

How to Hear Holy Spirit's Voice Clearly in Our Chaotic World

Do you remember life before the year of our Lord 1999? If you didn't have Caller ID, you would have to ask who was calling when you didn't recognize the voice talking to you on your landline. We didn't have that high falutin' technology in our house. We were living in the bustling metropolis of Irmo, South Carolina, and didn't want to pay the extra money each month to do something that a trained ear could easily do. If you didn't recognize them within a few seconds, they were either selling something or needed something.

From the advent of the rotary dial telephone until the mass adoption of cell phones, most people around the world had to learn to recognize the voices calling them and differentiate them to appropriately respond. It seems that we have become lazy by way of smartphones. I probably only know about three telephone numbers by heart anymore. One of them belongs to the Jenny Craig company (great advertising campaigns in the 1990s). But I digress ...

The word *shema* is Hebrew for "hear" or "listen." But it also means to do what the speaker says. It implies a response is expected by the very fact that you have heard the person speaking to you. Deuteronomy 6:4 is the starting place for understanding the context of *shema*.

"[*Shema*], O Israel: The Lord is our God. The Lord is one!" (Deut. 6:4, author's emphasis).

In such a busy and fast-paced world, we need help to understand if we have heard correctly or not.

For instance, when I go shopping for groceries, it is not the

voice of myself, my parents or my pastor that directs me to the thing I forgot to get. It is the voice of my wife in my head. It gently reminds me that I should have not overlooked the ingredients portion of the label. It consistently helps me think twice about dessert purchases in reference to the family budget. It may even literally call me mid-shop to help me make the correct decision. I am not confused about who it is. I also know that if I hear her share wisdom and don't do the wise thing, there will be consequences in my waistline and our available funds.

In a recent episode of *Coach & Joe*, Chad Norris and Armando Ramos helped us embark on a journey. They invited us into getting acquainted with a tool that the Lord and the leadership team at Bridgeway have been crafting together to help people *shema* the Lord as disciples. Chad has been on a very long quest to learn how to be both a disciple and friend of Abba and to teach everyone around him to do the same. He relates part of this story in the episode "Shema Triangle: Part 1."

[Click here](#) to see an easy-to-understand diagram of the "Shema Triangle."

One of Chad's favorite quotes about knowing Abba is from Tozer.

"What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us." –A.W. Tozer

How will we know if what we think about God is even remotely correct? There are myriad commentaries, man-made doctrines, books and conferences that aim to help you have correct theology. But what if they are slightly wrong? How can we know with confidence that our thoughts about God are correct?

The short answer is by listening to and obeying our Abba. The long answer is a journey of discipleship that will take you, and cost you, your whole life.

This is why the Shema Triangle tool is so helpful. It takes a repeatable and holistic approach to being friends with God. The tool gives us a pathway to not only revelation, but also consecration and transformation. It helps us understand where we are in our friendship with God and then helps us take the next set of steps to not only talk about but live out that friendship.

For those unfamiliar with the concept of friendship with God, please read Chad Norris' book, *Mama Jane's Secret*.

Since we are invited and promoted into friendship with the God of the universe in John 15:14-15, we should have a plan for how to practically and consistently engage in the relationship. The tool takes us on a journey of refining our understanding of God by learning to hear His voice and remove the other voices which distract and destroy.

We know from Scripture that God wants us to know Him (Jer. 9:23-24), that it is a very intimate level of knowledge. Scripture uses the same word for marital intimacy in Genesis 4:1 as in Jeremiah 9 to describe knowing God. Taking it into the New Covenant, Jesus tells His disciples in John 17:3 that eternal life is knowing (Greek word for intimate knowledge, *ginosko*) both the Father and Jesus.

We only know someone intimately by communing with them, by communication in a consistent and vulnerable way. So what voice are we listening to?

Here's what John 10 says: "But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name, and he leads them out. When he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them. And the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will never follow a stranger, but will run away from him. For they do not know the voice of strangers" (John 10:2-5).

But that isn't the only voice we can hear. Not by a long shot. Every day, I hear about 100,000,000,000 different voices (well, not quite that many). From my wife, kids, extended family, social media, TV, music, culture, podcasts, to my own conscience, voices are vying for our attention all the time. Especially the hungry infant.

Let's say you are in line at your local grocery store. You see someone ahead of you that seems to be struggling to pay for their food. You are in a hurry and suddenly have a thought pop in your head "just pay for their groceries." Then lots of other thoughts pop up to process what that thought even means. "Can you afford it?" "Are you being a good steward?" "This is taking too long." "Why did they even get in line without money?" "Will anyone notice my generosity?"

Your upbringing, your Abba, your bank account, your family, your schedule, your compassion, your frustration, your shame, your Sunday school teacher, your high school crush are all trying to weigh in on the situation in your mind.

Which one is Abba? Which one matters most? How can I learn to differentiate them?

These three questions are really important in beginning our journey to both hear and do what Abba is saying to us. Obedience to the wrong voice may feel right in a moment, but it is still missing the mark. When we learn what Abba's voice sounds like with the help of people in our community and the spiritual authorities in our lives, we can more quickly and easily listen and do what Abba is saying.

"You want to know why I think more people don't make disciples? It's not the bottom right of the triangle, it's the top." -Chad Norris

Are you interested in learning to hear Abba more clearly? Do you feel like you have too many voices competing for your time, obedience and attention? Do you feel ill-equipped to

make disciples because you don't know that your life is worth imitating?

Go to to see if taking a year to submit to the discipleship process of this tool is what Abba is saying to you.