

Listening to God

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

LESSON 6

THE HALLMARKS OF GOD'S MESSAGES TO US

Jesus said of those who follow Him,

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand” ([John 10:27–29](#)).

What a great statement of hope and comfort that is to us! We can know the voice of the Lord. As we follow His voice and do what He says to do, we will never perish, and neither will we ever be snatched out of His hand.

“But,” you may say, “how can I be sure that the voice I’m hearing is truly the voice of God?”

There are five identifying hallmarks of God’s messages to us. They are a means of determining whether the voice that we are hearing is truly the voice of God. If you have questions about whether a message is from God, line it up against these criteria:

- 1. The message must be consistent with the Word of God, the Bible.**
- 2. The message will usually be in conflict with the mainstream of conventional human wisdom.**
- 3. The message will clash with fleshly gratification and basic human lusts.**
- 4. The message will challenge one’s faith to rise to a new level.**
- 5. The message will call for personal courage to do what God has said to do, or to change in one’s life what God has said to change.**

Challenge to Grow in Faith

While a **“measure of faith”** has been given to every person, our faith is to grow. (See [Rom. 12:3](#).) God desires that we come to the point where we have great faith.

When the disciples awoke Jesus to still the storm on the Sea of Galilee, He responded to them, **“Why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?”** ([Mark 4:40](#)).

In other words, Jesus was asking, “How is that you haven’t used any of your faith in this situation?” He said to Peter after Peter walked on the water and then started to sink, **“O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”** ([Matt. 14:31](#)). Jesus clearly expected His followers to have faith, to use it, and to grow in their faith.

We grow in faith when we hear from God, obey what He says to do, and then recognize and acknowledge God’s faithfulness to His word in our lives. If we aren’t hearing from God, it’s virtually impossible for us to grow in faith. The same is true if we aren’t obeying Him, and if we aren’t looking for His fulfillment of His word in us.

We must recognize that a faith challenge requires consistency, endurance, perseverance, and watchfulness on our part. We must continue to stand in faith until we see come to pass the thing for which God challenged us to believe.

Jesus told a parable about a widow who went repeatedly to a judge for justice until he responded to her. Jesus, in pointing out that God was not like the callous judge, said, **“And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily.”** Then Jesus said this about our tendency to give up too soon in matters that call for our faith to grow: **“Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?”** (See [Luke 18:1–8](#).) Persevere in your believing once you have heard God speak to you. Endure until you see the fulfillment of God’s word.

Now, not every decision you make will necessarily call for great faith, but in making decisions in which you aren’t sure if you are hearing from God, you are wise to ask, Does this challenge my faith?

What does the Word say

Mat. 17:19-20

Read Luke 18:1–8 and then Luke 18:9–14, which is a parable Jesus spoke to some who were putting their faith in their own good works rather than in God.

Hab. 2:4

What does the Word say to me
