

Listening to God

Read [Psalm 46:1-10](#)

LESSON 5

HOW GOD GETS OUR ATTENTION

When we walk in the Spirit, our spiritual antennae alert to God, we hear what He is saying to us as a natural part of our spiritual walk. This is the Christian life, living keenly responsive to the voice of God in whatever fashion He may choose to speak to us. We can have our attention focused on a person, a chore, or an idea, but at the same time, we are so tuned to God's voice that if He speaks to us, we immediately turn our attention to Him.

Unfortunately, there are times when we choose to do things our own way. As a result, we are headed in a direction that will bring us to disaster or disappointment. God is speaking, but we aren't listening. We aren't tuned in to Him.

In these times, God often uses unusual means to get our attention. Prominent among them, from my experience and understanding of God's Word, are these four means:

1. **A restless spirit**
2. **An unsolicited word from another person**
3. **Unusual circumstances—both bad and good**
4. **Unanswered prayers**

No Such Thing as an Accident

There is no such thing as an accident with God. He has a plan and purpose for our lives, and even when bad things happen to us or around us, we can trust that God is continuing to work for our benefit. Our role is not to flail our arms against a tragedy but to lift our arms to God so that He might reach down and lift us up, hold us close, and speak His words to us.

God may use one method to get your attention in one circumstance and a different method at another time. Or He may consistently use one method to get your attention to the point that whenever you feel restless, or you face unusual circumstances, you automatically say, "I wonder what God wants to say to me?" Don't try to second-guess God, however. Recognize that He is a creative God and that He uses many methods to reach us and guide us.

Recognize, too, that God doesn't use the same methods for all people in like circumstances. He knows exactly how to reach each person. We err in prayer when we attempt to dictate to God how He should get the attention of another person.

God cares enough to employ various and sundry methods to cause us to stop and listen to what He is saying. He does not let us walk into an open manhole, spiritually speaking, without giving us clearly discernible danger signs. He never quits trying to reach us so that He can guide us into His wonderful plans and purposes for our lives.

Consider these questions:

- *What new insights have you gained about how God gets our attention?*

- *In your experience, is there one way in which God consistently seems to get your attention?*

- *How do you feel when you realize that you have not been listening as closely as you might have listened? How do you feel when you realize that God has not given up in trying to reach you with His plans for your good?*

- *Do you feel challenged that God may be trying to get your attention right now?*
