



## SPIRIT – **RESPONDING TO GOD'S** VOICE

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### Background

We are on our journey in our series Church Alive. We're trusting that each one of us will be awakened in our God-given gifts and callings in a fresh way and begin to serve one another and make a difference in our city.

We have examined the topics of Identity and the church as a Body and are now learning about the indwelling Holy Spirit, how He speaks to us and how to hear His voice. Today we will look at how we should respond to His voice.

### **Responding to God's** Voice

#### Introduction:

We all know that God has been talking to man since the beginning of time. The Word of God is full of examples of this.

The last few weeks we have been discussing that we can hear His voice and the different ways that God speaks to us.

This morning we are going to look at two things:

- A. God desires to speak to us.
- B. How do we respond when He speaks?

#### A. God desires to speak to us

##### My story:

*Like many of you sitting here today I have children and grandchildren in other countries around the world. There are days that I keep looking at my phone longing for one of them to message. So that we can start talking...*

*I know that my children are busy and I don't want to be pushy or interrupt their schedule so I wait for them to make the first move)*

I think that God is exactly the same and many times He is waiting for us to initiate the communication.

*James 4:8 ESV "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you."*

*Jeremiah 33:3 NIV "Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know."*

*Jeremiah 29:12-13 NIV "Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."*

*2 Chronicles 15:2 NIV "...The Lord is with you when you are with him. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will forsake you."*

My story:

*I was running a trail run a few years ago, talking to God about something.*

*God how do you know when it's me talking to you? Almost immediately I got this thought of all of our names written in the palms of His hands and when I start speaking to Him my name lights up.*

God desires to speak to us...

It's all about a relationship.

The more time that we spend communicating with the Holy Spirit, the more we get to know Him and recognise when He is speaking to us.

**When Grant calls my name, I don't have to wonder, is it him?** – I know him/ I recognise his voice

When the children were young and called me, I heard them – I could recognise them calling/ crying in a crowd.)

God desires to speak to us.

B. When God speaks to us, how should we respond?

1. Listen

We need to listen (fine tune your hearing):

- To that still small voice inside of you.
- To that random spontaneous thought that suddenly appears from nowhere.
- To that code between you and the Holy Spirit.
- To that verse that jumps out of the page and grips your heart.

God is trying to speak to us through all of these things.

I have found at times that I needed to ask for confirmation.

We need to listen, we need to be sensitive, and we need to fine tune. Then we need to –

2. Obey

This often takes getting out of the boat and walking on water!

*James 1:22 ESV "... be doers of the word, and not hearers only..."*

What is God asking you to do?

- It might be easy e.g. phone a friend
- Or more difficult e.g. go and wash somebody's feet
- It might cost you something e.g. pay for the person's groceries in front of you
- Get on an aeroplane and fly to your sister

- Stop and pray for that person walking on the road
- Take that beggar at the robot for lunch and hear her story, pray for her

What do we do when God says these things to us ... **We've got** to obey!

**When God says something and I don't do it, I have found that He goes quiet for a while. I repent and we continue on our journey together again.**

**There are definitely times when I miss it and think that God said something which He didn't. I have to eat humble pie. I would rather miss it than not obey!**

*1 Samuel 15:22 ESV "... to obey is better than sacrifice..."*

*John 14:15 CEV "... If you love me, you will do as I command."*

God desires that when He speaks to us, we listen and obey.

What can we learn from the book of Jonah?

- **Consequences if we don't obey when He speaks to us.**
- Great results when we do

With Moses, in Deuteronomy 3:25-27, we also see the consequences of not obeying God.

*Deuteronomy 3:25-27 NIV*

<sup>25</sup> *Let me go over and see the good land beyond the Jordan—that fine hill country and Lebanon..."*

<sup>26</sup> *"That is enough," the LORD said. "Do not speak to me anymore about this matter. <sup>27</sup> Go up to the top of Pisgah and look west and north and south and east. Look at the land with your own eyes, since you are not going to cross this Jordan. <sup>28</sup> But commission Joshua, and encourage and strengthen him, for he will lead this people across and will cause them to inherit the land that you will only see."*

*Hebrews 3:18 NIV "And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed."*

*Zechariah 7:13 NIV "When I called, they did not listen; so, when they called, I would not listen..."*

Disobedience leads to a breakdown in relationship, a loss of intimacy or connection. We want to be in a place where we are connected, in union with the Holy Spirit, hearing His voice. Out of the depth of my love for **Jesus my heart's desire is to obey Him, to please Him.**

Obedience leads to blessing.

*Deuteronomy 5:32 NIV "So be careful to do what the Lord Your God has commanded you; do not turn aside to the right or to the left. Walk in obedience to all that the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will possess."*

So, we need to listen; we need to obey and finally –

3. Trust God – Believe Him

**We've climbed out of the boat; we're walking on water** God has asked us to do something and now we have to walk by faith.

Walk in faith knowing that what He has said He will do, He will do!

My life verse:

*Luke 1:45 ESV "And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."*

When Mary responded in faith, it took her into a whole new adventure with God.

**God has a plan for each of our lives; if we don't listen to Him and walk hand in hand with Him,** we could totally miss His direction and purpose and end up chasing our own dreams.

Still experiencing blessing from God – yes,

Still loved by God, - yes,

But not fulfilling His perfect plan.

### **Conclusion:**

God is longing to direct us step by step. Big step by big step, little step by little step. He needs our ears to be fine-tuned to him. He needs us listening, he needs us obeying, He needs us walking in faith, **trusting Him for the outcomes...**

How is your relationship with Jesus?

Are you hearing His voice, are you led by His Holy Spirit?

Are you obeying what He has asked you to do?

**Will you believe God for great 'faith adventures' with Him?**

Will you allow Him to do the impossible through you?

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### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How is your relationship with Jesus? (*Loving and connected/growing/distant/non-existent, etc.*)
2. Are you hearing His voice, are you being led by His Holy Spirit? (*Are you growing in this or do you need help?*)
3. Are you obeying what He has asked you to do? (*Share a personal example of when you obeyed or disobeyed God and the outcome*)
4. Are you ready **for great 'faith adventures' with God?** What is He telling you to do? Can we pray and stand with you for this?