

Hearing God



Part 2

Hearing God

IF YOU COULD REGULARLY HEAR FROM GOD, FOR WHAT PURPOSE WOULD YOU WANT TO HEAR FROM HIM?

HAVE YOU STRUGGLED WITH HEARING FROM GOD?



Hearing God

1. We often have the wrong motives to hear from God.
2. Some of us confine God's interaction with us in the form of "impressions" or "circumstances," avoiding any notion of a God who *perceptibly* communicates.
3. God created us to enjoy intimate friendship with Him. Conversation is at the heart of every friendship. God is conversational and speaks to us.



Hearing God

Ways in Which God Communications:

1. God Speaking Directly (Audible Voice)
2. The Written Word (Scripture)
3. Angelic Visitation / Message
4. Visions
5. Dreams
6. Prophecy
7. Deliberation

8. Conversation(?)



Hearing God

WHAT WOULD A
CONVERSATIONAL
RELATIONSHIP
WITH GOD LOOK LIKE?



Hearing God

First, Are We Prepared To Hear From God?

- To what use would I put a word from God?
- What am I doing in my life that God would speak to me?
- Am I ready to respond to (obey) God, and not merely to invite God into my own plans, beliefs and projects?



Hearing God

Ways In Which God *Converses* with Us

1. Circumstances
2. Impressions
3. Thoughts and Emotions



Hearing God

The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.

We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. . . . But we have the mind of Christ.

- 1 Corinthians 2:10b-16



Hearing God

Ways In Which God *Converses* with Us

1. Circumstances
2. Impressions
3. Thoughts and Emotions

Your Responses:

- A. I would like that to be true.
- B. I know that to be true.
- C. I don't think that is true.



Hearing God

Another Perspective

The practice of listening for God's voice in your heart has only recently displaced Scripture as the most important way, in the view of most evangelicals, that God reveals himself to us. The idea, as it was taught to me, was that you are supposed to seek guidance from God (good idea!) and the key way to do that is by listening to how he's peaking in your heart (bad idea!).

The bad idea, let me hasten to say, is not that you should listen to your heart. That's something you have to do if you want to know your own thoughts and feelings, which you need to know if you want to make good decisions – not to mention if you want to have self-knowledge. But listening to your heart contributes to self-knowledge, not knowledge of God. The bad idea was that listening to a voice in your own heart was how you could hear God. For to know God you have to listen to God, not to yourself, and that means listening to a word that comes from outside yourself – the external word of Scripture.

Hearing God

Another Perspective

Scripture says that Christ dwells in our hearts by faith (Eph. 3:17) but directs our attention outside our hearts to find what we should put our faith in: “Faith comes by hearing,” says Paul “and hearing comes by the word of Christ” (Romans 10:17). The word of Christ that he’s talking about is not a voice in our hearts but the preaching of the gospel in external words that we can hear with our ears (Romans 10:15).

And yet this way of “hearing God speak” has become so dominant in American evangelical circles today that my students are not aware that it was ever any different. At my evangelical college, there are guys who tell girls, “I think God is telling us he wants us to get together.” And there are girls who are convinced that God has told them to break up with their boyfriend. Now a guy saying that kind of thing is pretty comical (unless he gets away with it, and then it’s too destructive to be funny anymore). But a girl who has to say that kind of thing is just in sad shape.

Hearing God

Another Perspective

I think I can imagine how it goes. See if this sounds right to you. Imagine a young woman getting back to her dorm room after a long night, and she's saying to herself, in a loud, excited voice, "Oh, I love my boyfriend so much! He's so great! He takes care of me, he watches out for me, he protects me, he never lets me go . . . he never wants to leave me alone, he won't ever let me out of his sight, I can't ever get away from him, he's always in control, he controls me so much, sometimes I feel like I can never escape . . ." And then, as her enthusiastic monologue begins to trail off, a very different-sounding voice comes out of her mouth, a quite little voice that says, "I don't feel right about this . . ." No doubt that's the voice of wisdom, unlike the loud, excited voice that came before. The loud, excited voice is trying to convince her that she's got a great thing going, but the quite little voice comes from deeper in her heart, where she feels there's something wong before she knows what it is.

Hearing God

Another Perspective

The sad thing is not that she listens to this quite little voice, but that she can't admit it's her own. She has to label it God's voice in order to take it seriously. Apparently she's never thought of her own voice as something worth listening to. Maybe she's gotten used to nobody listening very seriously to what she says. In any case, it seems that in order for her to listen to herself, to pay need to the wisest and most perceptive voice in her own heart, she has to say it come from God.

In short, she doesn't realize that she has a right to be amorally responsible adult. And it's her theology that keeps her from realize this.



Hearing God

Another Perspective

It is good news that God does not speak in our hearts. It's doubly good news, having to do with both God and ourselves. On the one hand, this means it's okay that the voices of our hearts are our own. And on the other hand, it means that when God does speak, we can hear him the way we hear people we love, who are real and therefore exist outside of our own hearts.





WELCOME TO EXODUS INTERACTIVE FORUM

INTERACTIVE



Participate, ask questions, talk back...

What if we listened to what everyone had to say — and discovered that God can speak through us all? After all, we all learn better when we talk things out, hear different points of view, and give room for the Spirit to speak through our deliberation.

[Read more](#)

THOUGHTFUL



Test everything, hold on to what is good...

Many hours of research are dedicated to prepare each one of our series. We explore the scriptures, the breadth of Christian scholarship, contemporary authors, and consider a wide range of sources outside of our faith.

[Read more](#)

FAITHFUL



Set apart Christ as Lord...

We all have questions. But we learn together in a way that tackles the deepest part of our doubts while making sure that our purpose is clear: to always know the reason for the hope that we have in Jesus Christ, and to be prepared to share that answer with everyone who asks us about that hope.

[Read more](#)

THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF
EXODUS INTERACTIVE FORUM.

WE WELCOME YOU TO SEND
FEEDBACK, QUESTIONS OR
COMMENTS, AND WE WOULD
LOVE TO HEAR HOW EXODUS HAS
IMPACTED YOU. EMAIL US AT:

INFO@EXODUSPODCASTS.COM

WANT MORE INFORMATION?

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT:

WWW.EXODUSPODCASTS.COM

- ALL OF OUR PODCASTS
- POWERPOINT SLIDES
- PODCAST TRANSCRIPTS
- BLOG UPDATES
- REFERENCE MATERIALS

© 2013 EXODUS INTERACTIVE FORUM.
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

YOU MAY FREELY DISTRIBUTE WITHOUT ALTERATION.