



Session 2 Testing What You Hear & Quieting Your Mind

I. Review of the 4 Keys to Hearing God's Voice *(from Mark Virkler)*

- Stillness (quiet yourself down)
- Vision (look to or focus on Jesus)
- Spontaneity (tune in to the flow of spontaneous thoughts and pictures)
- Journaling (write down what you hear or envision)

II. Discerning God's Voice from Your Own Voice, the Flesh, and the devil's Voice

A. Jesus told us that we would be able to recognize His voice

John 10:1-5 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2 But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 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.

B. How the Lord Speaks

When you're journaling, the Lord will speak to you in the **first person**. It won't be random or disjointed; it will flow in coherent, complete thoughts. And, it will probably be expressed better than you could write it yourself.

C. What the Lord told Michael in his 2-way journaling

"Faith is expressed through journaling without judging. It is coming to the conversation with the expectation that you are truly hearing Me, then writing in childlike faith.

Discernment helps faith. How? By being able to sort out the different voices, you can learn where to focus and what to write – or not write. Discernment also comes into play when you finish. After journaling, re-read what you wrote. Then evaluate it in terms of the source by categorizing your feelings, your responses. Does the journaling give you peace, comfort, assurance, a sense of well-being? Is it convicting but not condemning? Is it easily understood? Did you get it? Does it bring peace, or fear and agitation in your soul or spirit? Does it bring hope? Do you feel loved and valued? These are the hallmarks of My words. The devil never speaks this way. And you wouldn't pat yourself on the back with regularity."

III. Testing What You Hear

A. Since God is love, is it consistent with the qualities of love from 1 Corinthians 13: 4-8?

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

B. God's words to us have the qualities of "wisdom from above"

James 3:17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

In contrast, ideas that are earthly, unspiritual, and from the devil may reveal *envy* and *selfish ambition*. (James 3:16)

C. Test how it makes you feel.

Words from God's Spirit will have the qualities of the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control), while thoughts from the devil will have his characteristics: he is a liar, a thief, and a murderer.

God's Voice	Satan's Voice
Stills you	Rushes you
Leads you	Pushes you
Reassures you	Frightens you
Enlightens you	Confuses you
Encourages you	Discourages you
Comforts you	Worries you
Calms you	Obsesses you
Convicts you	Condemns you

Condemnation: To pronounce to be utterly wrong; to disapprove; to censure; to blame. Very accusatory. Satan is the "accuser of the brethren" and his voice makes you feel bad about yourself.

Conviction is the work of the Holy Spirit where a person is able to see himself as God sees him. Conviction in the believer brings an awareness of sin and results in repentance, confession and cleansing.

D. God's voice will have the qualities of true prophecy, which are edification, exhortation, and comfort.

Note: Things to NOT journal about at first – who you're going to marry, babies, investment strategies, etc. Keep it very GENERAL. You don't want to be misled. God will mostly speak to you about yourself.

E. From *Hearing God's Voice Made Simple* by Praying Medic

"The believer has two spirits living inside them—their own spirit and the Spirit of God. These two spirits are the sources of two different kinds of thought or streams of revelation. Before we can know which thoughts are God's we must first know which belong to us. One problem many of us have is that we do not know our own thoughts the way we should. When we know ourselves well and understand clearly the ways in which our mind works, we can view our own thoughts like an objective observer. The better we know our own thoughts, the easier it is to discern the thoughts that are not ours, but God's, or those of a demon."

“While the thoughts of mortals are different, they are more or less of equal quality. The thoughts of God, however, are infinitely higher and distinctly different from our own. God’s thoughts are so much more sublime than my thoughts. They are full of love, life, wisdom, compassion, and mercy. Although I would like to think that my thoughts are like this, if I am honest with myself, I must admit that God’s thoughts carry a certain quality that my thoughts do not have.” (p. 66)

“We must remember that although God’s voice is external to us, His Spirit resides in us. Because of this, when He speaks, we perceive His *external* voice to be an *internal* experience. We perceive His thoughts as our own thoughts. The way in which His thoughts come to us is so subtle it’s often hard to recognize that they had their origin outside of us. But these brilliant, loving, compassionate thoughts are the thoughts of God being spoken by the Holy Spirit. The same is true for visual images that we receive from Him. Many times we think an image came from our imagination, when it actually came from God.” (p. 67)

- F. The Holy Spirit may speak a specific scripture verse to you, or lead you to a portion of scripture. Then He will relate it to your life situation.**
- G. What is truly from God will be consistent with scripture – but not necessarily literally found in the Bible.**

Many people teach that anything we think we’ve heard from God must line up with scripture, and if it doesn’t we should toss it out. It’s good to search the Bible to see if something you’ve journaled has a scriptural basis, but many of the things God will show or say to us cannot be found in the scriptures. God will talk to you about your relationships, your heart attitudes, your life situations and people you are concerned about that are *not* specifically mentioned in the Bible. However, you’ll find that His input will be consistent with the general counsel and revelation of the Word.

H. Get spiritual counsel.

Have a trusted, mature believer read your journaling and tell you if it resonates as true in their spirit. Does it sound like God to them?

IV. Becoming still

A. Psalm 62:5 – “My soul wait in silence.” You can tell your soul (mind) to be quiet!

B. Ideas for quieting yourself down so you can hear:

1. Remove outer noise:
 - Get away from people, phones, TV, background noise
 - Remove tension – relax, sit, and be comfortable
 - Choose the best time of day for you to be alone with the Lord
 - Tap into the quietness of the morning or evening hours
 - Use earplugs
 - Establish a place you’ll use consistently to be alone with Jesus
 - Mellow music in the background without lyrics can be helpful

2. Remove inner noise:

- When intrusive thoughts pop into your mind, write them down and you'll be able to move on. These may be useful reminders but you shouldn't dwell on them now.
- If experiencing thoughts of feeling sinful or unworthy, confess and repent and move on.
- If your mind races from one thought to another, do a "right brain function" (something to get past analytical thinking). Sing a worship song in English, or sing or pray in tongues.
- Use your godly imagination to picture a biblical scene and place yourself in it.
- Visualize yourself with Jesus in a special place.
- Music (such as soaking music) may help you quiet your mind
- Smile! "Cease striving and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10)

C. Important: it takes practice! Everything worth learning and doing well takes practice!

D. Quotes from *Jesus Calling*

"An overly busy life stifles My Spirit and silences My voice."

"A deeper relationship with Me cannot be obtained by striving, but rather through a posture of rest and receptivity."

So learn to dial down, quiet yourself, and just BE in His presence.

The goal is a sweet encounter with the lover of your soul.

V. Activation