

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white top and a plaid scarf, is shown in profile, looking upwards towards a bright, cloudy sky. The sun is visible behind the clouds, creating a soft, ethereal glow. The overall mood is contemplative and spiritual.

*How
God Communicates
With Us*

Kevin & Deborah Martin

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Forward

People often ask us how we hear God. Answering that question is not as simple as some would make it. It is simple to know what He is communicating to you once you discover how you receive from God. However, here is where it becomes more complicated. Each of us is designed by God to receive most easily from Him in a particular way. How you receive from God is easily discovered once you recognize how you receive communication from those around you. Yet, even if we know the answer to this question, we still may find that we are not receiving communication from God. The problem is not that God is not communicating; there are hindrances to receiving from God which may be affecting us. Removing those hindrances can clear the channel so we can begin to know what God is saying to us. The responsibility to discover the hindrances and remove them is ours. But we cannot do it without His help.

Our prayer is that this teaching set will help you clear the channels and to know how your receiver works so you can receive God's communication to you. We invite you to take a journey of intimacy with the God Who loves you and is waiting to talk to you.

CHAPTER ONE

HINDRANCES TO RECEIVING GOD'S COMMUNICATION

Why do we need to talk about hindrances to our communication with God? Because we have an enemy who does not want us to effectively talk to and hear from God. If we hear more clearly from God, his schemes against us will not work like they did before. And the more freely and fully we hear from God the more devastating we will become to Satan and his hordes. To keep us from hearing accurately from God Satan lies to us and sends evil spirits to lead us into deception. They lie to us about God and about each other so we do not trust God and we live in suspicion of one another. Our warfare is not against flesh and blood nor against God. But Satan's schemes are to get us fighting or separated from one another.

2 Corinthians 2:11 Lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

Ephesians 3:17-20

¹⁷That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— ¹⁹to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Therefore, God desires that we learn to hear from Him and to communicate more effectively with each other. God knows us better than we know ourselves. He knows what prevents us from accurately communicating with Him. If we will take some time to listen to Him, He will reveal the truth that sets us free.

With that in mind, open your heart to Him and let us learn to set aside the hindrances so God can have the desire of His heart and He can also give you the desire of your heart.

The following does not cover all hindrances that can interfere with our ability to hear God. Ask Him to show you what hinders you specifically and He will.

MENTAL STRONGHOLDS

Negative thought patterns – Some people think that God only talks to special people. The truth according to Acts 2:17 is that “...in the last days, says God, that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh.” If you will listen, He will speak.

Unworthiness – Many people struggle with thoughts and feelings of unworthiness. In reality no one is worthy apart from the righteousness of Jesus Christ. But Christ will give His righteousness to those who ask. Anyone who receives Christ as Savior receives His righteousness and can thereby approach the throne of God. He is waiting for you to come.

Romans 3:22 Even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference

Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need

Wrong Concepts. There are various concepts of who God talks to, how He communicates and what conditions must exist. The word of God reveals several ways God communicates with us and His desire to talk to all of us. We need to let His word reveal the truth about God’s desire and willingness to be intimate with each of us. His Spirit is ready and willing to teach you through the word and through personal experience how God is ready right now to talk to you.

Some have only one concept of how God communicates and they are not open to any other way for Him to speak. We cannot put God in a box. He can communicate to any one of us in a variety of ways. Think of all the ways you communicate. God’s ways are higher and much more abundant than ours. Do not put your limitations on God.

Fear of an Angry God. God does have anger. He told me one day that it angers Him when He is separated from us by lies, fear and unforgiveness. However, the wrath that we deserve and are afraid of has all been poured out upon Jesus when He hung on the cross in our place. He is no longer angry with us. Jesus has paid the penalty for your sins and for your failures to obey God today. God is waiting for you to trust what He has done for you in Jesus and come to Him and be loved the way you have always wanted to be loved.

1 John 4:9, 10

⁹In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

ATTACHMENTS

Many people ask God to help them make right choices while their hearts have already become attached to one answer. When you become attached to one answer you will only hear that answer. Example: you are dating someone and have become emotionally attached. And you ask God, "Should I marry this person?" The only way you can accurately hear God in this situation is to detach yourself from the emotions in your soul. Very few Christians can actually do that. Most lie to themselves and believe they have heard God say, "Yes!"

Hebrews 3:10 . . . 'They always go astray in *their* heart, and they have not known My ways.'

Dating is not God's method of match-making. Dating is for people who do not hear God. It is for those who put their trust in the flesh to see if this person feels right. It opens you up to an attachment. Once the attachment is formed, it does not matter what God intends for you. You are attached and your flesh wants to keep what it is attached to. All is not lost, but you may be making a mistake in which you will have to settle for less than God's perfect will for you in this most important matter. God wants you to enter into an intimate relationship with Him before you seek a spouse. There are many reasons why He wants this. This is one important reason.

OBSTINANCY

There may be times we ask God to answer a question to which we already know the answer. You cannot or will not hear when you know the answer yet you are holding out for a different answer. The Spirit of God was prompting me to reveal facts about my past to a US military security agency who periodically investigate the backgrounds of military members who hold security clearances. I was remembering things I had not properly reported when I joined the military and I was afraid of what would happen if I reported these things now. God was trying to protect me. I asked Him whether or not He wanted me to reveal the things I was remembering. He wanted me to trust Him to reveal those things. I was afraid and wanted a different answer. After that He did not answer me again, until one day

the thought came very strongly, “You already know the answer.” I decided to trust Him. I obeyed Him and everything worked out perfectly in my favor.

FEAR OF OPENING A DOOR TO EVIL SPIRITS

John 10:27 “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.”

Some people are afraid that trying to hear God will open a door to evil spirits to deceive them. This can happen in certain cases that we will include in the section called Exceptions below. Because we have a relationship with God we can hear His voice without fear.

John Webster asks several questions to clarify the answer to the fear of opening a door to evil spirits in his book called “The Voice.” I have added a couple of questions. Answer these questions for yourself.

- Have you accepted Jesus as your Savior?
- Who is your shepherd – Jesus or the devil?
- Who are you in covenant with – God or the devil?
- Whose child are you – God’s or the devil’s?
- Who are you in relationship with – God or the devil?
- Whose voice will you hear – God’s or the devil’s?

If you have accepted Jesus as Savior, He is your shepherd and He has established His covenant with you. God is your Father, you are His child and you are in relationship with Him. Therefore, whose voice will you hear? God’s! Expect to feel safe!

2 Timothy 1:7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

No matter how fear presents itself, it is never from God. It is always from the enemy and it is always based on a lie.

Hebrews 3:10, 12, 13

¹⁰ . . . ‘They always go astray in *their* heart, and they have not known My ways.’

¹²Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; ¹³but exhort one another daily, while it is called “Today,” lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

When we pay attention to the lie, we err in our hearts and forget God's ways. We may reject God's ways and harden our hearts to any way but our own. Verse 13 says our hearts our hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Sin deceives us with a lie. God is speaking to us today. If we want to hear His voice, we must not harden our hearts. In other words give up your controversy with Him. It is based on a lie.

God told me once that His people do not trust Him. He said we have a controversy with Him. By controversy He meant a debate we have with God blaming Him for some injustice. Below I will talk more about this as I deal with the issue of judgments. First notice Hebrews 3 verse 15.

Hebrews 3:15 While it is said: “Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion.”

God intends for us to hear His voice. When you have a relationship with someone you listen to that person. You will hear his voice unless you close your heart to him for some reason. Closing your heart shuts off the relationship to one degree or another. Do not close your heart to God. He wants to speak to you. If you have closed your heart to Him, repent, open your heart to Him and renew the relationship. Because we have a relationship with God we will hear His voice, if we will listen.

Exceptions:

- Occult involvement
- Willful rebellion – resisting authority. This is not youthful rebellion in ignorance. Continued willful rebellion to rightful authority leaves us vulnerable and unprotected.
- Habitual unrepented sin – as with Eli's sons in 1 Samuel. This is not talking about a man who sins, repents, sins, repents and sins and repents in a cycle he is trying to break. This man is looking for God's answer and He is open to God and in relationship with Him. He is one of the Shepherd's sheep who gets caught in the same thicket over and over. The Shepherd goes and gets him out each time. However, Eli's sons are a clear example of habitual unrepented sin.

JUDGMENT

Being angry at God is the most common hindrance to hearing God that I have encountered among believers. Anger toward God shuts the door of our heart to

Him and prevents us from hearing Him. Things happen in our lives that we believe God should not let happen. We believe He could stop them, He is not stopping them, so we judge Him that His laws are too stringent for us to keep and He does not really care.

James 4:11 Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge.

Job 40:2, 8

**²“Shall the one who contends with the Almighty correct *Him*?
He who rebukes God, let him answer it.”**

**⁸“Would you indeed annul My judgment?
Would you condemn Me that you may be justified?”**

Most believers who are angry at God do not know it and would not believe it because it is not in their value system to be angry at God, Who loves them. We do not know our hearts. God uses the trials of life to reveal our hearts to us, if we are open to know our hearts. Once you acknowledge what God shows you, you are in a position to repent, turn to God and begin to receive His answer. To reopen one's heart to God, repentance of judging God is the key. Confess to God that you have judged Him and ask Him to forgive you. Do this for every issue of anger in your heart, whether the anger is directed at God or a person. You can tell when you are done when the anger leaves your heart. Until that happens, renounce the judgment every time you feel the anger.

1 Peter 5:5-7

⁵Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders. Yes, all of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for

**“God resists the proud,
But gives grace to the humble.”**

⁶Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, ⁷casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

CHAPTER TWO

HOW GOD COMMUNICATES WITH US

YOU WERE CREATED FOR FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

1 John 1:3 That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.

1 John 4:8-10 (KJV)

8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

2 Corinthians 5:19 (English Standard Version)

That is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

God created you in His image so He could have intimate relationship with you. No other being was created just for fellowship with our God. He loved you so much, that when Adam fell He could not leave you in that fallen state but sent His Son to bring you back to Him. He gave everything for you. To sacrifice all for the one you love. This is perfect love.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

You are His workmanship. You were created for His pleasure, for His joy, and for His Glory. Spending time with your Father brings Him the greatest joy. When I was little, I did not laugh a lot because my father drank a lot and abused his children. For this reason, my life was very hard. Now as an adult, the Father has returned my childhood to me. God has given me something the enemy had stolen, my joy! I laugh a lot more now. Laughter is healing to your soul. God has given it back to me because He loves me. I learned something important through this. Nothing you can do and nothing that happens to you will ever stop God from loving you.

John 10:27 (KJV) My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

John 10:3, 4 (KJV)

3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

Proverbs 4:20-22 (KJV)

20 My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings.

21 Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart.

22 For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.

James 1:5 (KJV) If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all [men] liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

We are His sheep. His sheep hear His voice. He calls us by name. Unfortunately, sheep are the dumbest animals in the world. They will follow another sheep off a cliff to their death. That used to make me think, "God how dare You call me dumb?" Until I realized it is His wisdom that makes me smart. Wisdom comes from reading His word and the revelations that God reveals through His word and to you. There are volumes that could be written about God that we will never know until we get to heaven. That is why Paul says in **1 Corinthians 2:2 For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.** All our knowledge is fruitless compared to His. His words are life within us.

John 17:21-26

21 That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one:

23 I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

24 Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

25 O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me.

26 And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

John 10:38 (KJV) But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.

Jesus and the Father are one. If you see Jesus as love but the Father as wrath, you do not have a clear picture of who the Father really is. God wants to have fellowship with you.

GOD'S VOICE HEARD THROUGHOUT TIME

Psalm 85:8 (KJV) I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly.

This verse says that God will speak to His people. Through the Old Testament and the New Testament, God talked to His people.

Ecclesiastes 5:1 (KJV) Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.

God spoke to many men, women, and people throughout time and He still speaks today.

Adam

He talked to Adam in the garden.

Genesis 3:8-10 (KJV)

8 And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

9 And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?

10 And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.

Moses

He talked to Moses through a burning brush and on a mountain.

Exodus 19:19 (KJV) And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.

Israel

He talked to Israel. This was before the new covenant when He said He would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh.

Deuteronomy 4:11, 12 (KJV)

11 And ye came near and stood under the mountain; and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness.

12And the LORD spake unto you out of the midst of the fire: ye heard the voice of the words, but saw no similitude; only ye heard a voice.

Daniel

The first time Daniel opened his mouth God was listening to him.

Daniel 10:12 (NIV) Then he continued, "Do not be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day that you set your mind to gain understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to them.

Noah

Noah received the plans for the ark to save his family and the animals of this world.

Abraham

God spoke to Abraham and told him that he would enter into a promised land; he would have a child in his old age and through his descendants all the families of the earth would be blessed.

Joseph

God gave dreams to Joseph that prophesied his future as second in authority under Pharaoh.

Mary

An angel spoke to Mary that she would become the mother of the Son of God.

Simeon

The Holy Spirit revealed to Simeon that he would not die until he saw Jesus.

Jesus

Jesus heard from God all the time.

Paul-Peter-John

After Jesus went to heaven, the apostles had visions, dreams, trances, and they heard from the Father.

VARIETY OF METHODS THAT GOD USES TO SPEAK TO HIS PEOPLE

1. Holy Scripture

2 Timothy 3:16, 17 (NIV)

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

God will never contradict Himself in His Word or speaking to you. God uses His Word to speak to us. When you read God's Word, let God speak to you through it. One verse can speak life into your heart and change you forever. It can break you free of the chains that hold you back from stepping into more of what God has for you. That is why God says in Hebrews 4:12 that His word is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. When God opened this revelation to me, it changed how I looked at the Bible. I took certain verses to my heart that changed my life. For the first time, I understood that God's Word was alive!

2. Other people or circumstances

Sometimes through Christians or non-Christians, either we receive answers from God in normal conversation or as we discuss things close to our hearts. God showed me the power of our words. I was listening and looking so intensely at my friend that he stopped and asked me, "What do you see?" I realized that my perceptions and my words were very important to my friend. It made me stop and think before answering. This spoke volumes to my heart about what comes out of my mouth.

Sometimes God uses circumstances in our life to answer our prayer. He can open a door or close a door to a new job or a promotion. God used the circumstance of leaving one job that I thought was right for me to place me in the job that He knew was right for me. When God closes one door, expect Him to move you into a new thing.

3. Dreams

During times of sleep, as our bodies are at rest, God will speak to us. A dream from God seems to stand out from other dreams. Write down the dream and the date you received it. Ask God to reveal the truth hidden within your dream. If

God gives you a dream about people you know, you need to ask God what to do with the dream. Do you tell that person about the dream or do you keep silent and pray for them? Just because God shares secrets with you does not mean you tell the person. God has used dreams to speak to my heart and shown me darkness that was there. I was working at a childcare center with a group of women. They had worked together many years and I was the new teacher. I felt like an outsider until they accepted me in their group. Then a new teacher was hired. They treated her the same way. To my shame, I did the same thing. Then God gave me a dream that revealed my heart. I went to the new teacher and repented. I went to my friends and shared what God had shown me. It was a hard thing to do and I lost a friend that day. You see I had allowed this friendship to be more important to me than God. Our loving God reveals the secrets of our hearts through dreams so He can set us free.

4. Visions

In visions you see into the spirit realm just as you see in the natural realm. Usually you are awake at the time of a vision. However, a vision can occur as part of a dream. While in intercession one night, the Lord took me into the second heaven (the spirit realm). I saw the enemy give orders to demons to attack our church. Then Satan turned and looked right at me. I could feel and see him looking at me. I could feel his hate and contempt for me. I could hear myself say, "He can see me." I had a sense as he walked towards me that my life was in danger. Just then Jesus stepped in front of me and I knew that I was hidden in Christ. The enemy could not touch me.

5. Inward visions

This is a vision that you see in your mind like a picture or a movie. It may be about some future event or something occurring at that moment. Prophets have inward visions frequently. God gave me a picture of my father having a heart attack. I asked God "What is this?" He said the enemy is attacking your father. I want you to pray against this. God had shown me a future event and a plan to stop the enemy's attack.

6. Trances

A trance is a sleep-like-state where you may have little or no awareness of your surroundings. Very few people experience trances. Intercessors might have trances while interceding for God to move in a certain situation. I have entered into a trance state while praying. I could hear others praying around me but only faintly. The vision and the sounds from the vision were louder than the people

who were next to me. It is as if God turns down the volume of your surroundings and turns up the volume of the vision you are in.

7. An Audible Voice

When people hear God speak, it is usually within our thoughts. Very few people hear God speak with an audible voice. If it happens to you, you will know and you will likely never forget it. I heard my name called twice and turned around to find no one there. God had spoken my name.

8. Feelings/Impressions

When God communicates through feelings or impressions, it can be very difficult to know this is God because feelings can lead you astray. If it is some major change in your life, like moving to a new country, you should seek counsel from someone that you trust as a spiritual authority in your life. While standing in the back of church during worship, I would get an impression to look at a certain person. God would show me what was happening in that person's life. It might start with a feeling that something was wrong or feeling that something was changing in the worship. I heard God ask, "Can you feel that change?" I said, "Yes, Lord I feel it." This was how God started to train me to be sensitive to His Spirit moving among His people.

Proverbs 11:14 (NIV) Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.

9. Word of Knowledge

This is a supernatural word from the Lord informing you of a fact which you previously had no knowledge. The Lord has given me knowledge that someone in a meeting had some type of sickness. He would have me declare healing to that person. If they can take that word and step out in faith, they will walk into their healing.

10. Word of Wisdom

This is the revealing of an event that has not yet occurred. Most prophets receive words of wisdom. God told me that southern Finland would have an early winter one year. God wanted the people to see that He is in control to encourage them to believe His words. It did snow earlier that year than expected.

11. Prophetic Word

This is a word spoken in a known language to edify, exhort, or comfort an individual or the Body of Christ. As a prophet of God, I had ministered on a

prophetic team every Sunday. I have given many words to people and witnessed the prophesied events occur in their lives. Prophetic words encourage people to move into the deeper things of God.

2 Corinthians 13:1 (NIV) This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

Two or three believers should judge a prophetic word. Is this a true word from God? Do not change your life based on a prophetic word without getting counsel.

12. Written instruction

As you are reading the bible, a passage from the Word of God speaks to you. God may confirm through His word the call He has placed on your life. Write down thoughts you have as you are reading the Word of God.

13. Knowing

This is a sense of instruction from the throne of God. Because we are one with God through Jesus and by the Holy Ghost, we receive communication from God's heart into our heart. The Holy Spirit communicates the deep things of God to us. I knew God was sending us to Finland even when those around us were not confirming it at first. I had a knowing in my heart but I waited for God to confirm it to others around me.

1 Corinthians 2:9-12 (NIV)

9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

10 But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

11 For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

DESCRIPTION OF HIS VOICE

1. Noise of many waters

Ezekiel 43:2 (KJV) And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east: and his voice was like a noise of many waters: and the earth shined with his glory.

His voice drowns out everything else when it floods us. His voice is like many waters rushing over us and it overwhelms our senses. There are times when God's voice fills my thirsty soul with refreshing water. It is like sitting in a warm bath filled with the sweet smell of roses and I feel relaxed just enjoying His presence.

2. Still small voice

1 Kings 19:11-13 (KJV)

11 And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: 12 And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. 13 And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?

Sometimes the hustle and noise of this world is so great that God must speak in a still small voice that forces us to stop and listen. As a teacher of young children, I learned to capture children's attention by whispering. So many children come from homes where the noise level is always high. This quietness surprises them and causes them to listen carefully.

3. Trumpet

Revelation 1:10, 11 (KJV)

10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, 11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia.

Sometimes God speaks to us in a loud voice. When He does, be sure it is most important.

4. Power

Isaiah 6:4-9 (KJV)

4 And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. 5 Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts. 6 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: 7 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. 8 Also 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. 9 And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

The posts of the door moved at the sound of His voice. There was power in the words that God spoke. That means He can move us by His word. There was a time when I believed that I was the only one who heard God clearly. I was sure I was so important. One night God showed up and showed me the pride I was walking in. He came in power and might and I wanted to hide. He showed me what a Godly fear is that night. The interesting thing was that God showed me His power but He also showed me His great love. You see, He must get all the Glory; not man. When man thinks it is his ability, pride has just taken hold. Once I repented, God showed me His mighty love.

God has used many things and people to communicate with His people (Angels, bushes, a donkey, husbands, fleeces, thunder, wives, prophets, wind, parchments, visions, dreams and a priest named Melchizedek). The mode by which He speaks to us is not what God wants us to react to; it is what He says that matters.

As God speaks to your heart it does not matter where your mind has been going; He blocks and overrides all circuits. His Voice speaking to you captivates you. He commands your undivided attention and His Presence fills us with well-being.

MOVING INTO HIS PRESENCE

Guard your mind to receive the thoughts of God.

Romans 12:2 (NIV) Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Philippians 4:8 (NIV) Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable--if anything is excellent or praiseworthy--think about such things.

The battle is in our minds, so guard your mind. Philippians tells us what to think on, godly thoughts! God speaks to us through our thoughts and He reveals His thoughts to us. As we choose to renew our minds daily, we step into the deeper things of God. We move into His presence everyday as we spend time with Him. Ask yourself this question, "Do you really want to hear God?" Or are you afraid He might say something you do not want to hear. The degree to which we know

the Lord and walk intimately with Him is the degree to which we will accurately interpret what He is saying to us.

If we will hear God, we must live in a habitation of meditation upon His word. We must immerse ourselves in the Scriptures and base our thinking upon His Word, filling ourselves with it. Let His living water wash our minds clean of the world's distortions of reality.

Habitation. This word is useful to this discussion because God wants more than visitation with us. He wants us to live in Him and He in us (John 17:21). The meaning of habitation is a place in which a person is most likely to be found; a natural environment or locality; a place of abode: a residence.

Do you want to be found in God's House, learning His secrets and touching His Glory?

Hebrews 4:12 (NIV) For the word of God is living 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.

Proverbs 4:20-22 (KJV)

20 My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings.

21 Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart.

22 For they [are] life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.

God's Word is living. God's Word can change your life.

You have two voices in your head: the voice of God and the voice of your heart. By spending time with God, you get to know Him, then you can tell the voices apart. They are like twins. A mother can tell identical twins apart because she has gotten to know the differences in each child. As you spend time with God, you will learn to recognize the voice of your heavenly Father. There are times when a new thought comes into your mind; this could be God talking to you. Test it to see if He is asking you to do something. This is how you learn. Maybe He wants you to call or go see someone. God is talking all the time. You just need to know that it is God and not you. It is like turning a radio to the right channel to hear the station clearly.

The devil and his demons also speak. But they send thoughts into our mind from without. Because they are thoughts, we mistake them as our own thoughts. However, their aim is always to cause condemnation or confusion. God leads us

with peace into the good things He has prepared for us. He encourages us to follow Him in faith. He does not push us to do His will. The Spirit of God will teach you the difference.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV)

3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Romans 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Only Jesus could effectively control His thoughts and not sin in His heart. Sin begins in the thoughts and feelings to which we yield our minds. Many believers have not learned to take carnal thoughts captive and bring them into the obedience of Christ. You cannot learn this yourself. Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you. Your job is to yield to Him and let Him do it for you and teach you your part.

We are to wait on him, worship Him and recognize it is Him we want, not His blessings. It is Him we want, not the experience of Him speaking. He speaks a word and suddenly a peace that passes all understanding comes over you. Nothing in your circumstance has changed, but you now have His perspective on them. You become content in whatsoever state you are.

Psalms 16:11 (NIV) You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Psalms 25:14 (NIV) The Lord confides in those who fear him; he makes his covenant known to them.

Matthew 6:21 (NIV) For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

What is intimacy with God?

Intimacy with God exists as we abide in Jesus, so that His Spirit and His words flow through us and we have no desire or need to hide anything from Him. Then we ask what we desire because our desires have been conformed to His desires, His will. This is how we glorify God on earth. This is how we increase His Kingdom.

John 15:7, 8 (NIV)

7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. 8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

HOW DO WE HEAR GOD'S VOICE?

John 16:7-13 (NIV)

7 But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

8 When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment:

9 in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me;

10 in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer;

11 and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

12 "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear.

13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all 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.

John 6:44 (NIV) "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day."

The beginning of your recognition of communication from God is when He called you to salvation. The key is to recognize God's voice when you hear it in whatever way He chooses to communicate to you. We recognize God's voice because we recognize Him. The better we get to know God the more clearly we will recognize His voice. God frequently speaks to us through our interests and knowledge. His Spirit often draws upon His Word within us.

Hebrew 5:14 (NIV) But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

Spiritual ears, eyes and touch must be exercised in order to gain knowledge of what is happening in the Spirit realm. The more we use them the keener they become. We will know when the enemy comes and tries to deceive us. Learn to obey God's word and His leading and grow from your mistakes.

Obedience keeps the dialog free flowing between you and God. Fear or other hindrances discussed in chapter one may lead to failure and cause us to fear judgment from God or to harden our hearts from His will. We may impute human motives to God and pull away thinking He is angry or lacks

compassion. Trust His love and goodness. Keep your heart open and continue to listen. He will speak in love and honor, leading you forward into things that are only good for you.

Isaiah 21:2, 3 (NIV)

2 A dire vision has been shown to me: The traitor betrays, the looter takes loot. Elam, attack! Media, lay siege! I will bring to an end all the groaning she caused.

3 At this my body is racked with pain, pangs seize me, like those of a woman in labor; I am staggered by what I hear, I am bewildered by what I see.

There are different ways that we hear God. Some see visions (pictures), some hear audibly, some sense in their bodies and some receive thoughts (hearing thoughts).

Fill out the Questionnaire to see how you receive communication best. How you naturally receive is the way God will start with you, but do not be surprised if He changes how He communicates with you. He wants you to learn and grow.

Some information was taken from John Webster's book The Voice.

CHAPTER THREE

YOU CAN HEAR GOD

John 5:22 “For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son.

John 12:47 “And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.”

The Apostle Paul understood these words of Jesus as a reality he could live in. In Romans 8:1 Paul declared, “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.” If you do not hear God the way you think you should, Jesus does not judge you. He holds the promise in His heart for you to hear Him. To receive this promise you have to live in the reality of “no condemnation.”

You see the Father is not interested in your condemnation. He has turned judgment over to Jesus. At the end of all creation; at the end of time there will be a judgment day. That’s when Jesus will judge. And believers will be sitting there on seats with Him, because we will already have allowed Jesus to take our sin and our judgment upon Himself (2 Corinthians 5:21). So we will not be judged then because we have already been judged in Christ. That’s what He means when He says, “I did not come to judge you. I came to save you.” And when you fail at hearing God, He is not interested in you walking around saying, “It doesn’t work for me. I can’t do this right.”

According to John 14:26 and John 16:13, the Holy Ghost is your teacher. He is your guide into all truth. He wants you to know the truth so you can be set free of condemnation and come into a relationship with Him in which you hear Him speak and you know He listens to you. Most people have no concept of how close God wants us to be to Him. Consider this next verse.

GOD WANTS YOU CLOSE

John 13:23 Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.

What does that look like? (Picture John leaning on the breast of Jesus.) John was at peace with his head on the bosom of Jesus. Do you have a desire in your heart as you remember days with your mother and father when they would hold you?

They looked at you with such love. You remember the loving way they would speak. Maybe you have not known that for a long time.

Some of you have only seen that or read about it. You saw it in a movie. You saw it at your neighbor's house or a cousin's home. But you never had that yourself. You think about John with Jesus and you say to yourself, "Oh, that's what I want. Why can't I have that?" But if you think about God as Father, the picture you have of Him turns negative, because you never had that. In fact, what you lived through was so negative you do not like to remember. And you do not want to picture God as a Father. It ruins the image of God for you. If you ever thought you could have this, the circumstances of your life brought you back to the reality of life in a world marred by man's choices. But your circumstances will never change the fact that God still wants you to hear Him. He created you to hear Him. He wants you to seek His face and His voice. He wants you to know His love.

He knows what you have longed for. He is the only one who can really give it to you. And He is very willing. He knew what I longed for. I did not know the depth of the longing in my heart. He knew the things that I did not understand. When I would go to receive personal ministry, at first it was kind of easy. Breakthroughs would come. Then one day He started to touch some very painful things. Once those things were touched and released I began to be released to have something with God the Father that I did not even know I was longing for.

I began to find out that He was not like my father. He is the Daddy I have always wanted. He has allowed me to experience my head on His shoulder as John laid his head on the bosom of Jesus. I can stay there as long as I want. God is communicating with me. He is communicating His love to me. And His willingness to give me what my heart has desired all along. He just gives it to me. And He has not changed. He is the same for you.

Sometimes I think, "God, why is it so easy? This cannot be right. I'm enjoying this too much. It seems too easy, too often. Surely there is some instruction you are trying to give me, and I am just laying my head on Your shoulder." And in my own confusion I would go through a couple of days like that. I deprived myself because I was still under the law in my thinking. He would say to me, "Where have you been? I am not holding this from you. It's okay. I want you to have this until the need of your heart is full." He was communicating His love to me.

People talk about being in God's presence. The scripture says we are to come into His presence with singing and with thanksgiving. In the early days I used methods

to come into His presence. I took what I could see in the scripture and did that. In the realm of the spirit it would bring me into the throne room and I knew I was there. It did not bring me close to Him. But back then I thought that was the best I could expect. So I was satisfied to come into the throne room and make my petitions. I made my requests known to God. Yet it was not changing my heart much. It was good. It helped me. In that frame of mind I would just wait to go to heaven one day as a servant of God. Good things would happen then. But God knew there was a longing deep inside me for something I never had. He began to challenge how I thought.

Things are different now. I have become aware of His presence. Without music or singing I just wake up in the morning and He's there. Just driving down the road or walking the streets of a city with my eyes open, I can just turn away from this world and look to my Father. All of a sudden His presence comes over me. I feel Him all around me. It seems like a light-weight sheet just settles over me. God is right here with me.

SEATED IN CHRIST

God has taught me something I believe he also wants you to learn. God wants to raise you up to a place in Christ at the right hand of the Father. I talk about my journey into this reality in a CD called "Sit, Walk, Stand." I will relay it briefly here.

Jesus took a year of my life to help me learn the practical reality of sitting in Him at the Father's right hand. This year began with an intensive two-week struggle to yield to His will to let Him show me this reality in the Word of God. I had heard this teaching and found it exciting and encouraging. Yet now that Jesus wanted me to walk in it, or I should say sit in it, I found myself extremely resistant to enter this place of rest.

Once I yielded enough to sit there in Christ, I found it very hard to stay there. For me this was a labor which reminds me of Hebrews 4:11. He was offering me rest in Himself and I had to struggle just to stop resisting His good, pleasing and perfect will for my life. We are odd creatures indeed. We want to hear a good teaching and then expect it to be easy to apply. Thank God for those who can do that with this reality. But I am not one of those people. I had to allow Jesus to deal with a lot of unpleasant stuff within my heart and the resultant wrong ways I thought about things. I am delighted today and very glad that as long as I was willing to yield, He was willing to patiently lead me. Such is the love of God.

At the end of that year, I was able to experience sitting in Christ at the right hand of the Father. Do you know that there is no place in Christ where you arrive and then just stay there? He then began to challenge me with a more difficult step. I now came face-to-face with the reason I had been so resistant at the beginning. He wanted me to actually look to my left. As soon as Christ said this to me deep fears rose up within me. I immediately left my place in Him. I began to feel like this had been a trick. He knew I could not look at the Father. Why could He not be satisfied with me being at rest just sitting in Him? Why did I have to do this next thing?

So we entered another intensive two-week struggle. I had developed a pattern in my times with the Lord. I would seek His face and open my heart for Him to talk to me about whatever He wanted. This had been enjoyable and fruitful in my life over the years. Now Jesus was using this willingness of my heart to trust Him in this issue to move me from one place in Him to another. I knew I could trust that His will was good for me. However that did not make this transaction any easier for me. It was extremely difficult. Fear rose up each time Jesus brought up this subject.

God knows the things you are afraid of. And He wants to defeat those fears in you. He cares about you. He wants you walking in peace and joy, not in fear.

So now each time I opened my heart to hear what Jesus wanted to talk about, He asked me to look toward my Heavenly Father. I would feel like arguing with Jesus, but He would bring scripture verses to my mind and I had no need to prove Him wrong. I knew He was right. Still, I could not look toward the Father, because my concept of "Father" was corrupted by my perceptions of my own father. I say perceptions, because he was actually a good and kind man. But unfortunately my experiences with him were confined to some of the worst years of his life. Those were the years when everything went wrong for him and he had been drinking too much. Before I could get to know him, my parents separated and I never really did know my father.

When Jesus asked me to look toward my Heavenly Father I expected to see an angry face. I expected judgment. Jesus assured me that I would be pleasantly surprised. I believed Him enough to finally look. I looked in great fear and only for the briefest second. I saw nothing but white. After some coaxing by the Lord, I looked long enough to see a wonderful smile emanating through the white. I looked away before the smile could turn angry. Slowly over time I learned that God the Father is always smiling when He looks at me.

While we were enemies in our own minds against God, Jesus came; He paid the price to reconcile us to our Father in Heaven. You do not have everything until you have Jesus and the Father. Receiving Jesus is our key, our doorway into, not only the kingdom, but through the veil that used to separate us from our Father, God.

If you cannot yet handle a relationship with the Father, but you have Jesus, let God give you everything He can give you in Jesus. However the Father says, “You are My son. I am not angry at you. I am not judging you. I want you to know Me.”

After a second year in which I became comfortable sitting next to my Father in Heaven, He began to move me, patiently into a place I have always wanted to be, but never thought I could be; in my Father’s arms with my head on His shoulder. This journey took well over two years. Many painful things came up and it was a very difficult journey. For many people father issues are the most painful. We recommend that you get to Father’s Heart conferences whenever you can, even if you have already been. God is using such conferences and meetings to draw His children to Him. I still need more revelation of His love. So I plan on attending more such ministry opportunities.

Now I have the liberty and joy to have this communication from God at this deep, personal, wonderful and challenging level. And during one time of sitting on His lap He asked me to get down and go talk with Jesus. So I did. Jesus did something new with me. He put his forehead to my forehead and just stayed like that until I was comfortable. Then He began to talk to me. Now He was talking to me as the Head of the Church. He told me some important things. This experience was so interesting to me. I never would get this kind of word sitting with my Father. From my Father I would hear, “You’re my son. I love you. I want you to be here with Me.” He was just being the father I never had. Not more.

I remember some rare times as a young believer when Jesus would hold me for a while. That was healing. But in addition to that, if I ever start getting information about the Church, it comes from Jesus, the Head of the Church. He will talk to me about what He wants me to do.

Most believers have no idea of the passion in God’s heart for them. If you think you are an exception and God does not have this kind of love and passion for you, you have believed a lie of the enemy. You can hold onto that idea, if you want to. But it is not true. You are not an exception. God wants this for you, too.

When you were a child looking at this kind of relationship, what did you wish for? You have always wanted someone to treat you in a loving way. Unfortunately, some people must admit that no one ever did. Or it seemed like there was some kind of hook. Some have experienced that they were loved as long as they did the right things or looked the right way. When they stopped doing those things or did not keep up their appearance, the people who loved them may have still loved them, but they could not express it with liberty anymore. They may have misinterpreted that to mean their loved ones did not really love them at all. So they judged them. We really do not know the hearts of those we judge. Only God does.

HONOR

When God first started to do this kind of thing in my life, He began by dealing with the judgments in my heart toward my father. As I repented I began to get some liberty there. I found I could think God's thoughts about my father. After you release your judgments you have to go to God and ask Him, "Give me a new way to think about my Father and my Mother."

You are not honoring your mother and your father until you can thank God with a sincere heart for the mother and the father that He gave you. All the trials, all the pain; but God put something wonderful in every one of us. He put something wonderful in them. You may have never seen it, but now you can begin to know it. He put it in them. They did not know how to walk in that. But it is still there. And from the combination of good things God put in your mother and father, He made you; God's purpose. He wants you to be the son or daughter of your father and mother that He intended you to be.

You may have looked at your mother and father and vowed, "I'll never be like them!" And in your vow you cut off, not only the evil you witnessed in them, but you also cut off the hidden treasure that God put in them. Maybe no one ever saw it, yet you cannot walk in it either. You cannot receive that wonderful grace of God that would release you into the full calling and purpose that God has placed upon your life until you honor your parents. He designed us that way. When you can release your judgments and allow Him to give you His thoughts about them and honor them the way He intended, you will say to God, "Thank you for my mother and father. I am going to be their son. I will be what you intended to come through them that the world needs. I am going to be that. They may have never honored their parents. They may have never honored You, God. But I am going to bring honor to their name."

My father's last name is Martin. My mother's last name is Taylor. I am going to honor the Martin and Taylor names. By doing that I honor the God who made them and Who created me through them, according to His good pleasure. You were made for God's good pleasure. No one is an exception. Not because you do everything right, but because He loves you. He wants you to walk in that love. You will never do everything right. You will fall back into your flesh from time to time. Your flesh cannot please God anyway. He wants your love. He wants you to trust Him as He deals with your heart. Trust Him as He brings you through your desert of pain to a place of joy in Him and in the knowledge of who He has made you to be, joined to Him. Without Him you are nothing. Without Him you cannot do anything. In Him, He can do so much. And you can do all things in Christ Who strengthens you.

He says, "I'm waiting for you. I'm not going to stop loving you. I do not hate you. I'm not angry anymore. I poured that out on Jesus. So now you can come to Me."

Consider these questions: Are you willing for Him to soften your heart?
Are you willing for Him to prepare your heart to receive from His heart?
Are you willing to wait on Him even as you would wait for a King?
Are you willing to let Him train you how you receive from Him?

WAYS I RECEIVE FROM GOD

Some of you naturally receive communication in certain ways. Others receive best in other ways. However we receive naturally from people is similar to how we will receive from God. We do not all receive communication in the same way. Let God show you how you receive best. But also let Him show you other ways you can receive direction, instruction, information, fellowship and love from Him.

Dreams and Visions.

I have received communication from God in several ways. The first way in which I recognized God was communicating with me was through a dream/vision. He gave me a vision of my ministry while I was having a dream of meeting Him face-to-face for the first time. For twenty years I tried to make that vision come to pass. When I stopped trying I discovered one day that I was living that vision. I had turned a corner in ministry and stepped right into the ministry He showed me 20 years before.

Quite often when He leads me in a way that is life changing, I will see Jesus in front of me doing something. Before Debby and I moved to Finland I asked Jesus to let me know somehow whether or not He wanted us to make this move. In an open vision He stood before me on an open plain of grass with His hand stretched out toward me. I was in Finland at that moment and I knew without further question that He was inviting me to come live with Him in Finland. Without words I understood the message, “Finland is open to you.”

Other times I will see a word. One day God put a word directly in front of me in big bold letters. The word was C O N T R O V E R S Y. He then said, “My people do not trust Me. They all have a controversy with Me.” He went on to remind me of the things people blamed Him for. I wrote more about that in the section on hindrances.

Hearing.

At rare moments I will hear just one word and I know what He means. To explain that one word to someone else would require a detailed explanation. On occasion that is how I receive revelation that becomes teaching material. One word from God can take a lengthy bit of time to explain.

Prompting.

Occasionally He just prompts me. It will seem like a nudge that means, “You need to do this.” The Holy Spirit prompts us at certain times. You suddenly know or you strongly believe that you should say or do a certain thing. You had not planned to do it. Now, however, you know you must. I have had such promptings about very important things in my life. And I have had them at times of ministry to other people. A person may be in front of me waiting to receive from the Lord and I will get a prompting to say a certain thing to this person. I am not necessarily hearing God speak, nor seeing anything. I suddenly just know what to say. I have learned that when I speak as prompted by the Holy Spirit it will be a key for that person. The Spirit of God touches that one and healing takes place. Promptings can be very important.

Knowing.

Something similar to prompting is “knowing” by the Spirit of God. There are times I simply know something to be true. You may have had that same

experience. It is not because we are so smart; it is an anointing by which God communicates knowledge to us by His Spirit.

1 John 2:20 But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things.

Jesus is the Holy One, but He promised that He would send us His Spirit after He ascended to the Father. The anointing to know all things is in fact the Holy Spirit. When that anointing functions in you it is a knowing that rises from your spirit, where you are one with the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:17), into your mind and you realize that something is true that you did not know so certainly before. 1 Corinthians 2:16 declares that we have the mind of Christ. We do. By the Spirit of Christ within our spirits we have access to the mind of Christ. He is the Head of His Body the Church. When we trust Him as our Head, we gain the benefit of knowing His mind about things in our lives. No issue of your life is too small or unimportant to Him.

Thoughts.

A common way God speaks to me is through my thoughts. In fact this way is common to a lot of people; probably all of us, who belong to God, hear Him this way. For many this is part of their problem in hearing God. He uses this approach to us most often. The problem with it is that the enemy uses this approach as his chief method of influence over us, because he knows we think that the thoughts he inserts into our heads are actually our own thoughts. When we accept the thoughts devils put into our thinking as our own, they then use those thoughts to lead us astray. This is why Paul told the Corinthians to cast down arguments and every high thing (thought) that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5).

Our thinking is the place where we are most easily led astray, so it is the place where the Spirit of God speaks most frequently and urges us to yield ourselves most fully to Him. This is where the battle is won or lost for most of us.

John 10:4, 5

⁴“And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

⁵“Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”

Jesus our Shepherd speaks to us in our thoughts, devils insert thoughts and we have our own thoughts. In each case the thoughts sound the same. How do we distinguish between the three? This is where the Spirit of Christ teaches us.

1 John 2:27 But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.

The anointing we have received from Christ is the Holy Spirit. He will teach you how to distinguish His voice from your voice and the voice of a stranger, though they all sound alike to you. Just as family members may be the only ones who can tell identical twins apart you and Christ are now of the same family of God with the Father and the Holy Spirit. The anointing of the Spirit will teach you to distinguish each one. Then you will know which thoughts to cast down, which to exalt and which to use to do the discarding and exalting.

We as teachers in the body of Christ can teach you this much. Only the Spirit of God joined to your spirit can teach your soul what you are hearing. Do not be discouraged by past failures or the seeming difficulty of this task. The anointing breaks the yoke and God's Spirit is a master at this. Trust Him to guide you into all truth, as the verse above says, **“the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.”** This is a wonderful promise. As this anointing teaches you to distinguish the Shepherd's voice, you will abide in Him. To abide implies a place of rest. Rest implies that there is no fear.

Do not let the enemy discourage you or talk you out of this. Those thoughts are not your own, they are from the enemy. Cast them down. Bring them captive to the obedience of Christ. If you do not, they will lie to you and lead you to not trust God and convince you to harden your heart in some controversy against God.

Hebrews 3:7, 8

⁷Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says:

“Today, if you will hear His voice,

**⁸Do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion,
In the day of trial in the wilderness.**

“If you will hear God”, the Spirit says. Do you want to hear God? Do not be led by a lie that it will never work for you. The Spirit of God is sent from God as a master teacher. He led you to Jesus for your salvation. He will help you to hear

the voice of the Shepherd and not be confused, but clearly distinguish His voice from your own and every other voice that would speak to you. Those who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God (Romans 8:14). Put your trust in Him and He will lead you through the door, Who is Christ, to your place of rest in the Father's arms

Questionnaire: How you receive communication most readily

This test will help you determine how you receive communication most readily. You will likely receive from God the same way, at least, at first. For each question choose only one answer. The answer which first appears correct to you is the one you should choose. This test is simple and easy to score. Do not make it complicated. We pray this helps you know God's communication to you.

1. When I have many things to do, I ...
 - a) make lists for myself or imagine doing them.
 - b) keep reminding myself that I have things to do.
 - c) feel uncomfortable until all or most of the things are done.
2. What I notice most about people is ...
 - a) how they look or dress.
 - b) how they sound when they talk.
 - c) how they move.
3. I learn most easily when, I ...
 - a) see someone demonstrate what to do.
 - b) get verbal instructions.
 - c) get "hands-on" experience.
4. When finding my way around a new city I tend to ...
 - a) use a map.
 - b) ask for directions.
 - c) trust my feelings about which way to go.
5. I enjoy books or magazines that ...
 - a) have a lot of pictures.
 - b) discuss interesting topics.
 - c) cover sports, activities, or crafts.
6. When I have leisure time, I prefer to:
 - a) watch TV, a video, or go to the movies.
 - b) listen to music, radio, or read books.
 - c) do something athletic or physical, or use my hands.
7. When I am talking to someone, I ...
 - a) try to see what they are saying.
 - b) listen closely so that I can hear what they have to say.
 - c) try to get in touch with what they are saying.
8. When I solve problems, I ...
 - a) keep looking at alternatives until the pieces come together.
 - b) talk about new approaches until something clicks.
 - c) fit possibilities together until I get a feeling of balance.
9. I like any place where:
 - a) there are things to see and people to watch.
 - b) there is music, conversation, or quiet.
 - c) there is room to move.

Example			
9			
8			
7			
6			
5			
4			
3			
2			
1			
	a seeing	b hearing	c feeling

Your Results			
9			
8			
7			
6			
5			
4			
3			
2			
1			
	a seeing	b hearing	c feeling

If you feel that God is speaking a message to you but you are not really sure if it is from God here are some good questions to ask yourself about the message.

- 1) Does it line up with the Scriptures?
- 2) Does it lead you into a closer relationship with God?
- 3) Does it lead you into expressing love, which is putting God's benefit and the benefit of others before your own benefit?
- 4) Does it lead to a dying of yourself and a greater manifestation of Christ's life in you?
- 5) Does it cause greater humility in you, and a greater dependence upon God?
- 6) Does it cause greater love, joy, and peace from God in you?

