



INTRO

Today we are beginning a new series entitled, “How Does God Speak To Us?” No surprise here...we’re talking about how to hear God’s voice!

I think this series is going to be life-changing for anyone who doesn’t know if it’s even possible to hear from God. Maybe that sounds weird to you. I get it! But hang stick with me and I guarantee you’ll learn how God promises that we can hear His voice in the Bible.

TENSION

Let me start off with a quick poll. Would anyone be honest and raise your hand if you’ve asked one of the following questions:

- Does God speak to us today?
- Does He speak in an audible voice?
- How can I tell the difference between God and Satan?
- Why can’t I hear God’s voice?

Yeah! It can be *totally* confusing if you’ve never felt like you’ve heard God speak before. In this series, I really want to help you out with that. And if you’ll take it seriously, I think you might even be able to say that you learned how to hear God’s voice more clearly.

Since we’re learning how to hear the voice of God, we’ll also be talking a lot about His will (how to know His will, learning what that means, etc.). I know a lot of people ask this question about knowing God’s will because we don’t want to make the wrong decisions. We wonder if God will have to intervene and slam a door shut.

These two ideas are some of the biggest questions in the Christian faith!

Let me make it a little more practical. Maybe you haven’t asked the question, “How do I hear God’s voice?” Maybe you’ve asked:

- Is it God’s will for me to date this person?
- How do I know where to go to college?
- What does God want me to do with my life?

I have asked God all those questions (and more)!

[LEADER NOTE: Share a personal story about how you had to discern God's will about something specific in your life. An easy one might be about a big decision you've made in your past (relationship, college, friends, etc.). I decided to use this as a time to describe my decision to start dating my wife and take that relationship more seriously.]

PERSONAL STORY

I can remember the moment right before I asked my wife to go on our first date. I had just left a really awful relationship. I didn't want to play games. As I walked up the stairs to her apartment, I can remember praying, "God, if this is going to be one of those bad relationships, please just have her slam the door in my face!" She didn't.

We went on our first date and we both agreed as we began dating that the number one most important thing in our relationship was to keep God's will in the center of our relationship. So, if we broke up, we'd be in the center of God's will. If we stayed together, we'd be in the center of God's will. We ended up getting married about 3 ½ years later!

Now, I don't want you to hear that and think, "Oh! It's that easy! Awesome!" It isn't easy! One of the most difficult things in the world is to discern the voice and the will of God (especially if no one is guiding you).

Let me be really clear. Throughout your life, **God will speak to you!** And He doesn't do it through a big, booming, audible voice in the sky. You're probably not going to have a Lion King moment where you're like Simba and you talk to Celestial Mufasa in the sky (although that would be incredible)!

I think it's entirely possible that God speaks in the mundane places of our lives and we miss it because we're so distracted by all the other things in our world!

Tonight, we're going to explore a few different Scriptures. So, go ahead and grab your Bibles, notebooks, phones, or whatever you have! If you're a note-taker, tonight is going to be chock-full of good stuff for you.

4 WAYS TO HEAR GOD'S VOICE

We're going to look at four lenses through which we can hear God's voice and learn His will.

Point 1
We hear God's voice through the influence of others.

The first lens that we want to look at is the influence of others.

Proverbs 15:22 says, *"Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed."* (ESV)

It's so important to have wise counselors in your life!

Let me pause and give you some clarity about what I'm saying. I'm NOT saying that you have to listen to everybody, every celebrity, or everything culture is telling you. I AM telling you that you need to have people in your life who are rooted in God's Word to help you make wise decisions.

When it comes to having wise counselors in our lives, there are two major mistakes that students make.

First, you need to remember that the wise counselors in your life are your parents (I know...I'll give you a second to calm down after you just freaked out on me). I know you think your parents might be weird, but they have wisdom that you don't! They've lived a lot longer than you and have learned some of the things that will put you in danger.

Side note: your parents are crazy because of you. You freak them out! They're worried about you! They were cool before you showed up.

The second problem you might face is that you put way too much stock in what your friends think. When it comes to asking for wisdom, it helps to have someone who has "been there and done that." Your friends are great, but they probably can't give great advice because their life experiences just aren't there yet.

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