

How to Respond to the Voice of God

When God spoke to Moses and others in the Old Testament, those events were encounters with God. An encounter with Jesus was an encounter with God for the disciples. In the same way, an encounter with the Holy Spirit is an encounter with God for you.

Now that the Holy Spirit is given, He is the One who guides you into all truth and teaches you all things. You understand spiritual truth because the Holy Spirit is working in your life. You cannot understand the Word of God unless the Spirit of God teaches you. When you come to the Word of God, the Author Himself is present to instruct you. You never discover truth; truth is revealed. When the Holy Spirit reveals truth to you, He is not leading you to an encounter with God. That is an encounter with God!

Immediately Respond

When God spoke to Moses, what Moses did next was crucial. After Jesus spoke to the disciples, what they did next was crucial. What you do next after the Spirit of God speaks to you through His Word is crucial. Our problem is that when the Spirit of God speaks to us, we go into a long discussion with Him questioning the rightness of His directions.

Moses went into a long discussion with God (Exodus 3:11-4:13), and it limited him for the rest of his life. Because of his objections, God gave Aaron to be a spokesman for Moses. Moses had to speak to the people through his brother Aaron (Exodus 4:14-16).

Aaron was the one who made the golden calf for the rebellious people. Aaron, together with Miriam, led a challenge to Moses' leadership. Moses paid a high price for arguing with God.

I challenge you to review what you sense God has been saying to you on a regular basis. If God speaks and you hear but do not respond, a time could come when you will not hear His voice. Disobedience can lead to a “famine ... of hearing the words of the Lord” (Amos 8:11-12).

When Samuel was a young boy, God began to speak to him. The Scriptures say, “Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground” (1 Samuel 3:19). Be like Samuel. Don’t let a single word from the Lord fail to bring adjustments in your life. Then God will do in you and through you everything He says to you.

Luke 8:5-15 records Jesus’ parable of the sower and the seeds. The seed that fell on the good soil represented those who heard the Word of God, retained it, and produced fruit.

Jesus said, “Therefore take heed how you hear. For whoever has, to him more will be given; and whoever does not have, even what he seems to have will be taken from him” (Luke 8:18). If you hear the Word of God and do not apply it to produce fruit in your life, even what you think you have will be taken away. Be careful how you listen to God! Make up your mind now that when the Spirit of God speaks to you, you are going to do what He says.

God Speaks With a Purpose

We usually want God to speak to us so He can give us a devotional thought to make us feel good all day. If you want the God of the universe to speak to you, you need to be ready for Him to reveal to you what He is doing where you are. In the Scripture, God is not often seen coming and speaking to people just for conversation’s sake. He is always up to something. When God speaks to you through the Bible, prayer, circumstances, the church or in some other way, He has a purpose in mind for your life.

When God spoke to Abram (Genesis 12), what was God about to

do? He was about to begin to build a nation. Notice the timing of God. Why did God speak to Abram when He did? Because it was then that God wanted to start to build a nation. The moment Abram knew what God was about to do, he had to make an adjustment in his life to God. He had to follow immediately what God said.

God Speaks at the Right Time

The moment God speaks to you is the very moment God wants you to respond. Some of us assume that we have the next few months to think about it and to try to decide whether this is really God's timing. The moment God speaks to you is His timing. That is why He chooses to speak when He does. He speaks to His servant when He is ready to move.

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