

Hearing God: The Spirit of God Is Speaking

John 14:16–17; Romans 8:14; Romans 8:16; Romans 8:26–27

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Today is Pentecost Sunday. For the Church this is the celebration of the Holy Spirit. We are fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus. We are ten after Jesus ascension into Heaven. On Pentecost Sunday Jesus' followers were gathered together to pray. As they prayed the Holy Spirit descended like strong wind from Heaven. Tongues of fire appeared above the disciples they began speaking in the languages of the others who were in the room.

All who believe Jesus is their Savior and Lord are filled with the Holy Spirit. Upon your confession of faith the Holy Spirit enters your life, takes dwelling in your soul, and speaks to you. The Holy Spirit is God's voice either as loud as the wind or as quiet as a whisper. The Holy Spirit reveals to believers the Truth. We are made aware of what is false, what is sinful. We are given a path to follow that God has planned for us. We are empowered by the Holy Spirit to live our lives like Jesus making disciples.

John 14:16–17 (NLT) Jesus said “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.”

Jesus gave us His Holy Spirit to speak the truth into our lives. I can't say this enough, the air is filled with lies. What you do with the lies is important. We can believe the lies or we can follow the truth revealed by God's Holy Spirit. It's simple really, and only made complicated when we believe the lies. How much of what you hear, what you take into your mind, heart and soul is the truth? It's not nearly as much as you would like it to be.

So many people – men, women, and children – are believing the lies. They wouldn't believe the truth if they scrolled past it on their phones, fast forwarded through it on their TV, or heard it for themselves. The lies are frequent and thick, like bugs on molasses. The lies are everywhere packaged in attractive pictures and videos. They come to us from people who look and act just like us. They sound good, pleasing, and appetizing. They are hard to resist because they look delicious.

I am dumbfounded sometimes by the things people say to me. Their words catch me off guard and I don't know what to say. The words themselves are comprehensible, but the meaning and the implications are nonsense. Two teenagers heard enough lies that they decide to shoot up a mosque in San Diego. A man drove his truck into a Jewish synagogue in Detroit. A different man drove his truck into a Mormon church. A shooter entered a Catholic church in Minnesota killing and wounding people. They all arrived at their individual actions because they believed the lies.

Who is behind the lies? It's not a political force, or an organization, or even fanatical groups. That's what were told, but the lies come from the liar, the devil himself. He is the great deceiver and people are being deceived. He is the prince of the air and the air is filled with his lies.

When we, as believers hear the Truth, it is spot on in our souls. We recognize the Truth from the lies. We know the Truth, His name is Jesus. We have a personal relationship with Jesus. We study His life, His teachings, His thoughts.

We're dumbfounded when we hear a lie presented as the Truth. We know the words, but they have been turned into something horrific by the lies. The Holy Spirit even reveals the Truth to sinners. That's how they know they are sinners. The lies become evident. Their eyes are open. Their soul yearns for the Truth. When those lies are revealed, they hate the lie and the liar. They love the Truth. They choose the Truth. They choose Jesus.

Romans 8:14 (NLT) For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God.

Even as a child of God, you and I don't always listen to the Holy Spirit. Too many children don't listen to their parents. Did you always listen to your parents? You may have heard your parents talking, but were you listening? Even though you heard your parents, you didn't always follow them, doing what they said.

Our lack of listening to our parents is just like our unwillingness to listen to God's Holy Spirit. We hear what God says, but we don't listen. The words on the pages of the Bible are read silently or aloud, but they don't stick with us. The Holy Spirit speaks in a whisper, and we ignore His voice. He speaks again, maybe through the wind, but we don't listen. He keeps talking, maybe in the earthquake, but we don't listen. Then comes the crisis and we can't stop begging. We still aren't listening. Finally, we pay attention, listening to the Holy Spirit's voice following wherever He leads.

I know you're thinking that's too simple. God is not complicated. God speaks, calling us to follow Him. The Father calls to His children to go with Him. Our Father walks with us, leading us. What do children do when they don't want to follow their daddy? They run away and hide. How did that work out for Jonah? Children through temper tantrums. How did that work out for Paul?

God will keep calling you to Him so that you will follow Him. Through His Holy Spirit, He continues to reveal the Truth. All the Father wants is for us to follow where He leads. Jesus the Son followed where He was led. How has that worked out for you?

Your faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord makes you a child of God. Sinners are saved by faith through grace. Our salvation is a gift from God. God has adopted us into His family. When we were sinners we were outside God's family. Every person who believes Jesus is Savior and Lord is a child of God.

But we hear the lie that God is an absentee father. We hear the lies that God doesn't care. We hear the lies that we can never be good enough to be God's child. We hear the lie that we can do whatever we want ignoring God. This results in not being able to listen to the Holy Spirit. You're so busy trying to prove the lie wrong that you can't take time to listen.

When simply all we need to do is proclaim in faith that we are God's child. It's like claiming every other promise of God, the lies can't stand up against the Truth. When you are saved by Jesus, you are born again as a child of God. Each of God's children can hear His voice, the Holy Spirit. Every child of God can follow the leading of the Holy Spirit. All God's children can do the will of God, fulfilling God's plan.

Romans 8:16 (NLT) For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's children.

To hear, listen and follow the Holy Spirit we need to remember we are God's child. As long as you are clinging to your non-spiritual junk you'll forget your Father. As a kid as long as I was playing with my friends, I forget that my dad said be home for supper. I was wrapped up in playing football or baseball or riding my bike. I would forget what my dad had told me. It was as if my dad didn't exist.

That is until I heard His voice or saw him drive up to the play ground. Then I remembered who was dad, who was the child. I was no longer the independent, self-sufficient, free-wondering child. It was at that moment I was under my dad's authority. I was hearing and listening to his voice. I was paying attention. I was headed home quicker than a squirrel out running a dog.

It was in the remembering that I was my dad's child that I started to follow. Before that all I heard was my friends calling me to play one more game. Before that all I heard was my own voice saying I'll go home in a minute, more like sixty minutes. Now, don't tell me you are any different. When you were a child you would forget your parents. You would chase your dreams and not follow your parents.

Even today we have all kinds of non-spiritual junk that makes us forget we are children of God. Our non-spiritual junk falls into all kinds of categories. It can be the junk of work, family life, making money. It can be the junk of houses, cars, motorcycles, or any possession.

Your non-spiritual junk might be a habit, an unhealthy activity, a group of friends. This non-spiritual junk can easily be the attitudes, beliefs, and lies that you've heard over and over again.

We all have non-spiritual things in our lives. They become junk when they creep up to first place in our lives. When they take precedent over God's voice. When they block out the voice of the Holy Spirit.

Making the claim to be God's child is like saying daddy talk to me. I've seen little kids do this frequently. They come up to their parent, who is engaged in something important. They keep calling out Mommy or Daddy. Now, parents not being perfect try to ignore their child to finish doing whatever they were doing.

Unlike these parents, when we call out Daddy, Father, God, He listens. He is never pre-occupied, or busy, or distracted. He is always listening. He is always responding to us.

God wants a listening and following relationship with you and me. He has important things to say to us. His words are life and death, eternally valuable to us. Being a child of God is the greatest relationship ever. Our Father in heaven is the greatest parent ever. Claiming your place in His family is empowering. He will always lead you to carry out His will, to bless you from heaven.

Romans 8:26–27 (NLT) The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. The Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will.

Though it's difficult, it's simple, follow the Holy Spirit as He reveals God's will.

Our spiritual lives are not at all complicated – God loves us, Jesus died and rose again, we trust God. That is not complicated. The Holy Spirit speaks, we follow, God's will is done. That's simple, isn't it?

My life, your life can be overwhelming. When we are caught between the lies and the Truth, we don't always know how to pray. We don't know what words to say. We don't know how to express our concerns.

The Holy Spirit of God who is living in you talks to the Father in heaven. Think about the Holy Spirit living in you. There is not a thought, an attitude, an idea that the Holy Spirit doesn't hear. We don't have to speak out loud for the Holy Spirit to hear what's going on within us.

This is truly an awesome gift from God to have the Holy Spirit. Among all the things – peace, hope, joy, patience, kindness, gentleness, self-control – that the Holy Spirit does for us, He also speaks to the Father for us.

I lay in bed at night and I ask the Holy Spirit to speak to the Father for me. When I'm with a family watching a loved one die, I ask the Holy Spirit to speak to the Father for me. While I stand before people speaking, I ask the Holy Spirit to speak to the Father for me.

Since the Holy Spirit is talking to the Father, and the Father is speaking, the Holy Spirit speaks to me. He tells me monumentally valuable things. He tells me things about my life – good and bad. He is talking to you also. He tells me to be quiet and to speak. He is talking to you also. He tells me to sit still and where to go. He is talking to you also.

When the Holy Spirit speaks the words of the Father to me and to you, we've got to make a choice. Do we acknowledge the Lord's voice? Do we follow the leading of the Holy Spirit? How are your thoughts, words, and actions demonstrating that you are following the Holy Spirit?

Even Jesus had conversations with the Father about following the Holy Spirit. He asked if there was any other way? Jesus could have at that moment decided to forego God's voice and do His own thing. All of humanity, every person - man, woman, and child – would have remained condemned forever.

Jesus heard God's voice and followed the leading of the Holy Spirit. History forever records that Jesus died as my disobedience and your disobedience on the cross. Jesus having listened and followed the Father's voice was raised from the dead. He was placed at the right hand of the Father in heaven. He reigns forever and ever.

Every man, woman, and child who believes this saved. Every man, woman and child who is saved is hearing God's voice. You can either ignore the Holy Spirit or you can follow. All those who follow are blessed.

Be a person who is blessed because you are hearing, listening, and following.