

# LISTENING PRAYER

## Hearing God's Voice in Prayer



A CRC webinar presented  
by Mary Sterenberg  
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## Opening exercise



Close your eyes. ...Hearing from God can  
be as simple as seeing a picture in your  
mind's eye...

## Receiving Guidance from the Holy Spirit

**If you know the Lord, you've already heard His voice.**

*(John 10:4, "His sheep follow him because they know his voice.")*

**Jesus always checked with His Father.**

*(John 8:26-29, I do nothing on my own, but speak just what the Father has taught me.)*

**Submit to the Lordship of Jesus Christ.**

*(II Cor. 10:5, "...we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.")*

## A Prayer to pray before listening prayer to silence all other voices

*Father God,*

*Thank you for promising to talk to me and lead me.*

*Thank you that I can listen to your voice, that you know me, love me, and that I can follow you. Thank you that I can trust your word because it is the truth. I come to you Father in the name of Jesus Christ, your son, and I ask for you to speak to me.*

In the name of Jesus, I take authority over Satan and command that he and his fallen angels cannot speak to me or interfere with my hearing clearly from God.

I place my own thoughts under the blood of Jesus Christ, and in my mind, I will only hear from your Holy Spirit. I will obey whatever you ask me to do, In Jesus name, amen.

## Learn to recognize God's voice

### God's Voice

- Stills you
- Leads you
- Reassures you
- Enlightens you
- Encourages you
- Comforts you
- Calms you
- Convicts you

### Satan's Voice

- Rushes you
- Pushes you
- Frightens you
- Confuses you
- Discourages you
- Worries you
- Obsesses you
- Condemns you

## Receiving Guidance from the Holy Spirit in Prayer

- Confess any sin (Psalm 66:18, *"If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened; but God has surely listened and heard my voice in prayer."*)
- Expect God to answer you (John 10:27, *"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me"*)

## God speaks in scripture

God has been speaking from Genesis to Revelation, beginning with garden conversations with Adam and Eve.

God still speaks today and gives revelation to His children.

## The role of Scripture, and God's ongoing speaking to us



God reveals true doctrine only through Scripture  
– God has spoken fully and completely to us in Scripture.

Anything the Holy Spirit speaks to us today, will be consistent with Scripture and with the nature and work of Jesus Christ.

**Acts 8:26-31**

**God speaking to Philip**



# God Speaking to Philip

Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Go south to the road-- the desert road-- that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (Acts 8:26)

The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it." (Acts 8:29)

## Ways the Holy Spirit may speak today

1. Mental images
2. Thoughts and 'nudges', still small voice
3. Words of Scripture
4. Visions
5. Dreams
6. Consensus of a group, confirmation
7. Audible voice
8. Nature
9. Visual Art and Music
10. Another person, (friend, spouse, pastor)

## Through Mental Images



*The word of the LORD came to me: "What do you see, Jeremiah?"*  
*"I see the branch of an almond tree," I replied. The LORD said to me, "You have seen correctly, for I am watching to see that my word is fulfilled." The word of the LORD came to me again: "What do you see?" "I see a boiling pot, tilting away from the north," I answered. The LORD said to me, "From the north disaster will be poured out on all who live in the land."*

Jeremiah 1:11-14

## Through Thoughts and Nudges, the still small voice

*The Spirit told Philip, "Go to that chariot  
and stay near it." (Acts 8:29)*

**How did the Spirit tell Philip to do this?**

## Through Words of Scripture



*As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. Then I remembered what the Lord had said: "John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit." (Acts 11:15-16)*

The Lord often speaks to us by reminding us of scripture.

## Through Visions



Many examples of visions in scripture (ex. Acts, Joel)

- A vision is a glimpse of reality as seen by God.
- It may be a glimpse of what God is doing or intends to do.
- A vision is one of the primary ways that we are shown how to cooperate with the Holy Spirit.



## Through Dreams



*But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord **appeared to him in a dream** and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 1:20)*

*And having been **warned in a dream** not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route. (Matthew 2:12)*

## Consensus of a Group



*"It seemed good to the Holy Spirit **and to us** not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements:..." Acts 15:28*

In this case the Holy Spirit seems to have spoken through a group -- the apostles and elders.

## Audible voice

### I Samuel 3



<sup>8</sup> A third time the LORD called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." Then Eli realized that the LORD was calling the boy. <sup>9</sup> So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. <sup>10</sup> The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

## Audible Voice

### Exodus 3:4



Moses and the burning bush

<sup>4</sup> When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!" And Moses said, "Here I am."

# Nature

**“The heavens declare  
the glory of God,  
the skies proclaim  
the work of His  
hands.” Psalm 19:1**



## Another Person



- God will confirm His word through other persons we trust, (friend, spouse, pastor)
- God will confirm His word through circumstances, (things will line up and work out, and we will have PEACE)

## Visual Arts and Music



## Pouring Out New Wine

by Stan Myers



# Glory

by Julie Quinn



## Contemporary Examples of God speaking



## Listening Prayer Guidelines

- Be still and quiet your soul
- Submit to the Lordship of Christ
- Praise, worship, acknowledge God's presence
- Confess any known sin
- ASK
- WAIT
- TEST
- OBEY

## Four Tests



**How can I know if what I am  
hearing is from God?**

Reasoned observation and questions  
to help with discernment ...

## Glory to Jesus?

Does it give glory to Jesus Christ in the present and in the future?

- John 14:26
- John 16:13-14
- 1 John 4:1-3



## Consistent with Scripture?

Is it consistent with the intentions and character of God as revealed in scripture?

- John 2:22
- 2 Timothy 3:14-17



## Confirming witness?

Do other people who are born again and filled with the Holy Spirit have a confirming witness?

- 1 Corinthians 14:29
- 1 Corinthians 2:14-16



## Confirmation in fruit?

Is there confirmation in objectively verifiable events or facts?

- Deuteronomy 18:21-22
- Isaiah 55:10-11





## The Four Tests

### ...all four should be confirmed

1. Does it give glory to Jesus Christ in the present and in the future?
2. Is it consistent with the intentions and character of God as revealed in scripture?
3. Do other people who are born again and filled with the Holy Spirit have a confirming witness?
4. Is there confirmation in objectively verifiable events or facts?

## ❖ Prayer

❖ Listening to the voice of God is key to developing our intimate relationship with God.

❖ Receiving guidance from God is key to our effectiveness in the Kingdom of God.



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Questions &  
Answers