

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 friends talk to you. What's more, we can hear Him every day 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 every day, 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.

<http://www.allaboutprayer.org/hearing-gods-voice.htm>