

# Does God really speak?

## Part one: "Listening to hear"

Reflection and study notes

"There is not, in the world, a kind of life more sweet and delightful than that of a continual conversation with God. Those only can comprehend it who practice and experience it; yet I do not advise you to do it from that motive. It is not pleasure which we ought to seek in this exercise; but let us do it from a principle of love, and because God would have us."

Brother Lawrence

"Perhaps we do not hear the voice because we do not expect to hear it. Then again, perhaps we do not expect it because we know that we fully intend to run our lives on our own and have never seriously considered anything else."

Dallas Willard

### Shama -

"Listen up"

to listen and to obey  
to hear and be heard  
to perceive  
to pay attention  
the power / will to hear  
to grant a request  
to yield to

### Introduction

Most people have no problem with the idea of talking with God. Even those who claim that God does not exist find themselves praying from time to time. But when it comes to hearing God speak many doubts emerge.

Why does God seem to speak to some people but not to me?

How do I know it is God who speaks?

Am I just hearing myself?

Am I making this up?

What does God's voice sound like?

What do I have to do to get God's attention?

But I still don't hear anything!

This series, "**Does God really speak?**" will address those questions and give you practical tools to actually hear God speak to you.

What has been your experience of hearing God speak to you?

What are your questions and doubts about God speaking to you?

### God who communicates

Let's just assume for a moment that God is a God who communicates. If that is the case then why do so many people have difficulty hearing the voice of God?

Let's put the question a different way.

Why is it that parents complain that children never listen?

Why is it that children complain that their parents don't listen?

The issue is not that parents and children are deaf, their hearing is fine. They are either talking past each other or don't want to listen. "I don't want to hear what you are saying." We call this selective deafness! Forever speaking but seldom hearing.

The pre-condition for hearing is listening.

Could it be that the reason many don't hear God's voice is that they are not listening?

### Listen and obey

The Hebrew word for hearing is "shama", which means to listen and obey. When our children hear but do not do as they are told we say they did not listen!

Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening" 1Sam 3:10

This could be translated to say, " God, I'm ready for a true conversation because I'm ready to listen and obey"

**A time for honesty:** What do you think is stopping you from hearing God's voice?

What prevents us from hearing others?

Pick from the following list ... inattention, stubbornness, busyness, noisiness, unwillingness, distraction, forgetfulness or disobedience.

NOTES	Does God really speak? Part one: "Listening to hear"
<p><b>Psalm 19:1-4</b>            "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge.            There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world."</p> <p><b>John 1:1-3</b>            "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made."</p> <p><b>2 Timothy 3:16 &amp; 17</b>            "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."</p>	<p><b>Tune in to the voice (sound) of God</b>            Now let's say I'm ready. "Speak Lord I'm ready to listen." What is it that I'm listening for?            An audible voice or what?            How can I hear the voice of God?            The word voice is qowl (kole) which can mean a sound, voice or noise.            Sometimes it may not be a voice we are to listen for, rather a presence or the sound of God.            "You say it best when you say nothing at all." Ronan Keating</p> <p><b>The three main stations</b> (we'll look at some more stations over the next two weeks)</p> <p><b>Creation</b> (Psalm 19)            God speaks through all creation.            Creation invites you into a conversation ...            Consider the ant ... Proverbs 6:6            Consider the mountains ... Psalm 90:2            Consider the stars ... Psalm 8            "Earth's crammed with heaven, and every common bush afire with God;            But only he who sees takes off his shoes."            Elizabeth Barrett Browning</p> <p><b>The WORD (Jesus)</b> John 1:1-3; 14            The same word that spoke creation into being became flesh and has made His home among us. Jesus is the voice of God! I hear God speak when I listen to the words of Jesus.            Read the following passages. What is God speaking to you through the words of Jesus?            Luke 6:47, John 6:68, 15:7</p> <p><b>The word (the Bible)</b> 2 Timothy 3:16            As God breathed life into dust, so too God breathed His breath of life into the words of the Bible. Through this God's voice can be heard. But not just to listen to some words on a page but to listen and obey its instruction.            God speaks through His word, the Bible.            Read the following passages. What is God saying to you?            Ps 119:11,105</p> <p><b>But how do I know it's for real?</b>            The test: while each station will play a different tune, all stations will play the same theme. I've heard people make some outlandish claims of what God has said to them. They didn't check out the other stations.            An experiment: Take a notebook with you this week and be ready to have a conversation with creation, the WORD (Jesus) and the word (the bible). Write down what you hear. You'll be amazed!</p>