

## HEARING GOD

In the Bible we have many examples of God speaking to people. He walked with Adam and they spoke. He spoke to Noah, to Abraham, to Moses and to Joshua. He even spoke to a small boy named Samuel. These encounters were all in a voice and a language they could understand. He spoke to Balaam through the mouth of a donkey.

God spoke to King Belshazzar by way of a hand that was sent to write on the wall. Others received messages delivered by angels, some in dreams and still others had visions. While at Mount Sinai, the Israelites heard God speak with a voice like thunder that shook the mountain.

We have a written record of the words Jesus himself spoke while on the earth in person. These can be found in the first four books of the New Testament.

What was the purpose for God speaking?

- to encourage people
- to build their confidence
- to strengthen them
- to give them hope in difficult times
- to give them instructions to guide their daily lives

Today, more than ever we **Need** to hear from God. We need his encouragement. We need his hope. We need his guidance in our everyday life. We have the same needs people have always had. We now have concerns because of the drastic changes that we have seen in recent weeks. Some are sick with a new type of illness; some are fearful the sickness of others may infect them or their family. Some have no financial income at this time, and all of us are missing connection and fellowship with like minded people. We need God's input as to how best to run our church services,

how to overcome the fear this pandemic has caused and how to stay connected with our church family.

Our God who is Omnipotent (all powerful), Omnipresent (all places at the same time), and Omniscient (all knowing) is by far the best source of help in times like this.

I have great news for you. **God still speaks.** Oh, I know there are people who would like you to think that God has stopped speaking because that is what they believe. Others will tell you that God had men write His final words (inspired of course) in scripture and therefore we no longer need to hear from him. However, in Malachi 3:6 we read that God does not change. Then again in Hebrews 13:8 we read that His son Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. I take that to mean that what he did in the past he can and will still do today. So yes, **God still speaks.** He speaks to all who will listen.

There are many ways that we can hear from God. As in the past, it may be through a dream, a vision, or even an audible voice. Unlike Old Testament times, Christians today have the Holy Spirit living inside of them. He will choose the method that best gets our attention. For this reason, all Christians have the ability to hear the voice of God. In my experience God most often speaks through scripture or through other people. At times He will use a Bible study group or a sermon from our Pastor.

Another way he speaks is through prayer. Prayer is communication with God. For communication to work it must go both ways. We speak - we listen – we speak - we listen. Since God gave us two ears and one mouth we should probably listen twice as much as we speak. A wise pastor once said “we should do nothing more than pray until we have prayed”. Without help, hope, encouragement, and instruction from God, we are like lost sheep wandering aimlessly through life.

If you feel a lack in your life, a need for hope, encouragement or direction, I would encourage you to spend more time conversing with God. Don't forget the listening part. Feel free to ask questions but not too many at one time and be sure to leave time for listening.

A few questions to ponder:

1. Have you heard from God lately?
2. Is there an area of your life that needs to line up with God's word so that true conversation can flow? It may be a sin issue, a lack of time spent in conversation, or maybe you just don't believe He will speak to you.
3. Does God want to encourage you today or perhaps use you to bring an encouraging word to someone else?

Psalm 22-24 are called the Shepherd Psalms. They point us to Jesus.

Ps 22 – The Good Shepherd - SEE also Jn 10:11

Ps 23 – The Great Shepherd –SEE also Heb 13:20,21

Ps 24 – The Chief Shepherd (yet to come) SEE 1 Pet 5:4

Jn 10:27 “My sheep **hear** my voice, and I know them, and they follow me”. God is still speaking. We need to listen to our earthly shepherds that God has placed over us but even more to the Great Shepherd. You have the ability to hear Him.

Jn 10:3 “...the sheep **hear** his voice: and he calls his own by name, and he leads them out”.

Be led by Him

Be Blessed