

How Do I Know When God Is Speaking?

You and I are living in a day when we need to be certain that God is directing our lives. We get His answers for the situations in our lives when the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, speaks into our spirits and transmits the “overcoming” victory of Jesus.

If you want to clearly hear the voice of the Lord, you must create an atmosphere for the Holy Spirit to talk to you. You must also develop your listening abilities so that you are able to distinguish among all the competing voices in the earth. This is essential for you to live a godly life—a life of victory.

God wants you to know His will. But for Him to reveal it to you, there has to be an open line of communication. Take these steps to make sure there’s no interference:

1. Recognize the hindrances to hearing God’s voice. To walk in the Spirit, you must focus on God and shut out distractions. Your emotions are one thing that can divert your attention and keep you from hearing the Holy Spirit.

You can’t receive a “phone call” from Him if you’re busy taking a “call” from your emotions. When fear, worry, anxiety or depression dominates your thinking, it blocks out the still, small voice of the Spirit.

Fear. One of the emotions that shouts the loudest is fear. Recognize that the voices that come to torment you do not come from the Father, who deeply loves and accepts you and is in control of your every circumstance (see 2 Tim. 1:7).

You can hang up on fear. The Word says you are to “[cast] all your care upon Him, for He cares for you” (1 Pet. 5:7, NKJV).

Selfish ambition. Maybe you're a doer, an overachiever. There is nothing wrong with desiring to succeed in life, but if that drive dominates your thoughts, you will not be able to hear clearly the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Pursuit of pleasure. Some people are consumed with the desire for material "things"—things they believe will bring them comfort and enjoyment. Others are so wrapped up in themselves or their families, they hardly give a thought to God. As a result, they are simply not attuned to the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Still others become professional "escape artists" who keep their minds occupied with entertainment—movies, books or television—in order to avoid their fears or problems.

In any case, the Holy Spirit will not shout to be heard above the din that fills your mind. To tune Him in, you will have to tune out the rubbish and clean out the clutter of your inmost thoughts. One of the best ways to do this is by taking time to encounter God through worship.

2. *Become a worshiper.* Worship increases your sensitivity to the voice of the Holy Spirit. It is a wonderful tool to help you focus your attention on God, rather than your problems and desires.

Worship is something you do, not something that happens to you. It is an act of your will, to magnify or enlarge your vision of God. When you worship, the things you face appear smaller, less important and less daunting in comparison to His greatness.

Two worshipers in the Bible are good examples for us. The first is Moses. In Exodus 15, after God parted the waters of the Red Sea and led the children of Israel to safety, Moses and Miriam led the Israelites as they praised and worshiped the Lord for their deliverance.

When they began to sing, dance and play their instruments in praise to God, the Holy Spirit prophesied through them about the victories God would give them as they took possession of the Promised Land.

The second is David. Perhaps, of all the people in the Old Testament, David understood, cherished and delighted in the Holy Spirit the most. After being caught in adultery and murder, David pleaded with God, “don’t take your Holy Spirit from me” (see Ps. 51:11).

As a psalmist, David was a singer of praise and one who reveled in worshiping God. He did not want to lose his sweet communion with the Holy Spirit.

3. *Perceive in your spirit.* As you worship God, you will begin to develop spiritual perception. The more you worship and commune with Him, the greater depth your relationship will have; and the more familiar His voice will become.

You may not always hear Him with your ears, but you can perceive what He’s saying as He whispers truth to your spirit (see 1 Cor. 2:9-10).

4. *Pray in tongues.* First Corinthians 14:2, 4 says, “For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself” (NKJV). To “edify” means to “build up.” It is another way to heighten your communication with the Holy Spirit.

Praying in tongues not only builds you up, it also strengthens, rebuilds and recharges your spirit so you can hear the Holy Spirit more clearly. He has all the answers you seek.

Nearly every successful thing I’ve ever done came to me as a revelation after praying in tongues. When you face a dilemma or a decision, don’t reason in your heart; instead pray in the Spirit, and you will receive the answers you need.

Being able to hear the Spirit's voice isn't an option. It is essential to live as God wants us to live. He doesn't hide His will from His children. But doing God's will is dependent on our clearly hearing His voice and perceiving His direction.

God speaks constantly through His Word, through His creation and by His Spirit in our hearts. These voices never contradict one another.

The responsibility to have "ears to hear" what He says falls to you. Your job is to eliminate undesirable noise and tune in to the Holy Spirit by offering up worship to the Lord, developing your spiritual perception, and building up your human spirit by praying in tongues.

Saturate yourself in God's Word, and re-order your priorities. Make whatever lifestyle changes you need to make. Nothing in life is more important than hearing from God.

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