

Hearing God and the Prophetic - Week 1

Why do we need to “hear God”?

1. Everything is connected!

- To live a life of faith

Romans 1:17

“The righteous **will live by faith.**”

2 Corinthians 5:7

“For we **live by faith**, not by sight.”

Hebrews 11:6

“And **without faith** it is **impossible** to please Him”

Romans 10:17

“So **faith comes** from **hearing**, and **hearing by the word** of Christ.”

Faith doesn't come from reading! We can sometimes 'read' a lot of verses and 'hear' nothing. Or we can read one line, and our hearts jump as we 'hear' God speak. It's through the latter that faith comes and you just know that you know God has spoken to you.

Note: faith “comes”....

Romans 4:20

“yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but **grew strong in faith**, giving glory to God,”

- To be led by God on adventure in life.

“Logos” and “Rhema”

In the New Testament, 2 different Greek words are used to refer to the Word of God.

One is “logos” and the other is “rhema”

In the New Testament, “logos” is used to refer to the constant, written word, which is recorded in the Bible. We learn about His ways, His purpose and plan for mankind.

The New Testament uses the word "rhema" for that "hearing God" moment of personal revelation of what God wants to say to us about a matter. When we know God has "spoken" in a "live" way to us personally.

Both "logos" and "rhema" are crucial to our Christian life. God uses His "logos" Word to speak His "rhema" word to us. And God's living, instant speaking always corresponds with and never contradicts His written Word.

In the opening verses of John, we find the word "logos" used for the Word. Jesus is the logos - and therefore He will never contradict Himself when He speaks "rhema" to us.

John 1:1-5

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. **2** He was in the beginning with God. **3** All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. **4** In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. **5** The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

Matthew 14:28-29

28 Peter said to Him, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." **29 And He said, "Come!"** And Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water and came toward Jesus.

- When Peter walked on the water...He made a **"demand on the logos to give him a rhema"!**
- It was in "hearing the rhema" that faith came to take the step out of the boat.

No wonder Jesus said the following:

Matthew 4:4

"But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, **but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.**'"

The word used for "every word" here is "every rhema".

In other words - if we are to truly live life as God intended and to have the kind of adventurous life as Peter had - we need to constantly live in the place of hearing "rhema" word from the "logos" word.

- To be victorious in the battle of life

Ephesians 6:10-11

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. **11** Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

Ephesians 6:17

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the **word of God**.

The word "word" here is also "rhema".

- The first thing you need in the challenges that life brings, is "hear a rhema" word!
- What is God saying to you about it?

- to encourage and help others!

1 Corinthians 14:3

"But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation."

1 Corinthians 14:31

"For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be exhorted;"

But please also note this often forgotten verse:

Revelation 19:10

"For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

- No true prophecy will contradict the "logos" of God. It won't go against His written word and ways therein.
- It will also communicate to people in the heart and spirit within which Jesus does. Never harsh or arrogantly.

Further:

1 Corinthians 14:32

32 and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets;

You can choose how and when you bring a prophetic word.

What should our approach be?

When a plane comes into land, it needs to have the correct angle of approach to do so. Likewise, we need to have the correct angle of approach in our heart to God's word.

1. Set aside proper time

Internet sites want to function with as fewest clicks as possible. 3 clicks max to get what you want. Download speed needs to be faster and faster as we demand almost instantaneous information. We can treat God like that and have a "3 clicks and download it quickly" approach to hearing what God is saying.

We often read something like "The word of the Lord came to me" when we read the prophetic books. There was time taken between the Prophet and God to "receive" the word.

Jeremiah 1:9

"Then the Lord stretched out His hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said to me "Behold I have put My words in your mouth".

1 Samuel 3: 1-11

3 Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord before Eli. And word from the Lord was rare in those days, visions were infrequent.

2 It happened at that time as Eli was lying down in his place (now his eyesight had begun to grow dim and he could not see well), **3** and the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord where the ark of God was, **4** that **the Lord called Samuel**; and he said, "Here I am." **5** Then he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, lie down again." So he went and lay down. **6** The Lord called yet again, "**Samuel!**" So Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he answered, "I did not call, my son, lie down again." **7** Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, nor had the word of the Lord yet been revealed to him. **8 So the Lord called Samuel again for the third time.** And he arose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli discerned that the Lord was calling the boy. **9** And Eli said to Samuel, "Go lie down, and it shall be if He calls you, that you shall say, '**Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening.**'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. **10** Then the Lord came and stood and called as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "**Speak, for Your servant is listening.**" **11 The Lord said to Samuel, "Behold, I am about to do a thing in Israel at which both ears of everyone who hears it will tingle.**

Samuel heard a voice, didn't realise it was God and ran to Eli. 3 times!

v 10 "Speak Lord for your servant is listening"

Only then does God expand and in Verse 11 he starts to speak to him a prophetic word to bring.

No What's app / phone / just before your favourite TV programme / just before visitors arrive etc.

Be properly "positioned" to hear God.

2. Come Hungry And Thirsty

In Matthew 5 Jesus teaches His famous 'Sermon on the Mount', also known as 'The Beatitudes'. He taught this right at the start of His ministry and was dealing with heart attitudes. He was basically saying that if we are going to receive anything from Him, we first of all need to come to Him with the correct outlook and heart.

In these verses He says we shouldn't come 'full' but 'empty'. In effect saying 'Jesus, fill me up with your Word. I'm ready to learn and to receive from you'. If we come full of 'I know everything already' we won't receive much from Him.

Matthew 5:3

'Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven'

He also says we should come with a deep desire to encounter Him and to connect with the living God. Only then will we find true satisfaction in our 'eating' from His word.

Matthew 5:6

'Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied'

3. Come Open

In Matthew 13, Jesus tells the Parable of the Sower. This parable is about God's word being sown into the hearts of people and the different outcomes that can happen.

In his explanation of this parable in verses 18-23, He tells us that, as powerful and creative as the word is, we have a role to play in whether it can be truly fruitful in our lives or not.

One of the hindrances Jesus describes here is that our hearts can be blocked up with worries and concerns of life as well as wrong priorities such as the love of money. The word has no 'room' to take root and be fruitful.

Matthew 13:22

'And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful'

When we read the Bible, let's do so from a place of being receptive. Don't let what you are reading and hearing be drowned or crowded out by the clutter of life's concerns or by being defensive. Come open, ready for seed to be sown into the open ground of your heart.

Matthew 13:8

'And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.'

Colossians 3:16

'Let the word of God richly dwell within you'

4. Come Expectant

John 10:27

'My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me'

James 1:5

'But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him'

When you read the Bible, have a huge expectation that God will speak to you. Have your 'spiritual antenna' up, and be alert, ready and expectant that you will hear God and that He really does want to communicate with you. Expect that the Good Shepherd wants to speak into your life and Almighty God wants to open '*the eyes of your heart*' (Ephesians 1:18) to see and comprehend His great plan and purpose for you.

God is not hiding from us and He wants to be found. If we come seeking Him and His voice, word and instruction then He promises to reward us with exactly that.

Hebrews 11:6

'And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him'

Luke 11:10

'For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds'

5. Come Under

We shouldn't read the Bible to argue and debate it. We shouldn't receive it as 'suggestions' or reply with 'well that's your opinion Jesus, I see it differently'!

We don't come to 'master the word', but rather to be 'mastered by the word'. We should therefore approach it with due reverence, hold it in high esteem and be willing to change and be shaped by its instruction to us.

"If you need a word from God, read the Bible. If you need an audible word, read it out loud!"

Psalm 119:160

'The sum of Your word is truth And every one of Your righteous ordinances is eternal'

6. Come Reliant

Some parts of The Bible can be a challenge to understand, but God has not left us without help. Jesus said He would send a helper to us - the Holy Spirit. Part of the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives is to help us understand God's word:

John 16:13

'But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will lead you into all the truth;'

Every time you come to the word, start by asking the Holy Spirit for His guidance, illumination and help to understand what God wants to communicate to you. Be reliant on Him rather than your own intellect. In fact, the most productive times 'in the word' are usually a mix of prayer and reading the word at the same time. We should ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to us what we are to hear and see, then bring it to God again in prayer, processing what we are hearing before Him. Then go back 'in' for more and so on and so forth. As we do that, we 'lean in' on the Holy Spirit and our 'quiet time' actually becomes our 'dynamic time'.

Luke 24:45

'Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures'

1. **Read It Regularly - stay in the "groove".**

2. **Meditate On The Word**

This means to 'chew over', think on and ponder before God what you are reading and hearing.

'But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night. He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season. And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers'

(Psalm 1:2-3)

3. **Write It Down**

This will help you see a direction and pattern in what God is saying to you and you can refer back to it as often as you want

Remember, this is for your eyes only. You can be as honest as you want and write down any thoughts you may have. This is your place to record precious communication between you and God.

4. **Memorise The Word**

Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would help us remember God's word to us. But He can only bring back to remembrance what we have put into our hearts in the first place!

John 14:26

'But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you'

Psalm 119:11

'Your Word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against you'

Knowing that it's God you're hearing comes with **PRACTICE:**

P: Peace

Does this decision produce peace within your heart? God's peace sets a guard over your heart. Keep looking for it.

Philippians 4:7

7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

R: Resound

Is there a resounding principal in God's written word? He will never contradict what He has already said.

A: Authority

Seek counsel of those over you in the Lord. They must give an account for counsel they give.

Hebrews 13:17

7 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account.

C: Confidence

Do you find a rise of faith? If it's God's word to you, it will produce faith.

T: Truth

Does it accord with all that is honest and righteous? Don't touch questionable things.

I: Informed

Take time and think it through. Consider all angles. Don't rush it.

Let the word be fully "unpacked"

In the verses we read earlier in Samuel, if Samuel had run off after 1 minute and said "I really feel God is saying "Samuel"...." it wouldn't have been what God wanted to communicate at all!

When God used an angel in the burning bush to speak to Moses, it caught his attention but what God wanted to say had nothing to do with bushes or angels!

Always best to wait a bit. Otherwise it can come a bit “half baked” and not quite ready to share. You may not have the fullness of what God is trying to say. You are picking up the “Samuel, Samuel” and you think **THAT** is the word!

So even if a word or stirring comes to you, take time to bring that before God and let it be fully formed in you. Sometimes you are in a prayer meeting / in a moment - even then, take time to let the word be unpacked as best as possible.

Get it clear! Let it properly develop and “distill”

That avoids being premature or half baked or “um well, i think, you know, I kinda feel that” type language!

Write it down, go back to God and pray over it. Get the right vocabulary to express the burden!

C: Circumstances

Be careful here. Don't always read “smooth passage” as endorsing the will of God! Often the enemy will try and stop you and it means you ARE on the right path! However, if it is God's plan, He will make a way.

E: Enthusiasm

This word comes from “en theos” which means “God within”. God's word always brings LIFE!