

Gifts of the Spirit

Why is learning to listen to the voice of God so important?

Operating in the gifts of the spirit takes practice and the ability to know the voice of God. These gifts are powerful and are of great value to the Body of Christ. However, many times Christians are satisfied with hearing from God during a Bible study or sermon at church and never learn to develop their “spiritual ears.” It takes practice and opportunity to *learn* how to hear and follow the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

How would these gifts operate if nobody paid attention to the voice of God, the leading of the Holy Spirit?

1 *Corinthians 12: 4-11.*

- 4 Now there are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but it is the same **Holy Spirit who is the source** of them all.
- 5 There are different kinds of service in the church, but it is the same **Lord** we are serving.
- 6 There are different ways God works in our lives, but it is the same **God who does the work** through all of us.
- 7 A spiritual gift is given to each of us as a means of helping the entire church.
- 8 To one person the Spirit gives the **ability to give wise advice**; to another he gives the gift of **special knowledge**.
- 9 The Spirit gives **special faith** to another, and to someone else he gives the **power to heal the sick**.
- 10 He gives one person the **power to perform miracles**, and to another the **ability to prophesy**. He gives someone else the **ability to know** whether it is really the Spirit of God or another spirit that is speaking. Still another person is given the **ability to speak in unknown languages**, and another is given the **ability to interpret** what is being said.
- 11 It is the one and only **Holy Spirit who distributes these gifts**. He alone decides which gift each person should have.

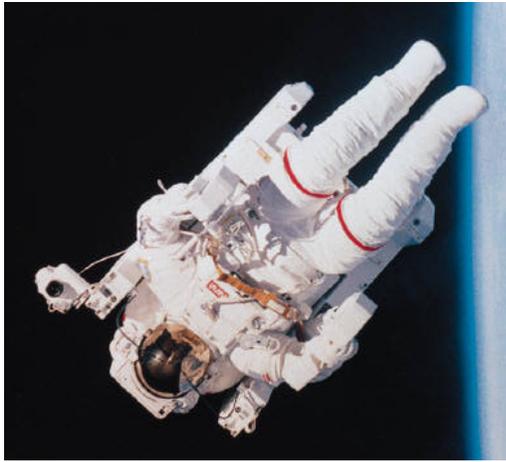


HEARING GOD

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Are you ready for something "Supernatural?" Hearing God's voice is just that. He communicates with us in various ways: through His Word (the Bible), through people, through "pictures" in our mind., words, thoughts, sounds, smells, etc. He is all around us, just waiting for us to hear what He has to say.



"...God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24, NLT).

We can worship God in "spirit" because that is what we really are. Your spirit is covered with skin and hair...and clothes. You have a body so that you can exist in this natural world and be recognized by your outward appearance (like an astronaut on a space walk).

God's spirit will most often make contact with you via your spirit in a kind of "up-link." Your spirit gets "impressions" or "feelings" that are then unscrambled by your brain. We can't always trust our feelings, however, they are an important thing to consider when you're listening for the voice of God.

God communicates with mankind through the five senses. You can read something He spoke into a prophet's ear thousands of years ago in the Bible or you can hear a sermon that touches your heart this week. You can feel your spine tingling and know that He is "in the house." He communicates, or speaks to us, in so many ways.



This traffic light is a great way to think about how you hear from God. See how these colors relate to hearing from God and how you can use this idea to train your brain to obey what you hear.

When the traffic light comes on in your spirit, it is usually because of a feeling. For example, what feeling do you get when you have a guilty conscience? (pretty yucky, huh?) What is going on if you have the same yucky feeling but you haven't done anything wrong? (devil is tricking you)

- **Red**—When you have a "red light" in your spirit, what does it feel like?
- **Green**—When you have a "green light" in your spirit, what does it feel like? This one can be tricky. Sometimes excitement (go faster) will cloud your ability to do the right thing.
- **Yellow**—Slow down and be careful...you won't see/feel this one very often.



LISTEN

There are so many things about listening for the voice of God, that entire books have been written about it. If you were to google "listening to God's voice" you would be shocked at how much information is available online (and most of it is helpful).

So here are a few Scriptures from various translations to consider as you start listening up.

- **Job 33:14**—For God does speak—now one way, now another—though man may not perceive it.
God speaks to us in all kinds of ways, but sometimes we are expecting something different so we miss Him.
- **Mark 4:24**—And be sure to pay attention to what you hear. The more you do this, the more you will understand—and even more, besides.
The more time we spend

seeking God about what He is wanting to tell us and the more attention we give to understanding what He says, the more we will receive revelation from God. On the other hand, the more casually and lazily we treat things divinely spoken into our lives—whether through people or circumstances or the Bible itself—the more we will miss things God is longing to tell us.

- **Psalms 119:145**—I call with all my heart; answer me, O LORD, and I will obey your decrees.
When you hear from God be sure to obey whatever it is He is asking you to do...even if it is something you have never done before.
- **Psalms 27:14**—Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.
Don't get in a hurry at prayer time. Spend some quiet time concentrating or meditating on Him. Give Him time to get through to you. Sometimes it takes a while to "shift gears"

from a busy schedule.

- **Hosea 12:6**—But you must return to your God; maintain love and justice, and wait for your God always.
If you have sinned or "messed up," return to God, and try again. Wait on your God always...wow!
- **Psalms 50:3**—Our God comes and will not be silent...
When God seems distant and you don't feel Him close or hear His voice...look for him with your other senses—He is everywhere at once!
- **Deuteronomy 5:24**—"The LORD our God has shown us his glory and his majesty, and we have heard his voice from the fire. Today we have seen that a man can live even if God speaks with him.
There will be times when the power of God will be so strong you may not hardly know what to do...be reminded that some day you will receive a body that can handle being in His presence.