

When God Speaks

Learning to listen is the most important part of the Christian life.

Pastor Eddie Ildefonso

Do you believe that God still speaks to us? Well, I want to tell you that He does. The God we serve is not a speechless God. When we look to the beginning of the Bible—[Genesis chapter 1](#)—we find the first evidence of God speaking when He said, "**Let there be light.**" (v. 3) From that moment forward, the voice of our Lord has echoed through the universe, bringing hope, guidance, and encouragement to those willing to listen.

The amazing news is that God desires both to hear from us and to be heard by us. But in order to receive our heavenly Father's messages, we must first train ourselves to hear His voice. In other words, when God speaks, we must be ready to listen. Learning to listen to God is the key—the most important part of the Christian life.



Stop and think about that for a moment.

Consider the value of receiving God's guidance in all things. Think of all the decisions we will face in life—all the difficulties and hardships we will encounter. Those who do not know how to listen to God's voice must rely upon their own limited strength and knowledge, which can lead to unwise choices. But when we learn to listen to God, we can draw from His infinite wisdom.

To reap the benefits of God's wisdom, there is a four-step process we should follow. This involves accepting [His Word](#), distinguishing [His voice](#), receiving [His message](#), and following [His guidance](#).

Accepting His Word

There are many ways in which God speaks to us today, but perhaps the most obvious is through [His Word](#). Now, many people will ask, "How can I know if the Bible is truly God's Word? Wasn't the Bible written by men?" The answer to this question can be found in [2 Peter 1:20-21](#), which says, "**But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.**"

In other words, man's will did not produce Scripture. Instead, the prophets and scribes of both Testaments were guided and guarded by the Holy Spirit to correctly impart God's truth to the world.

Therefore, we can accept the Scriptures as absolutely true and unquestionably inspired by God. When we know this, we can move forward with confidence and begin to ask God for illumination.

Illumination is what God does in our hearts through the Holy Spirit when we hear [His Word](#) and receive specific understanding. When this happens, something within us "clicks"—our hearts jump and

our spirits leap. But to experience these spiritual breakthroughs, we must spend time meditating upon [His Word](#) and inviting *His truth* into our hearts.

Distinguishing His Voice

Oftentimes, in periods of blessing, it can be easy to fall into complacency, taking for granted the merciful and wondrous character of our heavenly Father. During these times, we may forget how fortunate we are to be children of the God who desires to communicate with us.

[Psalm 115](#) reminds us that the gods and idols worshiped by others are "**the work of man's hands. They have mouths, but they cannot speak; they have eyes, but they cannot see . . . [and] they cannot make a sound with their throat**" (verses 4-7). Our God, however, is the Living God. He is compassionate, longsuffering, and genuinely interested in every detail of our lives. He is a caring Father who longs to impart His love and guidance.

Because our God is perfect and incapable of sin, we can be sure that when He speaks to us, His message will be truthful. Any time someone claims to have received a revelation from God that contradicts His Word, we can know that message is not of the Lord.

Scripture gives insight regarding these counterfeit messages, when it says that Satan is the father of lies. ([John 8:44](#)) Since the Devil loves to confuse believers as they seek to understand God's will, we can attribute false teachings to his evil schemes. The good news is that we can have victory over Satan by listening carefully to the voice of God.

If you are ever unsure about a message you receive, check it against the truth of His Word. You can be certain that God will never add anything to the Scriptures—not an additional message, passage, or book. ([Rev. 22:18](#)) Spending time alone with God in His Word is the best method we have for weeding out falsehood. When His truth is in our hearts, the counterfeits will be more easily identified. ([Psalm 119:11](#))

The Lord continues to be extremely gracious to us. May we be just as appreciative to Him!

Receiving His Message

Another important aspect of listening to God is understanding why and how He speaks. The Scriptures tell us that God communicates with us because He loves us and wants us to experience the peace and freedom that come from knowing Him in an intimate way. When God speaks, He always has something specific to say, but we must first prepare to hear Him by being settled and still.

If you are not hearing God's voice, the solution may lie in finding a quiet place and praying a prayer such as this: "Lord, speak to my heart, for I am still before you and listening for Your voice." The prophet Isaiah certainly understood the value of being still before the Lord as he wrote, "**In quietness and trust is your strength**" ([Isa. 30:15b](#)).

Whenever there is a sense of rushing and turmoil inside us, the call of God will likely go unnoticed. Even in times of distress and trouble, Jesus did not shout at the disciples. He always spoke words that brought hope and comfort. Yet each word Jesus spoke was powerful and had great impact on the life of the hearer.

Although God doesn't need any of us in order to fulfill His purposes, He does desire to receive our worship, praise, and adoration. He longs for us to call out to Him and desire Him above anyone or anything else. When we make the commitment to be quiet before God, His guidance will come to us as a still, small voice that speaks volumes to our hearts.

Following His Guidance

A final piece of advice for hearing God's voice involves a most important decision on our part. When God speaks to us, we must decide whether or not we will follow His guidance.

God offers His counsel, not to complicate our lives, but because He wants us to live in the comfort and assurance of His never-ending love. He wants us to know Him in a way that is different from our human relationships. Regardless of the relationship you may have with your earthly father, your heavenly Father longs to pour out His blessings upon you.

Knowing this, we can place our trust in God's instruction. Scripture supports this implicitly, as [Luke 11:11,13](#) says, "**Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?**" God is telling us two things here: "**You can trust Me because I love you, and I will give you the Holy Spirit as a gift.**"

God sent His Holy Spirit to be our guide—to teach us and bring conviction above and beyond what our own consciences can. And when Jesus describes the work of the Holy Spirit, He tells His disciples, "**He [the Holy Spirit] will guide you into all the truth.**" ([John 14:26](#), [John 16:7-13](#))

Therefore, contrary to guidance we may receive from friends or acquaintances, the truth of God's words delivered through the Holy Spirit is 100 percent reliable. Just as God always keeps His promises, He will never lead us astray, and He never makes mistakes.

God speaks words of guidance to us for three clear reasons: **to display His love for us**, **to establish our trust in Him**, and **to help us avoid sin**. Throughout our lives on earth, each one of us will need guidance in many areas, such as our finances, relationships, career paths, and raising children. God can and will provide such guidance through His Word and through His Holy Spirit. Our responsibility is to be prepared to listen.

Now let me just say this final thing to you: You can't learn to listen to God by simply listening to a sermon. **You must learn by practicing**. Therefore, you can't spend your time more wisely than by getting alone—away from everybody and everything—and telling God that you are available to listen. If you want to hear from God, then you have got to give Him your time. Turn off the television, turn off the radio, and put away the newspaper. Take your Bible, read, and listen—listen until you know that God has spoken.

You see, the reason many people have **little faith**, **weak faith**, or **wavering faith** is that they are not sure where they are in their relationship with God. When God has spoken, you can know exactly where you stand. And, my friend, God is willing to speak to your heart if you are willing to listen.

Prayer: *Father, thank You for being a God who speaks. We humble ourselves before You, knowing that we do not even deserve to belong to a God who is so gracious and kind, loving, good, and merciful. We love You and praise You, and we pray that Your Spirit will speak in these moments to accomplish Your purpose in each of our hearts. In Jesus' name, Amen.*