

WHISPERS

HEARING THE VOICE OF GOD

Part 2 - How to Hear God

INTRODUCTION— Why would God want to talk to me?

1 Samuel 3

Question: How does God actually communicate to us?

1. What is Spirit?
 - a. Higher consciousness, personality without physicality
 - b. Transcends mere emotion, instinct or basic intelligence
2. What does it mean to be filled with God's Spirit?
 - a. How is someone filled with the Spirit?
 - i. A Christ-follower prays for you and may place their hands on you as a symbol of connection – Acts 8:14-17
 - b. What is supposed to happen when I have the Spirit?
 - i. The Spirit opens the way for everyone to have an intimate friendship with God – Joel 2:28-29
 - ii. The Spirit provides a sense of divine presence, a tangible experience of love and relational guidance in the process of fostering a new heart (will) and mind (mental habits). This in turn enables us to live as God wants us to live – Ezekiel 11:19-20; 36:26-27; Jeremiah 31:31-34;
3. How does God, through his Spirit, influence our hearts and minds?
 - a. A guide, not a puppeteer; a whisper, not a hurricane
 - b. The “ah ha” feeling
 - c. 1 Kings 19:1-18; John 14:26; 16:13-15
4. Ways God might communicate with us?
 - a. Passage of Scripture stand out to us (Acts 1:12-26)
 - b. Teaching that convicts us (Acts 2:14-41)
 - c. Dreams at night (Acts 18:9-11; 23:11)
 - d. Mental pictures or visions (Acts 10:9-22)

- e. Urgings or compelling emotions (Acts 16:6-7; 21:22-23)
- f. A quiet inner voice (Acts 21:22-23)
- g. Something someone says – James (Acts 15:1-35)
- h. Striking events – signs (Acts 16:25-34; Luke 12:2)
- i. An angel (Acts 12:1-17)

Things to keep in mind as you seek God:

1. God is always speaking through Jesus, his story and his message found in Scripture.
2. God speaks through those he has called to proclaim his message.
3. God speaks personally when he has something to say.
4. Don't assume a personal communication from God is actually God until it is confirmed with someone else or in community.
5. Don't presume your way of connecting with God is the best or most safe or truest way. Guard against spiritual ego-centrism.
6. God models in Scripture that he doesn't tell us everything we want to know but he desires us as individuals and as a community to seek his heart and mind and to learn to relate to him as person. Interdependence, not independence, is his goal.

CONCLUSION – Friend or fan of God?

HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS...

WARMING UP...

1. Have you ever had an “ah ha” moment when you sensed God was in some way connecting with you or you were feeling his presence? How did you feel and what did you sense God was trying to communicate?

LOOK TO THE BOOK...

2. Read Ephesians 1:15-19a in as many translations as possible. What do you think it means to be “filled with the Spirit of wisdom and revelation” and to have “the eyes of your heart enlightened”? How can God's presence in our lives help us “get God” or understand his heart? Share any personal stories that illustrate this point.
3. Review the list – 4) Ways God might communicate with us? Which ones might you have experienced? How did you feel and what led you to think that it was God connecting with you?

SO WHAT?...

4. How can each person create mental space in their lives to prioritize listening to God and what practical changes each would need to make to see this happen?
5. How could your group make hearing God speak a normal part of your relationships within Home Church?
6. Take time to pray for anyone who wants a more real experience with the Spirit.

Tim Day @ THE MEETING HOUSE – Sunday, June 14, 2009