



How Does God Speak to Us Here and Now? (Part II)

Acts 2:17: (NASB) *And it shall be in the last days, God says, that I will pour forth of My Spirit on all mankind; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.*



A few weeks ago, we began to talk about how God communicates to us in our day. We began by looking at the biblical history of God and humanity and spent most of our time talking about how He does NOT communicate with us now. This week we will focus on what we believe to be the provable and scriptural ways in which God Almighty communicates to us as His Christian children here in the 21st century.

If we want to really communicate with God, it is important we learn the established ways of doing so instead of making up our own! Let's recap God's biblical methods of communication from "How Does God Speak to Us Here and Now (Part I)."

recap
recap

We need to observe how some methods are used in different ages with different people:

Genesis 3:8: (NASB) *They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day...*

Direct communication without barriers - the created is in natural communication with the Creator.

Sin enters and the rules change:

Genesis 6:13: (NASB) *Then God said to Noah, the end of all flesh has come before Me...*

Direct communication by selection - with only those (like Noah) who were striving to do His will.

Visions accompany the direct communication:

Genesis 15:1: (NASB) *After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision...*

Visions for the seeker were a dramatic way for God to make a point.

Dreams are introduced:

Genesis 28:12: (NASB) *He (Jacob) had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth...*

Dreams were given to both followers and others to reveal God's character, prophecies and power.

Dreams were obviously important in the Old Testament but are obsolete in the New Testament for Christians...why?

The New Testament has the benefit of the written Old Testament...

2 Peter 1:18-20: (KJV) ¹⁸And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. ¹⁹We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: ²⁰Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.



...as well as the benefit of the words of Jesus and the Apostles:

2 Peter 3:15-16: (NASB) ¹⁵and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, ¹⁶as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.

Here the Apostle Peter is assuring us that the writings of the Apostle Paul are as credible as the writings of the Old Testament. Dreams are not needed or promised. But, could God allow a dream to come into our hearts that means something? Of course.



God opens your Bible, Discerning Between the Three Voices You Hear in Prayer

- I think it's just a matter of trusting that God will open that Bible to the right page. It's a childlike trust. It doesn't come easily for us because we're so mental and so controlling. The whole idea of letting go of control and allowing something to open to the right thing is just real scary and alien to us, but it's a matter of letting go and taking daddy's hand.*



While we possibly could open our Bible to the exact right page for our circumstance, is that the way God means to communicate with us on a daily basis? We believe there are better methods of communication in place.

What about visions?

- Visions were absolutely used in the context of Christianity (dreams were not used in the New Testament).
- Visions were a tool to prepare specific individuals for specific and dramatic changes.
- Visions were apostolic tools of specific instruction to aid in the spreading of the Gospel.
- Visions were not an everyday part of every Christian life.

Does God speak to us through signs - specifically signs that we might ask for?



How do we hear the voice of God? We can hear through our experiences.

Gideon was a faithful servant of God. He asked God to verify His direction and God did!

Judges 6:36-40: (NASB) ³⁶Then Gideon said to God, If You will deliver Israel through me, as You have spoken, ³⁷behold, I will put a fleece of wool on the threshing floor. If there is dew on the fleece only, and it is dry on all the ground, then I will know that You will deliver Israel through me, as You have spoken. ³⁸And it was so. When he arose early the next morning and squeezed the fleece, he drained the dew from the fleece, a bowl full of water. ³⁹Then Gideon said to God, do not let Your anger burn against me that I may speak once more; please let me make a test once more with the fleece, let it now be dry only on the fleece, and let there be



dew on all the ground. ⁴⁰God did so that night; for it was dry only on the fleece, and dew was on all the ground.

What about me? Can I, or should I, be "putting out the fleece" to determine God's will in my life? Can God speak to us through our experiences?

God can and does speak to us through our experiences - BUT - we need to clarify how He does it and how He does NOT do it! We are NOT Gideon! Consider the following that led Gideon to this point:



Observations about the context of Gideon's actions from Judges 6:

- Israel sinned mightily while under the dominance of the Midianites for seven years (vs. 1-10).
- An angel tells Gideon that he will deliver Israel - Gideon is the youngest and therefore not in a position of authority, so he questions this (vs. 11-16).
- Gideon asks for a sign and the angel consumes Gideon's sacrifice miraculously (vs. 17-24).
- Gideon follows God's command and destroys the altar of Baal by night (vs. 25-33).
- Gideon gathers the men of Israel to fight for God (vs. 33-35).
- Now he again asks for a sign for this next phase - rising up against a mighty army (vs. 36-40). (This is when he asks for the fleece.)
- His army goes from 30,000 to 300; his fears are quelled by another sign among his men and victory (Chapter 7).



He had dramatic experiences including a visit by an angel and miracles happening around him. This was an "act by sight, not by faith" experience for him. It is as if God was walking him through it, with God reassuring him all along the way.

Though we are not Gideon, we can have the faith and courage of Gideon and like him, follow the voice of God in our own experiences! Gideon saw God's will and he ran to do it.

Proverbs 3:5-7: (NASB) ⁵Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. ⁶In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight. ⁷Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and turn away from evil.

We put all of our trust in God. We do not lean on our own ways of understanding. In everything we do and everything we think about, we acknowledge Him. And THEN after all of that, He can direct your path. Our minds must be bent towards the will of God in order to hear Him.



Psalm 32:8: (NASB) *I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you.*

There is great comfort in a promise like this! We must be in tune with Him in order to hear Him in our experiences.



Legitimate need, *How Does God Speak to Us*, Matthew Kelly

- The first voice of God is the voice of legitimate need. You and I, human beings, we have legitimate needs. In the four areas we've been speaking about: physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual. Physically if you don't eat, you will die. You have a legitimate need for food. We have legitimate needs in each of the four areas physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually. Who gave us this need to eat? This need to drink? Who gave us this legitimate need? God gave us this need. So, when we hear this need calling out to us, whose voice do we hear? We hear the voice of God. When we hear our legitimate needs physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually calling out to us, we hear the voice of legitimate need.*

We need to understand our legitimate needs from our wants and preferences.



A caller from Connecticut inquires: How do we determine if God or the devil is leading us? Is it really God's way?

Great question! We will spend the rest of the program trying to get at the heart of the answer.

Humility is implied throughout our whole discussion as a basic key to hearing God's voice in our experiences.

Notice the voice of God commanding us as His children to be protected under His hand:



1 Peter 5:6-9: (NASB) *⁶Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, ⁷casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you. ⁸Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. ⁹But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.*

Notice the voice of God promising us victorious results through humility and faith:

James 4:7-10: NRSV) *⁷Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹Lament and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned into mourning and your joy into dejection. ¹⁰Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you.*

Having a humble attitude is so important in order to have a godly perspective in our actions.



Does hearing God's voice take work?

So, if we are God's, then we need to act like it - in our case (and unlike Gideon) we act by faith and not by sight:

James 4:13-17: (NASB) ¹³Come now, you who say, today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit. ¹⁴Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. ¹⁵Instead, you ought to say, **if the Lord wills**, we will live and also do this or that. ¹⁶But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. ¹⁷Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.



We get in the way of the Lord's will all the time!



How do we hear the voice of God? We can hear through our study of the word!

Proverbs 30:5: (KJV) *Every word of God is pure: He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him.*

This is a great test to see if the voice is from God or from another source. God has spoken! What He said, what He wants for those who believe and what He promised to believers are recorded for our benefit - we now have to learn how to understand it all!

Look at how many times in the next text we are led back to the word!

Psalms 119:105-112: (NASB) ¹⁰⁵Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. ¹⁰⁶I have sworn and I will confirm it, that I will keep Your righteous ordinances. **(The word is recognized as the guiding light.)** ¹⁰⁷I am exceedingly afflicted; Revive me, O LORD, according to Your word. ¹⁰⁸O accept the freewill offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and teach me Your ordinances. ¹⁰⁹My life is continually in my hand, yet I do not forget Your law. ¹¹⁰The wicked have laid a snare for me, yet I have not gone astray from Your precepts. ¹¹¹I have inherited Your testimonies forever, for they are the joy of my heart. ¹¹²I have inclined my heart to perform Your statutes forever, even to the end.

To obey these things is to know them!



A caller from Connecticut suggests God speaks to us through Jesus:

Hebrew 1:1-2: (NIV) ¹In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ²but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, and through whom also He made the universe.

Matthew 4 describes Jesus' confrontation with Satan - Jesus' answer repeatedly was, **"It is written."** Jesus had fasted 40 days and nights to study God's word to discover what His will was for him. That is one way to prepare to answer the devil - know the Scriptures!

Often what is written in the word would not be our personal preference.



Illegitimate Wants, How Does God Speak to Us, Matthew Kelly

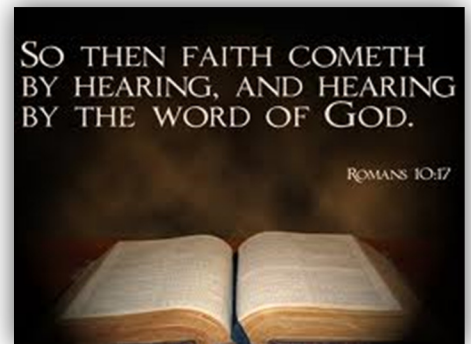
- Most of us don't even have the foggiest idea of what our legitimate needs are because our culture, our world and our lives are almost completely focused on our illegitimate wants. We spend most of our time, most of our energy focused and chasing our illegitimate wants. We think if we can have more of these things that we want that then we'll find happiness, that then we'll find peace in our hearts, in our lives, and so we chase and we chase these illegitimate wants all the time ignoring our legitimate needs, which are in fact the key to the balance and happiness that we desire and that God desires for us.*

God is not going to cater to our wants; He will show us how to fulfill our basic needs, especially spiritually.

Satan wants us to focus on our wants, turning our wants into needs. When that happens, we can start to justify it as a need instead of a want.

To be given faith is to know God's word and learn to hear His voice:

Romans 10:17: (KJV) *So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*



To walk in faith is to embrace God's word (God's voice) as higher than any words of any man:

1 Thessalonians 2: 12-13: (KJV) *¹²That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory. ¹³For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.*

To work in faith in God's service is to delve deeply into God's word (God's voice) for our instruction:

2 Timothy 2:14-16: (NASB) *¹⁴Remind them of these things, and solemnly charge them in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless and leads to the ruin of the hearers. ¹⁵Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. ¹⁶But avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness.*

The more fully focused we are on His word and the footsteps of Jesus, the more His voice becomes much clearer.



To be faithful in our faith requires fidelity to God's truth (again through His voice):

2 Peter 1:10-13: (NASB) ¹⁰Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; ¹¹for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you. ¹²Therefore, I will always be ready to remind you of these things, even though you already know them, and have been **established in the truth**, which is present with you. ¹³I consider it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder.



How do we hear the voice of God? We can hear it through prayer!

Prayer has been said to be our **lifeline** and that is very true. So, why does one cling to a lifeline? It is not to get everything that we always wanted in life; it is to be drawn in to the individual on the other side of the line so we can be given life!



Prayer is not about wanting things for ourselves; it is about wanting to be Christ-like. We want to learn direction within God's will.

The Apostle Paul is a great example:

2 Corinthians 12:7-10: (NASB) ⁷Because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me - to keep me from exalting myself! ⁸Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me.

He is reporting this after the fact, saying, "I now know why this thorn in the flesh (which we assume was poor eyesight) was given me." He was handicapped for his best spiritual benefit.

Paul was already walking, working and faithful, yet undergoing hardship, so he prayed. Jesus answered:

⁹And he has said to me, my grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness...

Was Paul crushed? No, rather he was made **stronger** for he had heard the voice of God through His son Jesus. Nothing had changed and yet everything had changed. His attitude was now in line with the "why" of the experience.

...Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. ¹⁰Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak (physically), then I am strong (spiritually).

He not only accepted the handicap, but he understood the lesson. All the negative things of his life were cause for spiritual rejoicing.

Whenever we hear the voice of God, (in Paul's case it came through Jesus and seems to have been an actual voice) it should serve as a reaffirmation of what our life *should* truly be about. The Apostle Paul lived a life of service and sacrifice.



Deceitful heart, *Discerning Between the Three Voices You Hear in Prayer*

- I just find it very hard sometimes to be confident that it is the Lord when I'm communicating with Him about something I'm attached to. People say, "Well, but I hear the Lord in my heart," but here's what the Scriptures say in Jeremiah 17, "The heart is deceitful about all things and beyond. The heart is perverse and unsearchable. Who can know it?" So, that's tricky, too. What's in our heart isn't always what's holy and right and godly.*

In seeking to hear God's voice through prayer, we need to be careful that our spiritual hearing is set on things above - this is harder than it may seem!

James 4:1-3: (NRSV) *¹Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? ²You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts. You do not have, because you do not ask. ³You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, in order to spend what you get on your pleasures.*

Who is he talking to? Dedicated Christians arguing among themselves. We cannot hear the voice of God when it is crowded out by our own voice of desire! Selfishness is very deceptive.

One more example of being offered up in prayer:

Habakkuk 1:2: (NASB) *How long, O LORD, will I call for help, and You will not hear? I cry out to You, Violence! Yet You do not save.*

Habakkuk is crying out that the world is a chaotic mess - the world is so out of balance. (It sounds like he lives next door to us!) God, where are you in the midst of what is happening? Why does evil prevail? Why don't you DO something? How did Habakkuk prepare for the answer? Did he cower in the corner afraid of the world?

No, he positioned himself to hear the voice of God and be of value and use to His cause:

Habakkuk 2:1-3: (NASB) *¹I will stand on my guard post and station myself on the rampart; and I will keep watch to see what He will speak to me, and how I may reply when I am reproved.*

This showed great faith, even though he was living in a time where it was often a walk by sight.

²Then the LORD answered me and said...

It was only then that he received his answer:

...Record the vision and inscribe it on tablets that the one who reads it may run. ³For the vision is yet for the appointed time; it hastens toward the goal and it will not fail. Though it tarries, wait for it; for it will certainly come, it will not delay.

The answer? It was not exactly what Habakkuk wanted to hear, but it was exactly what was needed to be heard. God's answer: The vision was not lost or late - it will be manifest - it simply must wait for My time. Meanwhile, write it - show it - inspire with it! The written vision IS the voice of God!



So we hear the voice of God through our experiences, our study of the word and prayer. How else?

hear

God's voice



How do we hear the voice of God? We hear through the very power of God in our lives - His spirit!

John 16:13: (NASB) *¹³But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own initiative, but whatever he hears, he will speak; and he will disclose to you what is to come.*

How often when we read verses in the Bible, all of a sudden something connects with another verse, another concept - you have been enlightened! This is an example of how the spirit really works in terms of focusing us on learning and applying the word. God's spirit is a powerful influence and force for His voice.

We need caution here as our own spirit and our own influences can get in the way and be counterfeit:

1 Corinthians 2:10-16: (Rotherham) *¹⁰Unto us, in fact, hath God revealed through the Spirit; for, the Spirit, into all things, maketh search, yea! The deep things of God. ¹¹For who of men knoweth the things of a man - save the spirit of the man that is in him? Thus, even the things of God, hath no one come to know, save the Spirit of God. (Lesson: Be clear as to the source of your input.) ¹²But, as for us - not the spirit of the world, have we received, but the Spirit which is of God--that we might know the things which, by God, have been given in favor unto us - ¹³Which we also speak--not in words taught of human wisdom, but in such as are taught of the Spirit, by spiritual words, spiritual things, explaining. (Lesson: Speak that which is of God's voice.) ¹⁴But, a man of the soul, doth not welcome the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, and he cannot get to know them, because, spiritually, are they examined; ¹⁵But, the man of the spirit, on the one hand, examineth all things, but, on the other, he himself, by no one, is examined. ¹⁶For who hath come to know the mind of the Lord that shall instruct him? But, we, have, the mind of Christ.*

What is our life focused on? What are our most important things? Lesson: God's voice through us can easily be the subject of criticism for those of this world! Your principles and priorities will be completely different.

hear

God's voice



How else do we hear the voice of God? We can hear when we meditate upon all of these things.

We do not pray and then run out to the mailbox and expect an answer. That is where meditation becomes a powerful part of this. Never underestimate the power of reflective thought. So, how do we put our reflective thoughts into the place where we can hear the voice of God?



First, we need to check our *outward* attitude:

Philippians 4:4-9: (NASB) *⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! ⁵Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near.*

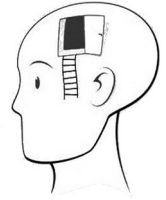
To get into the mental capacity to truly be able to reflect upon godly things, we should have a gentle, Christ-like spirit.





Second, we need to check our *inward* attitude:

⁶Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.



While you struggle, let the peace of God reign in your life. Trust our Heavenly Father. When we find peace, we do not need the immediate answer because we have the strength to sustain us until the answer is appropriate. That takes away anxiety.

Third, we can now reflect, for having passed the two previous tests of our inward and outward attitudes, our spiritual hearing should be in good order:



Philippians 4:8:

*Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, **dwell on these things.***

Dwell on these things - this is a way of meditating. We do not want to get so caught up in the business of life and cares of this world that we become anxious. The voice of God really comes through the quietness of our lives if we can be quiet long enough for Him to be heard! Satan's voice, on the other hand, works through the noise, ego, wants and desires.

Fourth, live these reflections, knowing these things brings us within hearing distance of God's voice:

*⁹The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, **practice these things,** and the God of peace will be with you.*

The repetitious practice is the secret!



God's voice wants to be in us and it can get there through Christ - we have to open the door to *let* it in:

Colossians 3:15-16: (NASB) ¹⁵*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.*

Thankfulness is an important part of all of this.

Choose today what will rule in your heart. Will it be the turmoil of life or the peace and voice of God through Christ?

¹⁶*Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you...*

If the peace of God has roots in your heart, the voice of God can have roots in your heart as well.

Choose today whose words will guide you - the words of the world, flesh and devil or the words of Christ? Observe, think, reflect and act!

Can we be the voice of God for others?



How do we hear the voice of God? We can hear it through the voices of the brotherhood.

Colossians 3:16-17: (KJV) ¹⁶*Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you...*

Here are some classic ways the voice of God passes through us:

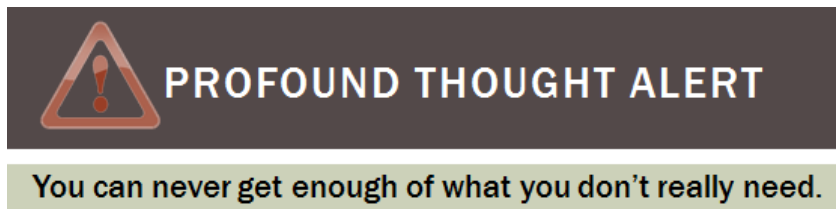
...with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷Whatever you do in word or deed do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through him to God the Father.

We are to pour spirituality into each other; there is a synergy that comes from this. We can find answers among each other.



Can't get enough, *How Does God Speak to Us*, Matthew Kelly

- Illegitimate wants, illegitimate desires. Funny thing is you never can get enough of what you don't really need, and we keep chasing these things that we have no need for. We keep filling our lives with these things that we have no need for - they're just the fruits of our illegitimate desires.*



Our world now is all about "what I want." We have forgotten what we *need*. If your want has become expectation, you will never be satisfied. However, the voice of God will always satisfy and it can come through fellowship.

God's voice is reflected in us as we relentlessly pursue and desire fellowship in Christ with others:

Romans 1:9-15: (NASB) ⁹*For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you, ¹⁰always in my prayers*



making request, if perhaps now at last by the will of God I may succeed in coming to you. ¹¹For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established;

The Apostle was fixated on contributing to their spiritual life. Do we deeply seek that kind of fellowship with others?

¹²that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.

Do we realize how we can give and receive to the spiritual benefit of all?

¹³I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented so far) so that I may obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles. ¹⁴I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. ¹⁵So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

Do we listen to God's voice even if it is delaying some good spiritual experience? Do we rejoice in His voice when He does that?



God's voice through Jesus is reflected in us as we truly reach out to another for their benefit:

Galatians 6:1-2: (NASB) *¹Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. ²Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.*

God's voice through Jesus is reflected in us as we intervene in the deep and damaging issues of life of another:

James 5:19-20: (NASB) *¹⁹My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, ²⁰let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.*

We can be the voice of God for others.

Bottom line: We can hear the voice of God through the many diverse members of the body of Christ:

1 Corinthians 12:18-26: (NASB) *¹⁸But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired. ¹⁹If they were all one member, where would the body be? ²⁰But now there are many members, but one body... ²³and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable...But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, ²⁵so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.*

If we are not listening for God's voice through the brotherhood, then how much are we missing? We have to study the word, be focused on what is right in God's eyes and understand the value of others who support the principles of



Scripture. The voice of God may come to us in an everyday way. Make meditating on His word a part of our lives.

*So, how does God speak to us here and now?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*

*And now even more to think about...
only in the **Full Edition** of CQ Rewind!*



Since prayer is a very direct way to commune with God and to therefore open our minds to hear the meaning of His word, we have several texts on prayer for further consideration.

First, here is the attitude of prayer to strive for to be able to “hear” His voice:

Luke 18:9-14: (NRSV) ⁹He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and regarded others with contempt: ¹⁰Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. ¹¹The Pharisee, standing by himself, was praying thus, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other people: thieves, rogues, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹²I fast twice a week, I give a tenth of all my income. ¹³But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, God, be merciful to me, a sinner! ¹⁴I tell you, this man went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted.

Prayer brings us guidance. By looking for guidance, we open the door for His voice:

Luke 6:12-13: (NRSV) ¹²Now during those days he went out to the mountain to pray; and he spent the night in prayer to God. ¹³And when day came, he called his disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles:

Prayer brings us deliverance. Knowing we need deliverance is a critical step in understanding His voice:

Hebrews 4:14-16: (KJV) ¹⁴Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. ¹⁵For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.



Prayer affords us the opportunity to give praise. Giving praise is raising our voice to God and may certainly open the door for others to hear Him through us!

Psalms 105:1-5: (KJV) ¹O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people. ²Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works. ³Glory ye in his holy name: let the heart of them rejoice that seek the LORD. ⁴Seek the LORD, and his strength: seek his face evermore. ⁵Remember his marvelous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth;



Asking God to hear your prayer certainly implies that He may not. This is a reality check - we must keep our minds tuned to the right things - the spiritual things of God to be heard.

Proverbs 15:28-29: (NRSV) ²⁸The mind of the righteous ponders how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil. ²⁹The LORD is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayer of the righteous.

The humble attitude of asking to be heard is always a good place to live:

Psalms 102:1-8: (NRSV) ¹Hear my prayer, O LORD; let my cry come to you. ²Do not hide your face from me in the day of my distress. Incline your ear to me; answer me speedily in the day when I call. ³For my days pass away like smoke, and my bones burn like a furnace. ⁴My heart is stricken and withered like grass; I am too wasted to eat my bread. ⁵Because of my loud groaning my bones cling to my skin. ⁶I am like an owl of the wilderness, like a little owl of the waste places. ⁷I lie awake; I am like a lonely bird on the housetop. ⁸All day long my enemies taunt me; those who deride me use my name for a curse.

Psalms 86:1-6: (NRSV) ¹Incline your ear, O LORD, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. ²Preserve my life, for I am devoted to you; save your servant who trusts in you. You are my God; ³be gracious to me, O Lord, for to you do I cry all day long. ⁴Gladden the soul of your servant, for to you, O Lord, I lift up my soul. ⁵For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call on you. ⁶Give ear, O LORD, to my prayer; listen to my cry of supplication.

Daniel 9:17-19: (NRSV) ¹⁷Now therefore, O our God, listen to the prayer of your servant and to his supplication, and for your own sake, Lord, let Your face shine upon your desolated sanctuary. ¹⁸Incline your ear, O my God, and hear. Open Your eyes and look at our desolation and the city that bears Your name. We do not present our supplication before You on the ground of our righteousness, but on the ground of Your great mercies. ¹⁹O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, listen and act and do not delay! For Your own sake, O my God, because Your city and your people bear your name!"

Nehemiah 1:4-7: (NRSV) ⁴When I heard these words I sat down and wept, and mourned for days, fasting and praying before the God of heaven. ⁵I said, O LORD God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love Him and keep His commandments; ⁶let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer of your servant that I now pray before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel, confessing the sins of the people of Israel, which we have sinned against you. Both I and my family have sinned. ⁷We have offended You deeply, failing to keep the commandments, the statutes, and the ordinances that You commanded your servant Moses.