

Sermon – June 14, 2020  
“Hearing From God”  
Crown of Life Lutheran Church  
Pastor Dave Schilling

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father, and from our resurrected Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.  
Amen

Let's pray, "O Lord, speak to each of us wherever Your love finds us this morning, speak to us in our minds, speak to us in our hearts, speak to us by the words of my mouth, and in the thoughts we form. Speak, O Lord, we, your servants, are listening. Amen

Today, if you pray or talk to God, you are seen as a spiritual person. But if you say you hear from God, some seem to think you are crazy. Here's the thing ... God does speak to us, and God wants us to hear Him, to know His voice.

When we study Scripture, we notice that God spoke a lot. And today, He is still speaking. We only need to learn how to better tune Him in, so we can hear His voice and understand what He is saying to us.

We all know communication can be difficult so it should not be a surprise to realize communication with God is also difficult, but so necessary if we ever hope to have a lasting relationship with Him.

So, how do we hear the voice of God? How do we better tune Him in so we can learn to be guided by Him?

In our Gospel lesson today, Jesus says he wants us to know his voice, which of course is the voice of God. Jesus says in verse 10 of our Gospel lesson, "The thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy." John 10:10

He is teaching us about Satan. You and I have an enemy, Satan, who wants to destroy us. He is known as the father of lies. So, here we have Satan speaking with lies and God speaking the truth.

How do we discern those different voices? How do we discern the truth? The thief comes only to steal, kill, and destroy. But Jesus came "... so that we might have life and have it to the full."

Let's look verses 27-29 of our Gospel lesson again...

"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand." John 10:27-29

Jesus is the Shepherd in the illustration, and we are the sheep. We are to know his voice and follow him, knowing that there is nothing anyone can ever do to snatch us out of God's hand.

The work of Christ in your life is an eternal, forever thing. Jesus and the Father are one. If you want to know what God is like, and develop a relationship with Him, just look at Jesus.

If you want to hear the voice of God, you must understand who Jesus is. We must know his voice and follow Him. I believe our Gospel lesson points us to a couple of key areas to help us do just that.

- Know God's Voice
- Do the General Things

So first, God wants you to know His voice...

### **Know God's Voice ...**

God is not playing some game where He hides and you must find Him to figure it out. The Bible says that God is not the author of confusion. He always speaks in a very clear way.

The secret to hearing God better is learning how to tune Him in, especially when you are trying to make a major decision, and you wonder "What is God saying to me?" "What does God want me to do?"

So, how can we better Know God's Voice?

I believe there are at least five ways that God speaks to us in our day and time. The first and most important way is through the...

#### **Bible.**

The Bible is the primary way God speaks to us, and the other ways I will describe shortly will ALWAYS fall in line with the Bible.

The Bible is God's direct communication to us. His will IS found in His word. In a way ... we should all stop looking for SIGNS and start looking for VERSES.

The more that you know your Bible, the more you will know God, and be able to discern His will.

However, some people when thinking about the Bible, are not thinking trust or relationship. Instead they are thinking the spectacular ... they are thinking miracles.

This is an important distinction because we were created to have a trusting relationship with God, not to just experience miracles and be amazed.

We may want miracles, but God wants trust. And those are always two different things.

A fella really wanted direction from God. So, he took his Bible, thumbed through it, and pointed to a verse without looking. And he prayed, "God, I need a magic moment. I need a word from you."

He looks, and the verse said, "Judas went and hung himself." The guy says, "That can't be right. Let me try it again."

So, he flipped through it again, pointed to another verse and it said, "Go and do likewise."

He tried it a third time and it said, "What you do, you must do in a hurry."  
That is clearly a case where you do not want to take Bible verses out of context.  
My point is that we need to view and teach the Bible as a whole. What is the truth throughout scripture? We must address context in order to understand and appreciate what God is really telling us through His Word.

It is good to remember that as you get into God's word, God's word will get into you.

So, we can be assured that God DOES and God WILL continue to speak through the Bible. But He also speaks to us in other ways. For example, He speaks through ...

Authority Figures in your life.

the Bible of course is always the main authority, so obviously we all submit to Scripture. But God will also speak to you through authority figures, such as through pastors and other church leaders.

It doesn't mean they are any more special than you, it just means that they have a different role in the church, and perhaps different responsibility.

God will speak through them. Have you ever worshipped and felt like your pastor knew exactly what was going on in your life and he shared what you needed to hear on a particular Sunday? That's the Holy Spirit in action. That's God speaking to you through pastoral authority.

The Bible says in Romans Chapter 13 that government is also to be an authority in our lives. It is God's will for us to obey the law of the land.

When you're driving and the posted speed limit is 65 miles per hour, God's will for you in that moment is to drive 65 miles per hour. The law of the land, ultimately, is ordained by God.

Then, in Ephesians Chapter 5, we read that if you obey your parents, it's good for you, and it'll help you live a long and healthy life. So, parents are godly authorities.

If you have a job, your employer is a godly authority. If you are married, your spouse is a godly authority.

Now, all of that being said, we also recognize that if any authority in your life starts teaching things that are not Biblical, then you SHOULD NOT listen to them.

A pastor's job is to deliver you, as best he can, the truth of God's word. And it is YOUR job to learn it with him. The Bible always comes first, but God also speaks through authority figures in one's life.

A third way God speaks is through...

Godly Others ... the optimum word being "godly".

The truth is, when we're making life decisions, you can find people who will always agree with you. It is important though to ignore those who will just tell you only what you want to hear.

So, how do you know if someone is a godly person? Well, are they following Jesus? Do they go to church regularly? Do they know the Bible? Are they humble?

1 Peter 5:5 says, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

You want to find humble people who you know are following Jesus, and you need to find people who care more about God's will than your feelings.

You want people around you who will tell you the truth whether you like it or not.

"Walk with the wise and become wise. for a companion of fools suffers harm." Proverbs 13:20

If you want to be wise, if you want to be godly, if you want to KNOW the voice of God, then live your life among people who are wise, godly, and who know the voice of God.

So, we have heard that the Bible always comes first, but God also speaks through authority figures and other godly people in our lives. The fourth way God speaks to us is through a...

#### Still, Small Voice.

God will nudge you in certain directions, impress upon you certain things. When you feel those promptings or nudges, ask yourself, "What does the Bible say?" Talk to some authority in your life. Talk to godly people.

God will speak to you through a still, small voice to nudge you to do certain specific things. The question is ... are we tuned in? Are we listening?

Finally, the last way God will speak to you is through...

#### Life Circumstances.

Ever heard or use the phrase "an open door" or "a closed door." That's how church people often describe life circumstances. God opened this door, and God closed that door.

However, don't fall into the trap of thinking that an "open door" means it is easy. "Oh, this is easy. God must want me to do it."

Most of the time when God speaks to you, it's not going to be easy. It's going to be difficult. God wants you to trust Him. If you are disobeying God because it's difficult, and you're using the, "Oh, closed door. It's hard so it must not be God's will," you're deceiving yourself.

When you start thinking like this, ask yourself important questions like ... "What does the Bible say?" "What do authorities in your life say?" "What do godly people say?" "What is

God really nudging me to do?

So, our Gospel lesson says we are to KNOW GOD'S VOICE and listen to Him, to help us navigate life in this broken world.

Now aside from knowing God's voice, I believe another IMPORTANT lesson that stems from our Gospel lesson is this...we are to...

### **Do The General Things ...**

These are things God asks you to do, so you will better know the specific things you're supposed to do ... the details.

This idea can be a bit confusing because we usually like to jump right to the specifics ... everyone wants to know the details.

Am I supposed to take this job or that job? Am I supposed to marry this person or that person? What class should I take in school? What am I supposed to do as situations arise in your life?

Here is my premise in a nutshell ... if you do the general things God asks you to do, then you will KNOW the specific things God wants you to do when the time comes.

The principal is that there are a bunch of General things that all of us know are in God's will, so we should do them.

For example, is it God's will for you to come to church ... to honor the Sabbath? Of course, it is ... it is even one of God's commandments.

Is it God's will for you to be in fellowship with each other? Of course, it is ... you were created to be in fellowship.

Is it God's will to pray?

Is it God's will to be in the Bible, and use the Bible as your source of truth?

How about, is it God's will to be around godly people?

When you do all of these GENERAL THINGS that you KNOW are God's will, then when it is time to make specific choices and decisions, the more certain you will be about God's direction for your life

Why? Because you spent time with God doing those general things.

Your job? Marriage? Kids? Aging parents? Relating to teenagers?

When it is time to make specific choices and decisions, you will know what God wants you to do because you DID the general things.

If we're going to recognize and fully experience the gift of salvation through faith in our Lord Jesus, we must learn to better...

Know God's Voice and faithfully Do the General Things. Amen