

Do You Hear God in Your Workplace?

God is raising up a new breed of man and woman in the workplace today. We have largely been a people who have operated at a “principle-based level” in regard to our relationship with God.

Our culture has been such a formula-based society that it has penetrated the church with this philosophy. In the workplace movement this is especially true. We often hear of programs like, 10 Steps to Better Church Growth or 5 Ways to Become a Better Leader, etc. that are designed to give us a formula for walking with God or succeeding in our jobs. Don't get me wrong; there is a place for these programs. However, I believe God is calling forth a new kind of workplace believer who is operating at a higher level.

Knowing His Presence

Moses was leading the Israelites out of Egypt when they did not have water. They began to complain to Moses. Moses cried out to God for help. God told Moses to speak to the rock and water would come from it. In the past, God told him to strike the rock. This was a new paradigm for Moses to “speak” instead of “strike” the rock. Moses disobeyed the Lord but was still able to bring forth water from the rock. *“Take the staff, and you and your brother Aaron gather the assembly together. Speak to that rock before their eyes and it will pour out its water. You will bring water out of the rock for the community so they and their livestock can drink” (Num 20:7-8).*

Today, we have many believers who refuse to operate at the “listening and obeying” level with God. They would rather use their skill and power only to accomplish their call. This will not produce spiritual fruit for the Kingdom. Rather, it will

only produce "Ishmaels," which is attempting to accomplish something for God in our own strength, the one thing Jesus never did.

Moses recognized he could not effectively lead his people out of Egypt unless he had more than his skill and ability. He had to have God's presence go with him. The LORD replied, *"My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."*

Then Moses said to him, *"If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?"* (Ex 33:14-16).

It is not enough to have God's Word in our heart. We must have His presence in our lives too. We do not have a relationship with His Word; we have a relationship with Jesus and His Holy Spirit. Some parts of the Body of Christ act as though the Trinity is Father, Son and Holy Scriptures versus the Holy Spirit. Only when this relationship is two-way with the Holy Spirit do we see the power of God reflected through us.

Recently I was visiting a major ministry to discuss co-hosting a major workplace conference. The morning after the meeting I was awakened at 5AM and was led to Exodus 33:15. The Lord was showing me that the conference theme needed to focus on bringing His presence into the workplace.

A few months later I was picking up a friend from the airport in preparation for another workplace conference. My friend begins to tell me this: "The Lord spoke to me on the plane and asked me 'What will be the way workplace Christians will overcome the shaking that is coming? He asked this several times of me and then said to me,' 'It is only through having his presence that they can overcome the shaking.'" He then told me to tell Os this immediately upon getting off the plane."

My friend told me this when he got off the plane. Before he

told me the answer I said, "It is only through His presence—Exodus 33:15." The Lord had been speaking to both of us on this important new paradigm God is speaking to the workplace believer today.

Why Don't We Hear?

Many of us have been taught that we cannot hear the voice of the Lord in our lives. In the first centuries after Christ the Greeks became Christians. However, their focus on knowledge-based systems and oratory skills began to move us away from our early Hebraic roots. You see, Greeks learned wisdom through reason and analysis; Hebrews learned wisdom through obedience. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Ps 111:10).*

Paul addressed this growing trend in the following passage: *"My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power" (1 Corinthians 2:4).* The more we move towards knowledge and intellect, the less we see the power of God manifested in our daily experience.

The Bible is full of Hebraic experiences with God. When God gave Joshua a strategy for defeating Jericho it confronted the logical basis for winning a battle. Imagine telling your generals that the strategy to capture Jericho is to walk around the city seven times and blow a trumpet. Imagine putting all the pros and cons of this option down on a piece of paper and deciding what to do based upon the pros and cons of these options. God confronts our knowledge to test our obedience.

We need to realize that we are a product of a Greek system that encourages us to operate on a reason and analysis basis without the power of God mixed in with our God-given reasoning abilities.

Speak to the Books

A few years ago, my TGIF devotionals were published as a book. Our agreement with the publisher called for us to purchase 1,000 copies of the book. At that time we had few distribution capabilities. We would only get one or two orders of books a day for small quantities from our website. After several months we had many boxes of books sitting in our basement. I was burdened about this. I felt God said I was to do something unusual. I was led to go down and lay hands on my books and pray and to leave the basement." So, I went downstairs and began to pray based upon Mark 11:23 that said, "Speak to the mountain."

"Have faith in God," Jesus answered. "I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins" (Mark 11:22-25).

Then, I began to pray: "Lord, these books do us no good here. In the name of Jesus we command these books to leave this office, in Jesus' name!" That afternoon I received a phone call from a workplace ministry in Dallas. They ordered 300 books from us, the largest order we had ever had.

"He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice" (Jn 10:2,3).

"He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God"(John 8:46-47).

Five Points

I love to tell the story of my friend Emeka Nwankpa from

Nigeria. I asked him to speak at a leader's meeting one time on the idea that prayer changes things in the physical realm. He is a lawyer from Nigeria and had to argue a case before his supreme court. He had five points he had to argue. He prepared for months for this case. On the day of court he met with his wife and junior chamber members of his team.

During his prayer time the Spirit of God spoke to Emeka and said, "Do not argue point 1-4, only argue point 5."

Now, if I am about to argue such a case before our supreme court, you better believe I want to know the difference between God's Spirit speaking and another voice speaking. Emeka stood before the judge and said, "Your Lordship, I wish to change my motion and only wish to argue point five in the case." "Are you sure you want to do that counselor?" said the judge. "Yes, your lordship," said Emeka. He proceeds to argue point five and sat down.

The opposing attorney stood up and for 12 minutes could not seem to get his words out. He mumbled, then said a few other things that seemed irrelevant and then told the judge, "Your lordship, it is unfortunate my learned friend did not present points 1-4 in this case. I wish to yield the case."

You see, he had prepared for 1-4 and not for point 5. My friend Emeka won the case by listening to the Spirit of God.

God will speak in the daily grind of our workplace callings if we allow Him to. Invite the Holy Spirit into your work life and listen to what He might say.

... those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God (Rom 8:15).

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