



Four Voices We Can Hear

We can be led by our own thinking, the voice of others, lies of the enemy, or be led by the Spirit of God. How are we going to discern what's of God?

1. Our Own Voice or Thinking

God wants to renew our thinking and our minds. He doesn't want us to stop thinking, but to submit our minds to the Holy Spirit. We come to Him with teachable spirits (Romans 12: 1-3).

*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world,
but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.
Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—
His good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12: 2*

We must die to our own imaginations and desires, giving them to God.

- *Lean not on your own understanding and in all your ways, acknowledge Him (Prov 3:5-6).*
- *He who trusts in himself is a fool (Prov 28:26).*
- *Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight (Is 5:21).*
- *For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, declares the Lord (Is 55:8-9).*

*I hope you will put up with a little of my foolishness. But you are already doing that.
I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy.
I promised you to one husband, to Christ,
so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.
But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning,
your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. 2 Cor 11: 1-3*

Give Him your burdens. It's difficult to listen to God if you are anxious or burdened about anything. That's why He died so that we can be free.

Cast all your anxiety on Him because He cares for you. Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. 1 Peter 5:7-8

Praise be to the Lord, to God our Savior, who daily bears our burdens. Psalm 68:19

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Matt 11:28-30

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

And the peace of God, who transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Phil 4:6-7

We must learn to quieten our thoughts and emotions so we can hear. We are in charge of our minds. Your mind does not wander without your control. *We take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ* (2 Cor 10:4-5). If you were talking to a president, prime minister or king, you would listen and your mind would not wander. Our Lord is the King of kings and we can know Him, and make Him known, by listening carefully to Him.

When we are walking close to the Lord, His desires become our desires.

Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in Him and He will do this. Psalm 37:4-5

This is what the Lord says, 'Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows Me, that I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight,' declares the Lord. Jer 9:23-24

Even in the face of death Jesus was able to control the direction of His thinking when He prayed, *'Father, if you are willing, take this cup from Me; yet not My will but Yours be done.'* (Luke 22:42)

Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing. Luke 23:34

The Christian life is walking in forgiveness. If we don't forgive, it will hinder our prayers.

And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins. Mark 11:25

For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins. Matt 6:14-15

2. The Voice of Others

Parents, pastors, prophets, teachers, friends, peer group, social media, and news reports are examples of the voice of others. We should only look to others as much as they look to Jesus and His Word. We must not tolerate anything that God does not tolerate.

Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. Isaiah 5:20-21

A true prophet will testify that Jesus, the anointed (Christ), is God in the flesh (1 John 4:1-3).

For the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy (Rev 19:10).

3. The Voice of the Enemy

The enemy brings fear. He makes you feel driven. He lies, brings confusion, and is the spirit of pride & deception. He is the father of lies.

*You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires.
He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him.
When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. John 8:44*

Demonic voices can quote and misquote Scriptures with urgency, trying to get us to act in haste.

When I was a leader, two intercessors came to me with two separate Bible verses speaking against another leader. I didn't have peace in my spirit. I had revelation through the Word, that the enemy could quote Scripture like he did with Jesus in the desert (Matt 4:6).

The enemy can arrange for a confirmation of prophecy, but there will be a 'check' in your spirit and it doesn't go according to the character of God.

The enemy twists things around to make it look like God is responsible for negative things that happen in our lives. It won't ring true and may cause fear. The Spirit of God is love and truth, Relying on God's love takes away all fears (1 John 4: 18).

Stand against the enemy in the all-powerful name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and with the 'Sword of the Spirit,' the Word of God.

We must submit ourselves, and our thinking to God, so we can resist the enemy.

Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. James 4:7

Do not give the devil a foothold. Eph 4:17-27

Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. Eph 6:11

*Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.
Resist him, standing firm in the faith ... 1 Peter 5:8-9*

4. God's Voice

The purpose of prayer is communication, and that leads to relationship with:

- God as our Father (Rom 8:16).
- Jesus our Shepherd (John 10:3, 4, 10).
- Holy Spirit as our counselor and guide. He is the Spirit of truth (John 14:16-18).

*I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;
I will counsel you and watch over you. Psalm 32:8*

The basis of our belief that He will speak to us comes from the knowledge of His character - He longs to communicate with us.

*Surely it is You who love the people; all the holy ones are in Your hand.
At Your feet they all bow down, and from You **receive instruction** . . . Deut 33:3*

God speaks to reveal His purposes and ways for our lives, and for things that are about to take place.

*The Sovereign Lord has given me an instructed tongue,
to know the word that sustains the weary.
He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught.
The Sovereign Lord has opened my ears,
and I have not been rebellious; I have not drawn back. Isaiah 50:4-5*

Hearing from God is prophetic revelation. We seek to hear Him.

But everyone who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort. 1 Cor 14:3

Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, "This is the way; walk in it. Isaiah 30: 21; see also verses 18-20

God is so creative. Nothing is impossible for Him. When others make wrong choices, we can still count on Him.

Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." Matthew 19:26

I know that you can do all things; no plan of Yours can be thwarted. Job 42:1-2

God will always make a way for those who believe and obey. His truth will always set us free.

If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free. John 8:31b-32 . . . no good thing does He withhold from those whose walk is blameless. Psalm 84:11b

Our hearts are to do God's will, but we must listen to His Spirit for the way to do it. Doing God's will man's way rarely works.

Do you judge God by what happens to you, or do you judge things that happen to you based on God's character?

Our daughter, Laurie, has been through many years of illness which has been very difficult for her. Peter and I had prayed and prayed, but with very little understanding of why God hadn't healed her. I was speaking in Indonesia to business men and women on the character of God. At the end of the teaching, an Indonesian business man, who is a friend, said, "Donna, I hear what you are saying about the character of God, but what about your daughter Laurie?" With tears running down my cheeks I said, "Fred, all I know is that God is loving, just and kind in all His ways." Many Indonesians came around me and were praying and weeping for Laurie. I called her a few days later and told her what happened. She said, "Mom, tell them not to weep anymore. I just read in John 9:3 that it's not because of my sin or my parents' sin that I am sick, but my illness is to bring glory to God - I can handle it now."

God doesn't cause sickness, but He allows it. There is so much we don't understand, but because of who God is we can trust Him. God is love. Everything God does is loving.

Hearing God's voice is not a gift, but a skill that has to be developed with practice. He wants to speak to us because of relationship. When we do not ask God, we *presume* that we are doing what He wants. If we listen with childlike faith, we can expect an answer.

Presumption can be **pride**. It is important not to presume what God is going to say, but to listen to Him. Below is an example of presumption when Peter spoke to Jesus about putting up three shelters.

Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah. "While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased. Listen to Him!" Matt 17:4-5

Through the lack of seeking God in detail, pride can come in. And pride wants control in group situations. God is looking for leaders, both men and women, who have the humility and faith to believe that the government is on His shoulders and He will lead us & guide us. He wants to lead the church, and He wants the church to disciple the nations.

To hear God's voice, we must learn what His voice (spoken within) sounds like. Learn to recognize His voice, and practice listening. Hearing is with the natural ear, and listening is with the heart. When you listen and you have faith to believe what He's saying, you will naturally walk in obedience out of love for Him. Disobedience will open the door for unbelief.

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says . . ." Rev 2:7; See also Rev 2:11, 17, 29; Rev 3:6,13, 22

Trust is foundational. Hearing the voice of God is all by grace, through faith. He gives grace to the humble but opposes the proud (Prov 3:34; James 4:6).

How can we better disciple the nations through listening to God? We are entering the time of ultimate clash between light and darkness. The light wins.

*“Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.
See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples,
but the Lord rises upon you and His glory appears over you.
Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.”* Isaiah 60:1-5

APPLICATION

What voices have you been listening to most in your life, and why? How will you change this?

How do you recognize your heavenly Father’s voice?

Are you willing to do whatever God says before He says it because you trust His character?

Ask the Holy Spirit what lies you have been believing. Then renounce those lies.

Ask the Holy Spirit what truths He wants you to know. Then receive His truths.