.

It is when we attend to what God reveals that we are most blessed. If we are going to attend to what God reveals, then we need to find a way to hear what He is saying. We need to find a way to flip on the noise canceling headphones for our lives and begin to listen. Because He is speaking.

God has given us the gift of His Holy Spirit who dwells inside of us. But due to the overwhelming amount of noise we encounter on a daily basis, we have great difficulty hearing Him. But, what if you knew that you could have access to the world's greatest leader at any point of time in your day? *Well, you can.* All you have to do is quiet the noise and listen. Next week, I will give you the 4 questions I use in my life to quiet the noise and listen to the leader within.

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