

Hearing God's Voice - Are You Ready to Listen?

Hearing God's voice is something we all long for-but did you know that it's not hard to do? In fact, God wants you to hear His voice! He doesn't speak to us through a quiver in our liver or through vibes or mediums. Hearing the voice of God is as natural as hearing your best friend talk to you. What's more, we can hear Him everyday and not just on special occasions or by chanting special incantations. He speaks to us in the natural moments of life. Do you want to hear God's voice? Then you must be ready to listen.

Hearing God's Voice - Why Do You Want to Hear Him?

Why do you want to hear God's voice? That may sound like a silly question, but motives are important in anything we do. The Bible says this about God's Word: "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12)

Do you want to hear God's voice? If you do, it's possible you're hearing Him already, for He may be the one giving you the longing to hear Him.

Hearing God's Voice in the Bible

In his book *Knowing God*, J. I. Packer says, "God has spoken to man, and the Bible is His Word, given to us to make us wise unto salvation."

The Bible itself declares, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). In another place, we read: "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness." (2 Timothy 3:16).

You may hear people say that the Bible is just a book written by men, but the Bible itself claims to be God's Word! Can we rely on it? The evidence of history, archaeology, fulfilled prophecy and personal testimony over thousands of years is overwhelming that the Bible is, indeed, God's Word. Do you want to hear God's voice? Then read the Bible. Find a good daily reading plan, and stick to it.

Hearing God's Voice through Prayer

When you want to have a conversation with someone, how do you begin? Do you stand in front of the person and hope they will talk to you? That might work, if the other person is outgoing enough, but usually we begin a conversation by opening our own mouths and talking, engaging the other person's attention. It's the same with God! He loves to hear us talk to Him, and it's in those moments that we prepare ourselves to hear the voice of God. Prayer is like saying, "Hello, God, it's me. I believe You created me and that You know way more about how I should live my life than I do. I'd like to get to know You better. Here's what's going on in my life, and I'd sure like Your thoughts on how to handle it. Would You please speak to me about this today?"

In an ordinary conversation, we speak, then listen for the response of the other person. It's the same with God! Once we've prepared our hearts to listen through prayer, we're more likely to hear the voice of God. Does He speak to us through an audible voice? Some claim He does, but usually that's not the case. We may not actually "hear" the voice of God, but He speaks to us in many ways. Here are some of them:

- God speaks through His Word
- God speaks through our thoughts
- God speaks through conversations with others
- God speaks through circumstances

Hearing God's Voice through Jesus

The Bible also tells us that [Jesus is God](#) in the flesh. Therefore, if you want to hear the voice of God, you must study and know the teachings of Jesus. Here's how John describes Him: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched - this we proclaim concerning the Word of life." (1 John 1:1). You must also have a personal relationship with Jesus. Have you ever tried to carry on a conversation of any depth with a

person you did not know? It doesn't usually go very far.

Shortly before He was crucified, Jesus met with His disciples to reassure them of what would happen after He was gone. He promised them a helper: "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever - the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you." (John 14:16-17). The Holy Spirit, then, is the fulfillment of the way we hear God's voice!

Hearing God's Voice with the Help of the Holy Spirit

"But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you." (John 14:26). The second chapter of Acts describes the events that occurred on the day of Pentecost, after Jesus ascended into Heaven. Verse 3 says they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, the Counselor promised by Jesus. This unique aspect of God's personality did not come to them as someone they could see and touch, but rather He came to live inside them. That same Spirit is available to you and me today. [Are you a Christian?](#) If so, you already have the Holy Spirit available to you. Ask God for a fresh filling everyday, and He will prepare your heart to hear God's voice. His Spirit, that still, small voice inside you, is the One who will remind you of what God said, and help you recognize God's opportunities in your life.

Hearing God's Voice - Conclusion of the Matter

So we have the Bible, prayer, Jesus, the Holy Spirit and our own hearts to help us in hearing God's voice. Do you want to hear God's voice? That is the final question, for God responds to willing hearts. In the book of Revelation, we read: "Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me." (Revelation 3:20). God will never force you to obey Him, but waits for your willing response to His call. Are you hearing His voice right now? Don't let your final answer be the wrong one.

You are here: [Prayer](#) >> [Learn More about Hearing God's Voice!](#) >> [Hearing God Speak](#)

Hearing God speak - Does He speak audibly?

These days we read and hear all kinds of claims regarding "hearing" from God. How can we know who or what to believe? Does God really speak to people today, and if He does, can we hear Him like we hear anyone else?

While there is no single "one-size-fits-all" answer to this question, we can know God wants you and me to hear His voice. How to hear God is the real question. Just as He has created us uniquely, so He speaks to us individually, even in corporate settings, for we hear Him not with our ears, but in our hearts.

Hearing God Speak - How Can I Hear Him?

While it's highly unlikely you will hear God speak to you out loud, in a big booming voice like Bill Cosby in his "Noah and the Ark" skit, God does speak audibly through teachers, pastors, friends, family members - even songs, events, and people we don't especially like. Are you surprised? God is God, after all, and can communicate with us any way He chooses.

Hearing the voice of God is as natural as an idea that comes into your mind. In fact, that's often exactly how He speaks. A thought occurs to you-something you've never thought of before-and it leads you to some kind of action that either answers a prayer or helps someone else who's in trouble.

God speaks to us in the natural moments of life. Do you want to hear God's voice? Then you must be ready to listen. Here are some preparation tips.

- Know why you want to hear Him. Motives are important. God is not a genie, nor is He Santa Claus. He speaks to those who come to Him in Jesus' name. "And I will do whatever you ask in

my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father" (John 14:13). He also speaks to us for specific purposes, as this verse reveals.

- The Bible says this about God's Word: "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12).
- Consider this: If you want to hear from God, it's possible you are hearing Him already, for He may be the One giving you the very desire to hear Him.

Hearing God Speak - He Speaks to Us Through the Bible

The Bible itself claims:

- "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1).
- "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).

The evidence of history, fulfilled prophecy, and personal testimony over thousands of years is overwhelming that the Bible is, indeed, God's Word. Do you want to hear God's voice? Then read the Bible.

Hearing God Speak - He Speaks to Us Through Prayer

When you want to have a conversation with someone, how do you begin? That's just how it is with God. One speaks; the other listens. Here are some tips for hearing from God through prayer:

- Schedule a daily appointment with God.
- Be ready to listen (hint: that means being quiet!).

Understand that the actual "hearing" may come after your quiet time has ended. It's the preparation of your heart to hear that makes the difference.

Hearing the Voice of God - What does the Bible say?

When bank tellers are trained to recognize counterfeit money, they simply are given genuine money and told to familiarize themselves with it. That way, when a counterfeit bill shows up, they are quick to recognize it. The same is true with hearing the voice of God. How can we be sure that it is God's voice we are hearing? By familiarizing ourselves with what He has already said in His Word - the Bible - we can recognize His voice. If God is going to speak to us today - whether audibly or inaudibly - He is going to say things that are in agreement with His Word.

When he was a young boy, the prophet Samuel heard the voice of God, but didn't recognize it until he was instructed by Eli, the chief priest (1 Samuel 3:1-10). Gideon witnessed an appearance of God, but he still doubted what he had seen and heard, even to the extent of asking for three signs (Judges chapter 6, especially verses 17-22, 36-40). How can we know when we are hearing the voice of God?

First, we have a distinct advantage over Samuel and Gideon. We have the completed Scriptures from God to read and meditate. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 tells us, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." Do you have a question about a decision in your life that you want to hear the voice of God? Study the Bible and see what it says. God never directs us in anything that is against what He has taught or promised in His Word.

Second, to hear God's voice we must know how to recognize it. Jesus said "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27). We can see this truth illustrated in how farmers relate to their animals. A relative of mine farms a small ranch. Whenever we go out to visit, we always go out to look at his herd. My relative can call all of the cows to him by a simple word. The cows do not respond to my voice at all. What's the difference? The cattle are with my relative constantly. He spends time with them daily and is the one who feeds and cares for them. The cows feel comfortable around him, and they can instantly tell when a stranger is among them. If we are to know God's voice, we must spend time with Him daily.

We have to be sure to spend quality time daily in prayer and Bible study. That is how we get to know God and hear His voice. As you spend intimate time with God and His Word, the easier it will be to recognize His voice. God speaks to us primarily through the Bible, but we can sometimes also hear God's voice in our consciences, in circumstances, and through other people. By filtering what we see and hear through the Bible, we can know if we are truly hearing the voice of God.

How do you know God is speaking to you?

You will hear God speaking to you in that still, small voice that prompts you in your spirit. But, how do you know it is **God** who is speaking to you? God has given us some direction as to how we can determine His voice from any others we may hear, either real or imagined. These confirmations will strengthen our faith and enable us to hear God more clearly as we grow in our faith.

How do you know God is speaking to you? - The Tests

The following tests will help you determine if God is speaking to you. These methods should be accompanied by continual prayer and in some cases fasting.

The first test is the confirmation of God's written Word - the Bible. Everything that God says will agree with His written Word. He will never tell you to sin or go against a teaching in His Word. This simple test can clarify many "messages." We must, however, be careful not to read the written Word with any preconceived ideas of what it is saying.

The second test is the confirmation of godly counsel. God has placed people in our lives to help us to hear His voice. These people may include pastors, teachers, parents, and godly friends. In most cases, they will confirm the voice of God to you and help you to see His plan. This is not to say that you should rely on them solely. These people are human and can have their own feelings and fears distort their objectivity. However, they

can be a very valuable source of confirmation when you are uncertain of God's voice.

The third test is the confirmation through circumstances. Christians can carefully studying their situation for indications of God's will. Some Christians have called this the Gideon method or "putting out the fleece." When God told Gideon that he was to lead Israel into battle against their enemies, Gideon put a fleece out on the ground in order to receive a sign that God was really speaking to him. If you feel led to use this test, come to God with a humble attitude and not a spirit of testing Him. Pray for God to reveal His will and carefully watch the circumstances that relate to that decision.

It is wise to not use any of these methods exclusively when trying to receive confirmation of God's voice. Most Christian leaders would agree that a combination of all three methods of confirmation is the best way to verify that the message you have received is from God. Each method is to be done with prayer. God wants you to hear His voice and He will reveal it to you.

Finally, remember that prayer is a conversation. When you ask God to talk to you, be still and listen for His voice. If you expect Him to speak and you are listening for it, He will speak to you regularly.

What are some practical tips for listening to God?

Listening to God is an important part of the Christian life. God desires to speak to us and we have the privilege of listening to His instruction and guidance. William Barclay once said, "Prayer is not a way of making use of God; prayer is a way of offering ourselves to God in order that He should be able to make use of us. It may be that one of our great faults in prayer is that we talk too much and listen too little. When prayer is at its highest, we wait in silence for God's voice to us."¹

So, how can we discipline ourselves to hear the voice of God? Consider these practical tips:

- Plan ahead. Restructure your schedule so you can spend uninterrupted time with your Heavenly Father. Find a quiet place and bring along your Bible, notebook, and pen. Perhaps you enjoy worshipping with music and would like to bring along your favorite worship music.
- Prepare yourself mentally, emotionally, and physically. It is essential that we come to God with a pure heart, righteous motives, and a desire to hear from Him. Spend time confessing sin and receiving God's forgiveness.
- Spend time in prayer, worship, Bible reading, and meditation on God's Word. As you read God's Word, ask Him to speak to you. God often speaks to His children through His written Word.
- Wait expectantly. This is not a time to zone out or think of the activities for later in the day. If something apart from God's voice comes to your mind, jot it down. This will free your mind to be able to concentrate on God and listen for His instruction. Spend time in silence, waiting for God to speak in your spirit. Feel free to ask Him questions and then await His answer. Some people like to write down what they hear from God or any direction they receive about a certain issue.
- Obey whatever God tells you to do.
- Continue your time of waiting on God throughout the day. Always be listening for His voice.

John 10:27 says, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me." Do you hear God's voice?