

ALAN TAYLOR

P O BOX 700623; TULSA, OK 74170-0623

918-447-8951

alantaylorministries.org

The Voice of God

It used to really discourage me when I was in a church service and the preacher would say the words "God told me." The reason it bothered me was because I had never heard God's voice, and I longed to do so. "Why would God speak to them and not to me?" I would wonder. How deep, spiritually, do I need to go to get to that place that I could hear His voice?

As I began to spend time with different preachers, I would corner them and ask what God's voice sounded like. "Was it deep and booming, or was it a whisper?" I wanted to know. Over and over, different men and women of God would share with me that most of them had not actually heard an actual voice, but instead had learned to know His will and desires. It was described as, "I feel it", "I just know it", "it's in my spirit", or "He speaks to my heart". It's been a lifelong quest of mine to know God's voice and will for me, as I think it should be for all of us. It is also in God's heart for us to know Him, and hear Him, from the moment we are saved.

I used to think that hearing an actual voice from heaven was the ultimate achievement in being able to hear Him. But as I've matured, I've discovered the opposite to be true. There's a place of knowing someone so deeply, that words don't have to be spoken.

When my wife and I were newlyweds, we would attend social events and she would try and hint something towards me. First she would try and get my attention, which can be difficult sometimes. Then she would try to secretly mouth words to me. However, I am horrible at reading lips! So finally, after many different attempts to tell me something important, she would have to ask me to leave and step out of the crowd, so she could verbally explain to me what she was trying to let me know. Now, after years of marriage, I can read her body language. Even from a glance I can see what she is telling me without words being spoken. I've come to discover that this is a deeper language that we enjoy together, and it is only with the people we love and know closely.

I believe that many in the Body of Christ have given up on striving to build this type of intimacy with God. It might be simply because they do not feel worthy, or it might be because of misunderstanding His leading in their life. One of the ways believers abandon the path to knowing His voice is by yielding over to the philosophy of doing good things in the name of God.

I was taught to just "go and do" the works of God, and even though I'm not against the idea of doing good things, without having to be told specifically, I was too immature and I fell into a trap. This was early on in my walk. Later, I discovered that my relationship with Him was being built upon what I did for Him instead of getting to know Him. Without realizing it, I had connected how busy I was with how close I was to Him, and

if I wasn't busy doing something in His name, I felt distant from God. Even when I prayed, I found myself offering my works as reasons for God to answer my prayers.

Living for God takes on a new meaning when you accept that it cannot be done without intimacy with our Heavenly Father! Jesus gave us example after example of what it was like to walk with God on this earth. Let's look at just a few verses of how Jesus operated, and how connected He was to His Father's will. We can clearly see how much His steps were about His Father's will and not His own:

John 5:19 says, *"Then Jesus answered and said to them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.'"*

John 5:30 *"I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me."*

John 12:49 *"For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak."*

John 8:28 *"Then Jesus said to them, 'When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things.'"*

We are spiritual creatures, and it is possible for us to know His voice very clearly in our life. Our Heavenly Father desires to be deeply involved in our lives. I honestly believe that the most important step to knowing His voice is to have an undeniable willingness to do what He asks. People often will tell me that they can't get God to speak to them, and I share how that's not their issue, because God is always talking. It really comes down to our willingness to listen and obey. It says in 1 Cor. 2:12-13, *"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual."* God's voice always includes His will.

If you are struggling to hear His voice, then let me encourage you in this one area: humble yourself and share with God that your life belongs to Him. Tell Him that you are willing to listen and that you will obey anything that He would ask of you. It is in these times of quiet, intimate yielding to Him, that we can hear Him the easiest. Don't give up if it seems like it's taking too long. Just like any great relationship, it takes time to learn each other's voice. It may seem a simple thing, but I have personally been amazed at how many times God has shown me His will, and spoken to me throughout the day. He loves you, He has a plan for you and He desires closeness with you.

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