

Discerning God's Voice

October 14, 2018

John 10:3-5 ESV

3 The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

4 When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

5 A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.

1 Timothy 4:1-3 ESV

1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons,

2 through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared,

3 who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

Proverbs 7:10-15 ESV

10 And behold, the woman meets him, dressed as a prostitute, wily of heart.

11 She is loud and wayward; her feet do not stay at home;

12 now in the street, now in the market, and at every corner she lies in wait.

13 She seizes him and kisses him, and with bold face she says to him,

14 "I had to offer sacrifices, and today I have paid my vows;

15 so now I have come out to meet you, to seek you eagerly, and I have found you."

3 Requirements for Hearing God's Voice

1. Knowing God's Word

The best way, if not the only way, to learn and practice hearing God's voice is to read and study the Bible. Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you what the Scriptures mean and to open your eyes and heart to see. When reading the Bible, you have the promise, the guarantee, that the Holy Spirit will be present and speaking.

John 16:13-15 ESV

13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide (*hodēgeō* - to be a guide and teacher, to show the way) you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak (*laleo* - say, tell, utter, to use the faculty of speech), and he will declare (*anaggellō* - tell, speak, declare, announce, rehearse, report, show, make known) to you the things that are to come.

14 He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare (*anaggellō*) it to you.

15 All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare (*anaggellō*) it to you.

Hebrews 8:10-11 ESV

10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

11 And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know (*oida - to know, understand, get knowledge of, to know how, to be skilled in, cherish, pay attention to*) me, from the least of them to the greatest.

You will not hear the voice of the Lord speaking to your heart until you can hear His voice speaking to you in the Scriptures.

Proverbs 6:20-23 ESV

20 My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching.

21 Bind them on your heart always; tie them around your neck.

22 When you walk, they will lead you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk with you.

23 For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light, and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life.

Unless the Scriptures become more than just text on paper; alive, intimate, life-transforming, character-forging, you will never hear the voice of the Lord speaking to you personally.

2. A Surrendered Heart - *surrendered to God's timing, methods and results.*

Isaiah 55:8-9 ESV

8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.

9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 ESV

1 For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.

2 a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted...

Ecclesiastes 3:11 ESV

11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

Ecclesiastes 3:14 ESV

14 I perceived that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it. God has done it, so that people fear before him.

Hebrews 3:7-19 ESV

7 Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, "Today, if you hear his voice,
8 do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, on the day of testing in the wilderness,
9 where your fathers put me to the test and saw my works for forty years.
10 Therefore I was provoked with that generation, and said, 'They always go astray in their heart; they
have not known my ways.'
11 As I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter my rest.'"
12 Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away
from the living God.
13 But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened
by the deceitfulness of sin.
14 For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end.
15 As it is said, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion."
16 For who were those who heard and yet rebelled? Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses?
17 And with whom was he provoked for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies
fell in the wilderness?
18 And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient?
19 So we see that they were unable to enter because of unbelief.

If the circumstances of your life are requiring you to die to self, you are exactly where God's voice is leading you, in the very center of God's will.

2 Corinthians 4:7-11 ESV

7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not
to us.
8 We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair;
9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed;
10 always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in
our bodies.
11 For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also
may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

Ezekiel 14:1-5 ESV

1 Then certain of the elders of Israel came to me and sat before me.
2 And the word of the LORD came to me:
3 "Son of man, these men have taken their idols into their hearts, and set the stumbling block of their
iniquity before their faces. Should I indeed let myself be consulted by them?
4 Therefore speak to them and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: Any one of the house of Israel
who takes his idols into his heart and sets the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and yet
comes to the prophet, I the LORD will answer him as he comes with the multitude of his idols,
5 that I may lay hold of the hearts of the house of Israel, who are all estranged from me through their
idols."

We will not hear the voice of God whenever we have idols in our hearts; any area of our heart and life which is not surrendered to God.

3. Holiness of Heart, Mind and Lifestyle

2 Corinthians 6:16-17 ESV

16 What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

17 Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you.

We will not hear God's voice if we are knowingly and willfully participating in a sinful and worldly lifestyle.

John 16:7-15 ESV

7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

8 And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning SIN and RIGHTEOUSNESS and JUDGMENT:

9 concerning sin, because they do not believe in me;

10 concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer;

11 concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

12 I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come.

14 He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

15 All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 ESV

16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for TEACHING, for REPROOF, for CORRECTION, and for TRAINING in righteousness,

17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.