

How to hear the Holy Spirit

5 types of communication

- Verbal – we are speaking with others
- Non-Verbal – posture, movements, touch, etc.
- Written – a message, word
- Active listening
- Visual – images, what we see, dreams

There are other voices that compete for our attention. How do we know God is talking to us?

- God is talking to us,
- the devil is talking to us,
- our carnal nature is talking to us.

Voice of God and the Holy Spirit will always line up with the revealed scriptures.

The following scriptures are just a few examples of how the Spirit speaks through one of the five means of communication:

Matt 10:19-20 – take no thought how or what ye shall speak.....For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you

John 3:6, 8 – The wind bloweth, where is listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit.

John 14:16-17, 26 - And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; ¹⁷ Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

¹⁸ I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

- My question: How does He come to you?

²⁶ But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

John 15:26 – But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.

John 16:13 -he will guide you into all truth....he will shew you things to come.

1 Kings 19:12 – he may not speak to you in a loud voice

1 Cor 2:14 – spiritually discerned; verse 12 – we have received....the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.



John 10 - My sheep know my voice – how....they have a relationship with the Shepherd.

Galatians 5:22-23 - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, ²³ Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

1 John 4:2 – Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come
Hear His voice through scriptures

My Experience: - it is not a voice that comes from outside but instead comes from within. Often it is a new revelation or confirmation. Often it comes through following the steps.

- Verbal – revelation from others, personal, in class, sermons, etc., often I hear Him while I’m teaching others and a revelation appears; also, often in music.
- Non-Verbal – feelings of peace and comfort resulting from an experience with God; again, often resulting from music.
 - All about the steps for me and following the relationship...it is a relationship!!!
- Written – most often I hear the Spirit through reading and studying the Word
 - Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12
- Active listening – second most often is hearing His voice in my head during quiet time, at night.
 - I have to keep something to write with near my bed.
 - It is often a thought or revelation or confirmation that He gives me that I have to write down quickly.
 - Sometimes it is in the form of a question.
 - An unction coming from a different place than my emotions.
- Visual – 3rd most often instance in perhaps Him speaking to me through what I see. Nature, fellowship in church, ministry, worship, etc.

Comment from a class member (Paul) -- sometimes we hear external influences rather than the Spirit. We can refuse the Spirit signs. The noise of the world can drown out the Spirit’s communications especially when we are in spiritual Egypt.

Google Results: How to tell if it is the Spirit

- Is your first instinct to defend yourself or prove you’re right? If so, that is your flesh. It is not the Holy Spirit.
- Are you looking down on someone or feeling disdain for another person? If yes, that is your flesh, your sinful nature at work. The Holy Spirit is always love and wants to give you love for every person.
- Are you envious of what someone else has, feeling you deserve the same thing? If so, that is your flesh. The Holy Spirit never leads us to or condones jealousy.

- Are you struggling to apologize and admit you're wrong? That too is your flesh. The Spirit's desire is for your pride to decrease and the humility of Christ to grow in its place.
- Do you see the toddler version of yourself coming alive? Do you want what you want, when you want it? That's walking in the flesh, not the Spirit. The Holy Spirit desires sacrifice for God that is also God-dependent, not sacrifice for self-glory.
- Are you ungrateful and discontent? If so, you're being led by your flesh. Ingratitude is never from the Holy Spirit.

Jesus Walk.com

Heart Preparation for Listening to God (1 Samuel 3:1-10)

When Samuel is a very young child he goes to live with Eli the priest, where he sleeps in the temple, the Tabernacle that is pitched at Shiloh. You know the story. The boy Samuel is sleeping, when he is awakened by the Lord calling his name: "Samuel!" He thinks Eli is calling him. This happens twice. Finally, Eli realizes that God is calling the boy.

"So Eli told Samuel, 'Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, "Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, 'Samuel! Samuel!' Then Samuel said, 'Speak, for your servant is listening.'" (1 Samuel 3:9-10)

This is the heart needed for one who would hear God:

"Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening."

Humility is required.

"**LORD**" represents God's own name Yahweh, I Am that I Am. He comes in all his majesty to us and we humble ourselves before him.

Samuel places himself in the position of a servant whose master has called him, so he comes ready to listen to his master's command and then obediently carry out his command.

Surrendering Control

A willingness to obey is an important part of being receptive to God's voice. It is insulting to ask God what we should do if we have no intention of doing anything other than what we want to do. Part of a willing and submissive spirit is a willingness to obey:

1. Even if we don't understand why, and
2. Even if we don't know the final result.

Too often there is in us an insistence on being in control. Explain it to me, God, and if I agree that it fits my objectives and plans for my life, then I'll be happy to obey.



God sees the whole picture, like a reconnaissance pilot who watches the battle from a spotter plane high above the action, then radios down the instructions for battle.

We'll Only Know When We're Willing to Trust

There's a sense that only when we *do* obey what God shows us will we find out what he is planning to do through us. When we resist, we'll never know. When faced with his enemies' unbelief, Jesus said:

"If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own." (John 7:17)

Discerning God's Voice

You're aware, of course, that there are many voices floating around our heads (Ephesians 2:1-3; 1 John 2:15-17):

- God's voice -- the real thing.
- The World -- voices of others, peer pressure, worldly standards of success, etc.
- The Flesh -- our own desires and thoughts, many of which are selfish.
- The Devil -- demonic temptation and misdirection from Satan and his forces.
- The Conscience -- our moral sense of right and wrong that we obtain from our upbringing. Sometimes we are hindered by a skewed sense of justice or righteousness -- perhaps an extreme legalism, or an insensitivity to certain sins. Our conscience is strongly influenced by the culture we grow up in. However, the conscience can be educated by the Word of God as we seek his way.

How do we discern the difference between these? Frankly, it's a learning process, and any such process involves mistakes. That's why being part of a caring, supportive Christian community is valuable in this learning process.

But to be able to discern God's voice there are some things we must do to cooperate with the Spirit.

1. **Spend time with God regularly.** Again, if you haven't already, develop a meaningful Quiet Time day by day. Include elements of praise, confession, intercession, listening, and Scripture reading. You're developing a relationship.
2. **Read the Scriptures.** Reading the Word of God cleanses and washes us as we read and study it (Ephesians 5:26; John 17:17). Plus, the Scriptures help us understand God's viewpoint so we won't be swayed by counterfeit voices. Including scripture reading in your Quiet Time is vital.
3. **Confess and repent of any known sin.** Sin has a way of blinding us, creating callouses on our hearts, and hindering our prayers (1 Peter 3:7). Walking in the light and confessing any sin as it occurs (1 John 1:7-9) is the safest way of seeking to hear God's voice.

4. **Recognize and surrender your desires.** We humans are able to rationalize almost anything. To prevent us from stamping our own desires with the imprimatur of "God's voice," we must take time to recognize what we want and then surrender that to God. Wanting things is natural, but what we want isn't always God -- though sometimes it is. Sometimes God molds the desires of our hearts (Psalm 37:4). So as we're seeking to discern God's voice and will, it's valuable to recognize what our desires are. Then give them to God in prayer, as Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane: "Yet not what I will, but what you will" (Mark 14:36b).
5. **Seek counsel if you're not sure.** Because you're just learning to discern God's voice, it's good to ask a spiritual brother or sister if what you heard sounds like God. Just be careful that the person you ask believes in God speaking to people today!

Lessons for Disciples

Here are the main points we've discussed in this lesson.

1. Listening for God's voice is a Bible pattern. God communicates to us by means of his Spirit.
2. Jesus demonstrated before his disciples a pattern of getting away to a solitary place to talk to his Father (Mark 1:33-38). It was there he learned what to say and do (Luke 4:42; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 28b; 11:1; 22:39-41).
3. Jesus said, "The Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing..." (John 5:19). When he took on flesh, Jesus voluntarily laid aside his prerogatives as Son of God (Philippians 2:6-7). Listening to his Father was the lifeline for his life and ministry.
4. Through the Holy Spirit we have access to the very mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:10b, 16b).
5. Since Jesus is our example, we need to develop a life habit of seeking him daily, known as a Quiet Time. This is essential to developing a growing relationship with God.
6. In the Bible, the Spirit sometimes speaks to believers in words -- sentences with content.
7. God also leads us through nudges, in articulate leadings, that consist usually of brief instructions.
8. We need to become sensitized to God working around us. Ask: Where have I seen God lately?
9. We prepare our hearts for the Spirit's voice by humbling ourselves as servants who are ready to obey what God speaks to us without questioning (1 Samuel 3:9-10).
10. We prepare ourselves by recognizing and clarifying our own desires in a matter so we can surrender our desires fully to God. Without doing this we can confuse our own desires with the Spirit's leading.
11. Hearing the Spirit is a learning process where we'll make some mistakes as we learn. We are learning to discern between God's voice, the world, the flesh, the devil, and the conscience.