

SHARING (GOD'S VOICE)

SESSION 3 – Sharing, Receiving, Failing

GIVING the Word

There are a variety of ways to give someone a word from God. Some ways are more direct and other ways are more subtle.

- **Telling a story** — Jesus and Pharisee, woman with ointment (also, when Nathan confronts David)

Luke 7:37–43 – When a certain immoral woman from that city heard he was eating there, she brought a beautiful alabaster jar filled with expensive perfume.³⁸ Then she knelt behind him at his feet, weeping. Her tears fell on his feet, and she wiped them off with her hair. Then she kept kissing his feet and putting perfume on them.³⁹ When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know what kind of woman is touching him. She’s a sinner!”⁴⁰ Then Jesus answered his thoughts. “Simon,” he said to the Pharisee, “I have something to say to you.” “Go ahead, Teacher,” Simon replied.⁴¹ Then Jesus told him this story: “A man loaned money to two people—500 pieces of silver to one and 50 pieces to the other.⁴² But neither of them could repay him, so he kindly forgave them both, canceling their debts. Who do you suppose loved him more after that?”⁴³ Simon answered, “I suppose the one for whom he canceled the larger debt.” “That’s right,” Jesus said.*

- **Saying a prayer** — Jesus at death of Lazarus

John 11:41–42 – So they rolled the stone aside. Then Jesus looked up to heaven and said, “Father, thank you for hearing me.⁴² You always hear me, but I said it out loud for the sake of all these people standing here, so that they will believe you sent me.”

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- **Delivering the word given**
 - The prophecy or picture is described.

When we give the word, we have to be careful to give the word in a way that is not at the expense of person receiving the word.

God is always speaking, just not always in areas that we want to hear about.

We also have to be careful to leave room for a person's free will.

SHARING GOD'S VOICE CONSISTS OF THREE ASPECTS

1. **Revelation** – that which God has shown
2. **Interpretation** – What does that which is shown mean?
3. **Application** – How do you walk out that which God has spoken?

Acts 21:10–14 – *Several days later a man named Agabus, who also had the gift of prophecy, arrived from Judea. ¹¹ He came over, took Paul's belt, and bound his own feet and hands with it. Then he said, "The Holy Spirit declares, 'So shall the owner of this belt be bound by the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem and turned over to the Gentiles.'" ¹² When we heard this, we and the local believers all begged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem. ¹³ But he said, "Why all this weeping? You are breaking my heart! I am ready not only to be jailed at Jerusalem but even to die for the sake of the Lord Jesus." ¹⁴ When it was clear that we couldn't persuade him, we gave up and said, "The Lord's will be done."*

Acts 20:23–24 – *"...except that the Holy Spirit tells me in city after city that jail and suffering lie ahead. ²⁴ But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God."*

AVOID PRESSURE TO PERFORM WHEN SHARING

People will ask you to receive a prophetic word for them.

You must be careful not to be pressured by others to feel that you have to have a "word from God" for all things.

2 Kings 4:27 – *But when she came to the man of God at the mountain, she fell to the ground before him and caught hold of his feet. Gehazi*

began to push her away, but the man of God said, "Leave her alone. She is deeply troubled, but the Lord has not told me what it is."

Sometimes we use personal prophecy as a substitute for hearing God speak to us as individuals.

- **It is impossible to build a personal relationship with God based on what others prophesy.**

Instead, it is our responsibility and privilege to develop a personal relationship with Him by continuing to fast, pray, and seek God on our own behalf.

ACTIVATION

ASK GOD: "How are You blessing them?"

RECEIVING Prophetic Words from Others

1. Embrace the Word

1 Chronicles 17:23 – *And now, O Lord, I am your servant; do as you have promised concerning me and my family. May it be a promise that will last forever.*

2 Chronicles 20:20 – *Early the next morning the army of Judah went out into the wilderness of Tekoa. On the way Jehoshaphat stopped and said, "Listen to me, all you people of Judah and Jerusalem! Believe in the Lord your God, and you will be able to stand firm. Believe in his prophets, and you will succeed."*

2. Humility

Jeremiah 43:2 – Azariah son of Hoshaiiah and Johanan son of Kareah and all the other proud men said to Jeremiah, “You lie! The Lord our God hasn’t forbidden us to go to Egypt!”

James 1:21 – So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls.

3. Knowing the Heart of God and His Word

1 Samuel 24:4 – “Now’s your opportunity!” David’s men whispered to him. “Today the Lord is telling you, ‘I will certainly put your enemy into your power, to do with as you wish.’” So David crept forward and cut off a piece of the hem of Saul’s robe.

4. Upright Walk

5. Confirmation by those around us and by circumstances

2 Samuel 5:11–12 – Then King Hiram of Tyre sent messengers to David, along with cedar timber and carpenters and stonemasons, and they built David a palace.¹² And David realized that the Lord had confirmed him as king over Israel and had blessed his kingdom for the sake of his people Israel.

6. Putting Words on the Shelf

7. Patience

Romans 8:25 – But if we look forward to something we don’t yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.

James 1:3 – For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow.

8. Ask: “What do I know about the person delivering the word?”

9. Does the word “fit” with other words?

FAILURE – Jonah

God told Jonah to give a message to the people of Nineveh, but Jonah did not want to do it and went the other way.

Jonah had several failures in this story:

- He resisted the word.
- Even when he gave the word, he did so reluctantly and wished for God's wrath on the people instead of grace.
- When God had grace on the people, Jonah was miserable and became bitter.

Jonah 1:4-5 – But the Lord hurled a powerful wind over the sea, causing a violent storm that threatened to break the ship apart. ⁵ Fearing for their lives, the desperate sailors shouted to their gods for help and threw the cargo overboard to lighten the ship.

Jonah 1:12-17 – “Throw me into the sea,” Jonah said, “and it will become calm again. I know that this terrible storm is all my fault.” ¹³ Instead, the sailors rowed even harder to get the ship to the land. But the stormy sea was too violent for them, and they couldn't make it. ¹⁴ Then they cried out to the Lord, Jonah's God. “O Lord,” they pleaded, “don't make us die for this man's sin. And don't hold us responsible for his death. O Lord, you have sent this storm upon him for your own good reasons.”

¹⁵ Then the sailors picked Jonah up and threw him into the raging sea, and the storm stopped at once! ¹⁶ The sailors were awestruck by the Lord's great power, and they offered him a sacrifice and vowed to serve him.

¹⁷ Now the Lord had arranged for a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was inside the fish for three days and three nights.

- Did Jonah fail to deliver the word given by God?
- What was the motive behind Jonah's failure? Was this failure—an attempt to do right but it went bad—or was it a deliberate attempt to disobey God?
- What were the results of this failure?
- Who suffered?

Jonah was asleep in the boat and some time had passed before the storm arose. He was at ease with the fact that he was not doing what God had asked him.

- **We may not immediately see the results of our failures.** We would think that failures should automatically bring negative results upon us, but often that is not the case.

LESSONS TO LEARN FROM JONAH

1. Root problem with Jonah's disobedience

- Sometimes we do not consciously disobey God—we simply do not heed Him.
 - Though Jonah thought he loved God, he really had a limited love for Him.
 - John 14:15 – *If you love me, obey my commandments.*
 - This love of God is a key thing in our lives; it brings us into relationship with Him so that we can hear His voice.
 - 2 Corinthians 5:14 – *Christ's love controls us.* It compels us.
 - Paul says that he is overruled, overmastered, held as in a vice by the love of Christ.
 - The one thing that held Paul until there was nothing else on the horizon was the love of God.
 - This abandonment to love is the one thing that bears fruit in our lives, and it will always leave the impression of the holiness and power of God, never of our personal holiness.

2. The pain of resisting the word

- Resisting presents storms in our life and in our soul.

3. What about our failures, our mistakes, either deliberate or unintentional?

- Honesty helps.

- Note how God used Jonah's honesty with the sailors:
 - Jonah 1:8-12, 15-16 ... God used the situation and Jonah's honesty to touch the hearts of these sailors.
 - Jonah 3:1 ... the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time:
- Can we always assume that better late than never?
- If I didn't give the word the first time, it is just as good to give it the second opportunity I have?

4. What if my heart is wrong?

- When I minister, do I do it with grumbling?
- Even in our wrong attitudes, God can still bring results.
- How much more could have been accomplished if Jonah's heart had been right?

ASK GOD: "How do You want to encourage them?"