

HEARING (GOD'S VOICE)

SESSION 1 – He's Always Speaking

Biggest myth: “God doesn’t speak very often or ever to me.”

Many of us have preconceived ideas about how God speaks.

Our God is a communicating God and He wants to communicate with us. In fact, He specifically created us with ears to hear His voice.

- One of the main reasons that we don’t hear God speak more often is that, even when God has clearly directed our path, we don’t recognize it as God’s voice.

John 10:3-8, 16, 27¹ - *“The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep recognize his voice and come to him. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.⁴ After he has gathered his own flock, he walks ahead of them, and they follow him because they know his voice.⁵ They won’t follow a stranger; they will run from him because they don’t know his voice.”*

⁶*Those who heard Jesus use this illustration didn’t understand what he meant,⁷ so he explained it to them: “I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep.⁸ All who came before me were thieves and robbers. But the true sheep did not listen to them. ...*

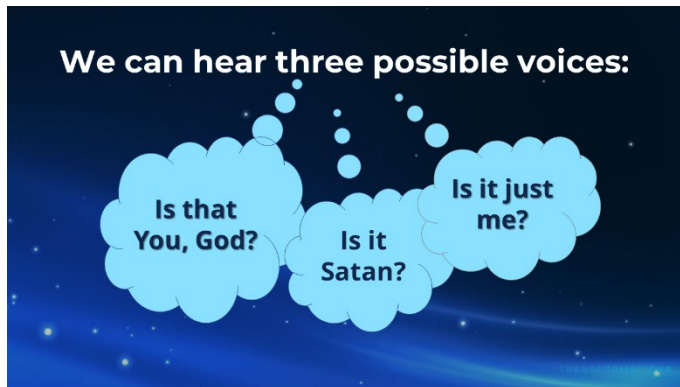
¹⁶*“I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd. ...*

²⁷*“My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.”*

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Who is the hero in your story?

One of the biggest challenges to hearing from God is distinguishing between the different voices that we hear in our head.



John 10:5 - *They won't follow a stranger; they will run from him because they don't know his voice."*

Do we deserve to hear His voice?

God speaks in lots of different ways

1. THE BIBLE

- Any experience, prophecy or "revelation" which contradicts Scripture is not of God and is to be rejected ... period.
- The Holy Spirit resides in us and part of His job is to teach us all truth and communicate God's heart to us.
- **John 14:26** - *But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you.*
- **2 Timothy 3:16-17** - *All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.*

2. WITNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

- **Romans 8:16** - *For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children.*

3. PEACE OF GOD

Describe a time when you sensed peace from God about a situation.

4. REPETITION

- **2 Corinthians 13:1** - *"This is the third time I am coming to visit you (and as the Scriptures say, "The facts of every case must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.")*
- **Genesis 41:32** - *"As for having two similar dreams, it means that these events have been decreed by God, and he will soon make them happen."*

5. DIVINE COINCIDENCE

- **Esther 4:14** - *"Who knows if perhaps you were made queen for just such a time as this?"*

6. OBJECT LESSONS

- **Joel 2** - locusts invade like an army

7. WISE COUNSEL

- **Proverbs 15:22** - *Plans go wrong for lack of advice; many advisers bring success.*

8. NATURAL MANIFESTATIONS

- **Romans 1:20** - *For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God.*

9. STILL SMALL VOICE

- **1 Kings 19:12** - *And after the earthquake there was a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire there was the sound of a gentle whisper.*

10. SUPERNATURAL

- **Numbers 22:30** - *"But I am the same donkey you have ridden all your life," the donkey answered. "Have I ever done anything like this before?"*
- Gifts of the Spirit – prophecy, words of knowledge, etc.

11. DREAMS AND VISIONS

- **Matthew 2:12** - *When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.*
- **Acts 10:3** - *One afternoon about three o'clock, he had a vision in which he saw an angel of God coming toward him. "Cornelius!" the angel said.*
- Natural Dreams:
 - **Ecclesiastes 5:3 NLT** – *Too much activity gives you restless dreams.*
 - **Jeremiah 29:8 NLT** – *This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies, the God of Israel, says: "Do not let your prophets and fortune-tellers who are with you in the land of Babylon trick you. Do not listen to their dreams."*
- Spiritual Dreams:
 - **Daniel 7:15-16 NLT** – *I, Daniel, was troubled by all I had seen, and my visions terrified me. So I approached one of those standing beside the throne and asked him what it all meant. He explained it to me like this.*

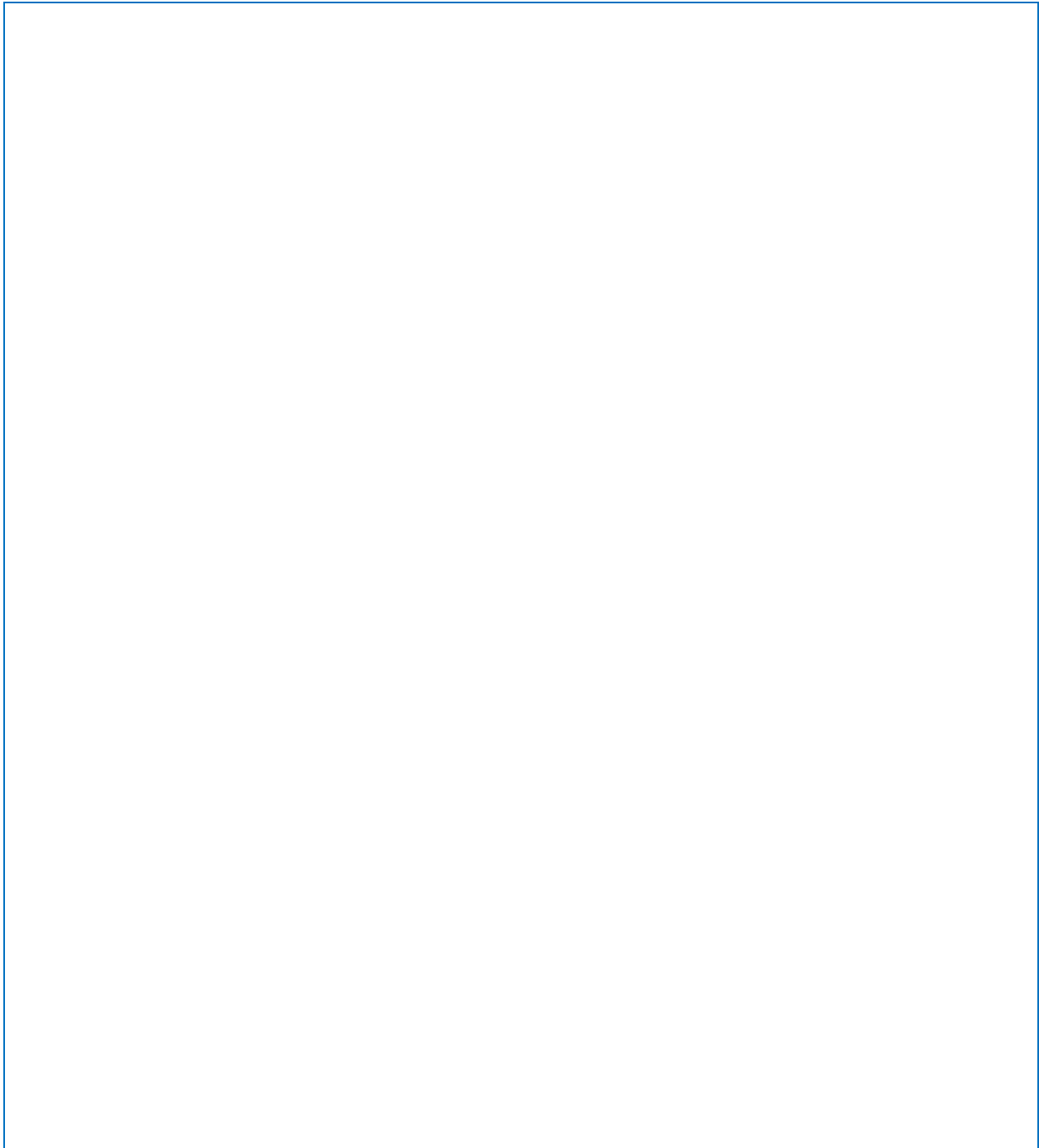
Cloud of information

For any situation or individual, there is a cloud of information that God wants to reveal or speak.

ACTIVATION EXERCISE

Read [Psalm 139](#) and [Romans 8](#) (following pages)

- Go slow, meditate on each section and see if something jumps out to you about it, write down your thoughts.



PSALM 139 (NLT)

- ¹ O LORD, you have examined my heart
and know everything about me.
- ² You know when I sit down or stand up.
You know my thoughts even when I'm far away.
- ³ You see me when I travel
and when I rest at home.
You know everything I do.
- ⁴ You know what I am going to say
even before I say it, LORD.
- ⁵ You go before me and follow me.
You place your hand of blessing on my head.
- ⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too great for me to understand!
- ⁷ I can never escape from your Spirit!
I can never get away from your presence!
- ⁸ If I go up to heaven, you are there;
if I go down to the grave, you are there.
- ⁹ If I ride the wings of the morning,
if I dwell by the farthest oceans,
- ¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me,
and your strength will support me.
- ¹¹ I could ask the darkness to hide me
and the light around me to become night—
- ¹² but even in darkness I cannot hide from you.
To you the night shines as bright as day.
Darkness and light are the same to you.
- ¹³ You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body
and knit me together in my mother's womb.
- ¹⁴ Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex!
Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it.
- ¹⁵ You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion,
as I was woven together in the dark of the womb.
- ¹⁶ You saw me before I was born.
Every day of my life was recorded in your book.

PSALM 139 (NLT)

Every moment was laid out

before a single day had passed.

¹⁷ How precious are your thoughts about me, O God.

They cannot be numbered!

¹⁸ I can't even count them;

they outnumber the grains of sand!

And when I wake up,

you are still with me!

¹⁹ O God, if only you would destroy the wicked!

Get out of my life, you murderers!

²⁰ They blaspheme you;

your enemies misuse your name.

²¹ O LORD, shouldn't I hate those who hate you?

Shouldn't I despise those who oppose you?

²² Yes, I hate them with total hatred,

for your enemies are my enemies.

²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart;

test me and know my anxious thoughts.

²⁴ Point out anything in me that offends you,

and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

ROMANS 8 (NLT)

Life in the Spirit

So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. ²And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death. ³The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. ⁴He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit.

⁵Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. ⁶So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. ⁷For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God's laws, and it never will. ⁸That's why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God.

⁹But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.) ¹⁰And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives

ROMANS 8 (NLT)

you life because you have been made right with God. ¹¹The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.

¹²Therefore, dear brothers and sisters, you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do. ¹³For if you live by its dictates, you will die. But if through the power of the Spirit you put to death the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live. ¹⁴For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.

¹⁵So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God's Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children. ¹⁷And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering.

The Future Glory

¹⁸Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. ¹⁹For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. ²⁰Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, ²¹the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. ²²For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth

ROMANS 8 (NLT)

right up to the present time. ²³ And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children,^[1] including the new bodies he has promised us. ²⁴ We were given this hope when we were saved. (If we already have something, we don't need to hope for it. ²⁵ But if we look forward to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.)

²⁶ And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. ²⁷ And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will. ²⁸ And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. ²⁹ For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. And having called them, he gave them right standing with himself. And having given them right standing, he gave them his glory.

Nothing Can Separate Us from God's Love

³¹ What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be

ROMANS 8 (NLT)

against us? ³² Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else? ³³ Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself. ³⁴ Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us.

³⁵ Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? ³⁶ (As the Scriptures say, "For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.") ³⁷ No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.

³⁸ And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. ³⁹ No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.