

You've Heard God's Voice. Now What?

So you have learned to listen for God's voice. You enter His presence often, quiet your soul and anticipate hearing from Him. You remain open to hearing from Him throughout your day. Whether occasionally or more often, there are times you sense He is speaking. Awesome! Now what do you do *after* you hear God's voice?

A relationship with God is something you can enjoy every day. But your sense of His presence, His peace and His guidance will not feel the same every day. When you seek God diligently about something and then become aware of His voice it does something deep in your soul. Your emotions may be relieved or stirred up. It's difficult to fully describe in words what it's like at that moment.

But what comes next? Do you rejoice—and then go about your regular routine? Do you dismiss it or question what God has said? Do you immediately rush headlong into frantic action? What you do next will often affect the way in which what God said to you impacts your future.

Here are some sound steps to take after you hear God's voice.

Treasure His Voice

God's voice is not like the thousands or millions of other messages your brain receives every day. His voice is precious. He doesn't speak lightly. His voice is comparatively rare, immensely valuable, "pregnant" with meaning, purpose and power. He doesn't speak just because you wish for Him to do so. The presence of the Holy Spirit means He is with us always, and we always have access to Him. But His voice is not in the same category as the "Good morning" you exchange with a friend. This is the God of the universe! When He does speak,

treat that word as the priceless and powerful message that it is.

Interpret With Care

I believe part of the reason God doesn't speak to us more often is that we so easily confuse our own thoughts, other people's words or even messages from the evil one as coming from God. God will not usually add His own voice to a confusing cacophony of sound. His word is always true, but we are finite in our ability to hear, understand and differentiate His voice from that of others. He is able to make Himself heard, but we must continue to grow in our ability to understand. Hold your understanding of His voice loosely.

Get Prepared

God speaks to us, in part, so that we have an opportunity to prepare for what He is about to do. That's our role. If God has spoken about a door He wants to open for you, are there skills you can develop now that will increase your readiness? If you've heard Him say a relationship will be restored, or your desire for a spouse will be answered, what are you doing to learn about healthy relationships now? If God has given you a vision for some area of ministry, are you making sure the roots of your character are strong and deep with integrity? Knowing what God said is true, what do you need to do to prepare?

Obey

God's voice may have impressed on you to do something, perhaps something difficult. As Mary said to the servants nearby when Jesus was at the wedding feast, "Whatever He says to you, do it" (John 2:5). God's instructions may be to forgive someone who has hurt you, change something significant in your lifestyle or take what feels like a big risk for His kingdom. Once you understand what He is asking of you, whatever it is,

just do it! He usually won't tell you anything more until you follow through on what He has already told you to do.

Keep Listening

In any relationship, including relationship with God, it's not "one and done." Keep listening not in a desperate way, but to keep your own heart open. You will need God's continuing guidance as you follow through on what God has told you. I recall a time I felt impressed to share with a friend that I had been praying for her about something specific. I did so immediately, and the results were disastrous. I learned I needed God's guidance as much or more about matters such as time, place, tone and context. It's not a matter of hesitating; it's about continuing to listen and learn at every step of the way.

Trust Him

It's common to get some things wrong, or at least slightly off-center, in hearing and understanding God's voice. He knows that. Joyce Meyer tells how God reassured her in this way; "Don't worry about missing Me. If you get lost, I'll come find you!" That's part of what relationship with God is all about. And the more you go through things together with Him, the more you will become able to trust Him. When things seem "off," go back and seek Him again. He's God, He's your friend and He's on your side. He can be trusted.

Listen. Follow through. Do it again. Your relationship with God will grow as a result.

Your Turn: *Think of the last time you heard God say something to you. What did you do next? Did you follow through? Is there anything you need to do now? Leave a comment below. {eoa}*

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