

The devil does everything in his power to make his voice heard in this world. At one point he even had the audacity to interrupt Jesus while the Lord was speaking in the synagogue:

*"And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day He entered into the synagogue, and taught... And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him"* (MK 1:21-26)

Using the voice of the man, satan cried out loudly, having one purpose in mind - to send fear throughout the entire congregation! He wanted every person within the sound of his voice to cower in fear - to believe he had power and authority, even as he was being cast out.

Peter warns last-day believers that satan will come to them with a loud voice, trying to bring fear: *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour"* (1.PET 5:8).

Here is my point: If satan is making his voice known in these last days, showing his power to the masses of lost souls, how much more important is it for God's people to know their Father's voice? Do you think the Lord would sit by as satan roars at the world - and yet remain silent Himself? Never! Isaiah said: *"And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard"* (ISA 30:30)

Since Adam and Eve, God has been speaking to man. Scripture says that from the very beginning,

# God Wants You to Know His Voice

*"They heard the voice of the Lord God"* (GEN 3:8). Adam said, *"I heard thy voice in the garden"* (verse 10)

From Genesis onward through the New Testament, God made His voice known to His people - to Abraham, Moses, Caleb, Joshua, Samuel and David, to righteous kings and judges. In the books of the prophets we see this phrase repeated time after time: *"And God said..."* God's voice was known and understood. He always made His voice to be heard!

Jesus confirmed this in the New Testament, using the example of the Good Shepherd: *"The sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger they will not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers"* (JN 10:3-5).

Jesus stated to Pilate: *"Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice"* (18:37). The message to us is clear: If you have God's Spirit in you, then you will hear and know His voice!

Yet we live in a day when many voices clamor for our attention. Paul warned: *"There are...so many kinds of voices in the world, and none*

*of them is without signification [meaning]"* (1.COR 14:10).

Perhaps you have had the experience of many other Christians: When you pray, seeking to hear and know God's voice, your mind is flooded with all kinds of voices, You may wonder, "How can I distinguish the voice of God from my own flesh? How can I be sure it is God speaking, and not the voice of a tempting spirit?"

Let me share with you a few insights I believe God has given me on this matter of hearing and knowing His voice:

## **If You Are Living in Sin, You Will Never Hear God's Voice!**

If you are coddling some secret sin, you can be sure you really don't want to hear God's voice. That is because you already know what He will say to you - and you don't want to hear it!

When Adam and Eve sinned, it brought shame. And with that shame came guilt, fear and condemnation. This shame is called "nakedness" in the Old Testament - and being naked meant standing in God's presence clothed only with guilt.

*"And the Lord called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the*

*garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself"* (GEN 3:9-10).

Adam hid from God's voice, because of the guilt and shame of his sin. And that is exactly where many of God's people are today - hiding, afraid to hear God speak!

You may have lukewarm Christian friends who don't like to go to church with you. When you first met them they were living carelessly. Indeed, they were burdened with guilt and shame - but they weren't ready to give up their secret sin!

When you brought them to church with you, God's Word pierced their conscience. They knew they were hearing the voice of God, calling out to them, "Where are you - what are you doing?" Fear struck their heart! The holy presence of Jesus made their sin seem vile and they could not wait to run out of church and hide!

Beloved, if you want to hear God's voice you have to be ready for a total cleansing. You must be willing to have every sin exposed and cast away!

The prophet Isaiah had an awesome vision of the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up. Seraphim covered themselves with their wings because of the holy presence of God. They cried out: *"Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory"* (ISA 6:3).

God's voice was so mighty it shook the temple. And at the sound of it, the righteous prophet Isaiah fell on his face, crying: "Woe is me for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (verse 5). Isaiah was stricken with a sense of sin and uncleanness - because God's voice is a purging voice!

*"Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged"* (verses 6-7).

Isaiah could not hear God's "directing voice" until he had first heard His "purging voice."

You see, direction and guidance come only after purging because if you haven't been purged, you can't go any farther with the Lord. Yet

thousands upon thousands of God's people today flock to meetings to get a quick, "cure-all" word from God. They want a prophet to lay hands on them - to tell them what to do and what the future holds. Most of what they hear, however, is flattery: "Thou shalt be mightily used of God!" "Thou shalt be a witness to the nations!" "Thou shalt be blessed and prosperous!"

How many of these people do you think would flock to meetings if the "star preacher" pointed a finger at their heart and gave them the purging Word of God? "You're still unclean - you never have let go of your secret sin! You have no vision of Jesus' holiness. Hear His voice - repent!"

If you want to hear God's voice of direction, you must first be ready to have your soul purged and cleansed. His Word comes to pierce our conscience and expose wickedness - so He can use us!

#### **It Was Only After Isaiah Heard the Voice of Purging That He Heard the Voice of Direction!**

Once he had received purging, Isaiah received direction from God: *"I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go..."* (ISA 6:8-9).

How excited we become after the purging! Once we have repented and become broken, we pray, "Lord, You know that I've been cleansed, that all sins have been purged. Now I'm ready to hear Your voice of direction speak comfortably to Thy servant - I'm ready to obey!"

Yet if you want direction - if you think you're ready to do what He asks - then let me ask you: Are you ready for an unsettling word - a mission of hardship and rejection - a life of faith with no guaranteed comforts except those of the Holy Ghost?

That is exactly what happened to Isaiah! The prophet volunteered, "Send me, Lord." And God sent him on a hard, difficult mission!

*"And He said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not, Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears,*

*and understand with their heart"* (verses 9-10).

The word Isaiah heard was not flattering! On the contrary, it would make him hated, unpopular. The Lord told him, "Go, harden those who refuse to hear Me speak! Close their eyes and ears - finish the hardening of their hearts!"

Dear saint, if you want to know God's voice, then you have to be willing to hear anything He says! God will never say, "Go!" until He first asks you "Who will go?" He comes to you, asking, are you willing to do anything I tell you - to do it My way? Are you willing to lay down your life?"

When I prayed for direction a few short years ago the Lord told me clearly, "Go back to New York." That was a most uncomfortable word for me! I had been ready to retire. I had planned to write books and preach at selected places. I thought, "Lord I've already spent my best years there. Give me a break!"

Yes, we want to hear the voice of God, but we want to hear it comfortably! We don't want it to shake us. Yet why should God give us His voice of direction if He is not sure we will obey Him?

Abraham learned to hear God's voice by first obeying what he heard - at the time he heard it! God's word to him was a hard word: "Sacrifice your son, Isaac!" Abraham acted on that word and his obedience became a sweet-smelling aroma that touched the whole world: *"And in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice"* (GEN 22:18).

#### **There is One Major Cause of Why So Many Believers Cannot Know or Understand the Voice of God!**

The teachers of Israel came to Moses and said: *"Now therefore why should we die? For, if we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, then we shall die. For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?"* *"Go thou near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it"* (DEUT 5:25-27).

These men were saying to Moses, "You go to God! You hear His voice

and tell us what He says, and we will do it."

But Moses reminded these leaders that at one time they had heard the Lord's voice for themselves: *"The Lord talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire"* (DEUT 5:4). God had talked to them personally - and they had lived! In fact, that very night, before retiring, they had agreed: *"We have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that God doth talk with man, and he liveth"* (verse 24).

No, these Israelites were not afraid of hearing God's voice - they were afraid of what He was going to tell them! It was because they still clung to idols - golden mice they had carried with them from Egypt!

God already had commanded them:

*"Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them"* (EX 20:35). And now He was saying to them, "I want all of your heart. Lay down your idols!"

Amos spoke for God, saying: *"Have ye offered unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel? But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Molech and Chiun your images, the star of your god, which ye made to yourselves"* (AMOS 5:25-26).

The writer of Hebrews says Israel begged *"that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded...)"* (HEB 12:19-20).

Here is the key! The Israelites could not endure what God had commanded of them because they could not bear the thought of giving up their hidden idols and secret sins!

They thought, "Moses is meek. We'll let him talk to God and then we'll listen to him. He's led us all these years, and he still hasn't caught onto our hidden idols. He won't be as hard on us as God!"

No! God is not an entertainer who plays parlor games with idolatrous Christians! He seeks intimacy - He wants to speak to the smallest details of our lives. And He speaks with one purpose in mind - to possess all of our heart! He wants to destroy all idols and purge all sin so He can bless, favor and reward!

The Lord said of Israel: *"O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!"* (DEUT 5:29).

### **God's Voice Cannot be Heard When You Are Depending On A Man's Voice!**

Israel could not hear God's voice because they preferred hearing the voice of a man. I ask you: Could this be the reason you are not able to hear His voice?

Perhaps you have an idol - a certain minister, teacher or evangelist. He speaks to you of good things - of healing, prosperity, faith and blessings. But he does not dig into your heart about sin! You don't want to be searched; you want only to be blessed - so you listen to his tapes for hours, devouring his messages. But you are feeding on a man instead of on Christ!

Beloved, the reason why many Christians today cannot hear the voice of God is because they have been indoctrinated by a man! The Bible speaks of this as the worst idolatry of these last days - addiction to false doctrine, false teachers, indoctrination by men who do not speak for God.

I do not speak against these men, but against heresy and error - against false doctrines that are coming forth and ruining men's souls. Those who run to such doctrines end up halfhearted, confused, shipwrecked. They miss the true blessing and favor of God!

It is time for every believer to go directly to the Lord and hear His voice without a man in the middle! You have to learn to hear God's voice for yourself. Yes, His Spirit will be digging, searching, convicting, dealing. But you will never know His voice until He has all your heart!

I want to speak now to those repentant, remnant believers who truly want to hear and know their Lord's voice:

### **God's Desire Is for His Holy People to Enjoy a Daily, Consistent, Conversational Hearing Of His Voice!**

God desires to speak to you as if you were sitting down to dinner with Him. He wants to converse with you, heart to heart, on any and all matters! The Bible says:

*"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me"* (REV 3:20).

This verse often has been misapplied to the unsaved. We speak of Jesus standing at the door of the sinner's heart, seeking entrance. No - it is to the believer that Christ is speaking!

The context shows that Christ is talking to those who are clothed in white raiment (righteousness), who have bought gold tried in the fire, whose eyes are anointed (having revelation), who are loved, reproved and chastened (see verses 15-19). These are repentant, holy people who want to know the voice of God!

As I read and reread verse 20 in this passage, three words kept leaping out at me: "Open the door! Open the door!" And the Spirit of God spoke clearly to my heart: "David, the reason you have not heard Me as I want to be heard is because you are not wholly open in your spirit to hear!"

Now, we know theologically that Jesus abides in our heart. Yet most of us keep a little place in our heart that we never open up to the Lord. This is the seat of our soul, the very core of our being - it makes us the person we are. And out of it springs all of our emotions.

This is the room Jesus comes to, knocking, calling. He is saying there is a closed door between you and Himself - something that is blocking Him from coming in.

This door as I see it represents a commitment - one that many Christians have not yet fully made. Most believers pray, "Lord, all I need is a little advice, a few words of direction - a reminder that You love me. Just let me know whether I'm doing right or wrong. Go before me and open the doors!"

But Jesus answers us: "If all you want from Me is direction, I can send a prophet to give it to you. If you only want to know where to go and what to do, I can send someone and you can filter it all through him. But you're missing Me!"

The truth is, Jesus wants more! He wants your closeness, your deepest emotions your locked-up room. He wants to sit down with you and share all that is in His heart - to talk to you face to face.

He wants to be intimate with you!  
He is calling for dinner for two!

Revelation 3 is a wonderful picture of this. It speaks of love and intimacy, of sharing secrets, of tender voices. Christ is saying here, "I want to share My heart with you. I want you to know My ways, so that the very thoughts you think are My thoughts. I want My voice to emerge more and more in your heart - until your very mind is the mind of Christ!"

He stands at the door, knocking, asking for a commitment - a step of faith that says you will open up your heart, soul and mind to Him. This can't happen through emotions or feelings. Rather, it must be through a commitment of faith that says, "Jesus, I commit to you, not to answers, not to direction. I open the door of my all to You!"

When Jesus comes in, He brings food, bread - in other words, Himself. And when you feed on Him, you will be satisfied completely!

**The Song of Solomon Offers a Beautiful Picture of Christ Wanting in the Door!**

The bride portrayed in the Song of Solomon says:

*"I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night"* (SOS 5:2).

The bridegroom in this scene represents Jesus. He is knocking on His bride's door, saying *"Open to Me My beloved, My head is filled with dew [meaning, I have suffered for our love]."* The bride hears Him knock, but she is in bed. She loves the bridegroom, but she is too tired to get up and open the door to him.

Then something happens. She says, *"My beloved put his hand in the hole of the door, and my [heart*

*was] moved for him"* (verse 4). In oriental times, doors were built with an opening in them. Here, the bridegroom wants so badly to be with his bride that He puts His hand in the opening and tries to undo the lock from inside. But for some reason he is hindered. So he looks through the opening at his bride - and he sees her sleepy-eyed and half-awake.

He wonders: "Does she truly love me? "Why does she not open to me with anxious jubilation? Why am I so anxious to be with her - and yet she is so unconcerned about being with me?"

Dear saint, this is exactly what the Lord is wanting from His church! He wants us waiting at the door, full of love - not slighting Him as if He were not the altogether lovely One of our hearts!

People who are in love want to be alone together. And this picture shows Christ's heart toward us: He wants intimacy with us so badly that He literally reaches inside and tries to unlock the door! Yet, I ask you - how many times has Jesus wanted intimacy with you, but you've shut Him out?

At this point, the bride rouses herself and smells her beloved's fragrance (the myrrh) on the lock of the door: *"I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dripped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock"* (verse 5).

Finally, she says: *"I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone: my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called him, but he gave me no answer"* (SOS 5:3-5).

The bridegroom was gone! He still loved her - but his actions said, "She has no intense love for me - she's taking me for granted! I've got to withdraw until she learns to appreciate who I am"

Beloved, sometimes the Lord has to withdraw from us for the same reason! When He does so, He is saying to us, "I want you to come to Me with all your heart. I want you to love Me - to yearn after Me with everything that's in you!"

Suddenly, the bride realizes she has slighted her bridegroom! So she runs into the streets, crying, *"I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if ye find my beloved, that ye tell him, that I am [faint with desire]"* (5:8). She tells everyone, *"He is altogether lovely"* (verse 16).

This is a picture of an awakened church - awakened to her need for Christ! Those who hunger for the Bridegroom are already standing at the door when Jesus knocks. They're ready, with their hand on the door, to open up to intimacy with Him!

Like the bride in this passage, we must wake up to who Jesus is to us! We have to say, as the bride does, "That's my love, my life, I can't do without Him!"

Have you not yet opened up to loving intimacy with Jesus? Have you not yet let the Bridegroom in? Open up your soul and spirit to Christ, and trust He will enter, Let Him be your source, your everything and believe what He said: *"I will come in - I will dine with you!"* (see Revelation 3:20).

In His presence, shut in with Him alone, you will get to know Him - His fragrance, His ways, His heart. And you will learn to know His voice - the voice of the One who loves you enough to keep knocking and begging for your intimacy.

Get close to Him - and you will know His voice!

by David Wilkerson  
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