

## **Conversations With God *Discerning His Voice***

The Well Church Ministries

*Pastor Tim Vanderwater*

tvanderwater@thewellchurchministries.org

October 5, 2014

### **1 Introduction**

- I have heard many people say,
  - “God does not talk to me”
- Whether you realize it or not, God does talk to you.
- However, not everyone knows how to recognize or discern His voice.
- If this is you, don’t feel badly.
- Many people face this in their lifetime.
- Hearing God’s voice is something that you have to learn.
- It isn’t necessarily natural for everyone.

## 2 God Speaks To Us Through His Word

- The first and most important way in which God talks to us is through His Word.

### **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

***16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.***

- Scripture is God's revelation of who He is and how much He desires to be in a relationship with you.
- His Word often speaks to us directly.
- It guides us in daily decisions
  - In Relationships
  - In Prayer
  - And In Truth

### **Hebrews 4:12 (NIV)**

***12 For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.***

- It teaches us God's purpose and plan for our life
- It helps us to avoid Satan's traps
- It encourages us and directs our steps

**Matthew 4:4 (NIV)**

***4 Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"***

- When we read the Word, it feeds our souls
- Without the proper nourishment of God speaking to us, we become empty and weak
- We have to know the Word, because any prophetic Word given should never contradict the Bible.

### 3 God Speaks to us by Giving Us Divine Wisdom

#### **James 1:5 (NIV)**

***5 If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.***

- Sometimes out of nowhere, we have this incredible wisdom
- This often comes directly from God

#### **Luke 21:15**

***15 For I will give you words and wisdom that none of your adversaries will be able to resist or contradict.***

- This is why it is important to have mentors in our life
- God often speaks His wisdom through them
- (examples)

#### **1 Corinthians 12:8 (NIV)**

***8 To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom***

- Sometimes, people are given great wisdom as a spiritual gift.

***2 Chronicles 1:7-12 (NIV)***

***7 That night God appeared to Solomon and said to him, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you."***

***8 Solomon answered God, "You have shown great kindness to David my father and have made me king in his place. 9 Now, Lord God, let your promise to my father David be confirmed, for you have made me king over a people who are as numerous as the dust of the earth. 10 Give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people, for who is able to govern this great people of yours?"***

***11 God said to Solomon, "Since this is your heart's desire and you have not asked for wealth, possessions or honor, nor for the death of your enemies, and since you have not asked for a long***

***life but for wisdom and knowledge to govern my people over whom I have made you king, 12 therefore wisdom and knowledge will be given you. And I will also give you wealth, possessions and honor, such as no king who was before you ever had and none after you will have.”***

- Solomon asked for Wisdom, as God invites us all to do, and He gives it gladly.
- This is why we should pray before every major decision in our life.

#### **4 God Speaks To Us Through Discernment**

##### **Hebrews 5:14 (ESV)**

***14 But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.***

- God speaks to us by giving us discernment.
- It is the Holy Spirit indwelling in you, giving warning signs.
- There is human intuition that plays in, but the Spirit often intercedes in order to protect us

### **1 Corinthians 2:14 (ESV)**

***14 The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.***

- The Holy Spirit gives us understanding to what is of God and what is not.

## **5 God Speaks To Us Through His Spirit**

### **John 14:16-17 (NIV)**

***16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever17 the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.***

### **1 Corinthians 3:16 (NIV)**

***16 Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst?***

- The Holy Spirit resides in us
- It is how God communicates with our spirit.
- This is a learned skill and one of the most difficult ways to hear God.
- God will put a word or thought into your mind that is random and repeatedly plays through your mind.
- (Examples)

### **John 16:13 (NIV)**

***13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.***

- We have to be in tune with God in order to hear what God is saying.



- Sometimes this requires a time of solitude, reading His Word, praying, and just quietly listening for God.

### **Romans 8:5 (NIV)**

***5 Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.***

- When we are listening for God, we have to set our minds of the things of God, not our own selfish desires.
- When our thoughts and attitudes are focused on the kingdom of God, the Spirit will clearly guide you in all things.

## **6 God Speaks To Us Through Dreams and Visions**

### **Joel 2:28 (NIV)**

***28 "And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.***

## **2 Corinthians 12:1 (NIV)**

***12 I must go on boasting. Although there is nothing to be gained, I will go on to visions and revelations from the Lord.***

- Sometimes the Lord gives us a message in a dream
- Not all dreams are spiritual, but if one receives a dream, he should pray and seek the council of others to understand its meaning.
- Sometimes God gives us a vision. It is like a clear picture in our minds.
  - (examples)

## **7 God Speaks To Us Through Other People**

### **Matthew 18:20 (NIV)**

***20 For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them."***

- God is amongst the church and often gives a Word through another person.

- It is so important that when you feel God telling you to speak to someone that you do it.
- It is also important to recognize when God is speaking to you through another person.

### **1 Corinthians 14:29 (NIV)**

***29 Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said.***

- It is important to confirm when you believe God has spoken to you.
- A prophetic Word will never contradict Scripture
- Scripture is the complete authoritative Word of God
- 

### **James 3:17 (NIV)**

***17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate,***

***submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.***

- If someone claims to have a Word of God and it does not line up with James 3:17, then you should probably not put too much weight into what was said.

### ***1 Thessalonians 5:20-22 (NIV)***

***20 Do not treat prophecies with contempt 21 but test them all; hold on to what is good, 22 reject every kind of evil.***

- Test everything to be sure it is God speaking.
- Practice so that you can build up your confidence in knowing the Lord's voice.
- It is ok to make mistakes. This is how we develop.
-

## 8 God Speaks To Us Through Prayer

### **Romans 8:26-27**

***26 In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. 27 And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.***

- Finally, God speaks to us through prayer and in prayer.
- When we are interceding for someone in prayer, the Holy Spirit will often give us the Words to speak.
- When we speak to God, we need to be in a place where we can listen to what he is saying.
  - He may give you a Bible verse.
  - He may give you a Word
  - He may just give you a sense of comfort and peace.
- We won't know unless we are in a place where we can hear.