

## CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW? “When God Speaks”

### INTRODUCTION [Open to Matthew 11:25]

Where we’ve been ... Why God Speaks; How God Speaks

Stories rec’d (devotionals, journaling, increased awareness, stories)

Today: When God Speaks (position ourselves to hear God clearly)

(Jesus in Mark 4:9) “*He who has **ears** to hear, let him hear.*”

#### 1. God speaks clearly to your HUMBLED heart.

(Matthew 11:25-26, James 4:6, Psalm 51:17, Isaiah 57:15, 66:2)

(Matthew 11:25-26) *At that time Jesus said, “I praise You, Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because You have hidden these things from the **wise and learned**, and revealed them to **little children**. Yes, Father, for this was Your **good pleasure**.*

#### *What does God like doing?*

He takes great pleasure revealing Himself to little children; they have unplugged ears and open hearts, are teachable, learners, admit need for help, can’t do it alone, open to instruction, they’re humble.

Humility doesn’t mean you are passive, timid, wimpy or weak but that you know who you are and who you aren’t; you have an accurate perception of who you are in relationship to God and others, the humble person knows themselves; the good, bad, ugly.

God hides Himself and His truth from the wise & learned; but because unlike children they are not teachable, they don’t need help, can do it alone, their ears are plugged and their hearts are not open, they are prideful.

A prideful person sets their focus on themselves; on the outside this person may seem strong and confident but on the inside this kind of life produces fear, anxiety, selfishness, insecurity, perfectionism, weariness, etc.

This kind of person cannot hear God speak because the only voice they can hear and that they listen to is their own.

A humbled life, one who sees themselves accurately, experiences joy, confidence, service, healthy self esteem, self image, self worth.

This kind of person can hear God speak because they are open to God’s voice and look forward to what He has to say to them.

God draws near to the humble near enough to speak and to be heard.

(James 4:6, 8) “*God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.*” 8 *Come near to God and He will come near to you.*

Is your heart humbled? If not then draw near to God this morning, humbling yourself and He will draw near to you.

#### 2. God speaks clearly to your CLEANSED heart.

(Matthew 5:8, 2 Timothy 2:20-21, Psalm 32, 51, 66:18, John 1:9)

Jesus told His followers, “*Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.*” (Seeing carries with it the idea of knowing personally)

Being pure in heart does not mean you are perfect in heart, never making a mistake, being without sin.

But instead that you are a person who has come to grips with your own sin problem, you’ve taken responsibility for it, understanding its destructive nature and honest about it with them yourself and with God.

Like King David admits in Ps. 66:18, “*If I had **cherished sin** in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.*”

To cherish means to value, treasure, to take pleasure in one’s sin.

Instead of hating it, doing everything we can to get rid of it from our lives we hold it close, it is our friend, companion, couldn’t imagine life without it ... we cherish it. (Are you doing that today?)

The result of cherishing personal sin is that God deafens Himself to our voice and hearing Him speak clearly is severely hindered. Why? Because sin separates ... it destroys communication. It is the universal disconnect between God and human beings.

So what can you do if you sense you are in this place?

The Bible makes this incredibly awesome and gracious promise to us, *“If we **confess our sins**, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”* (1 John 1:9)

### 3. God speaks clearly to your **OBEDIENT** heart.

In John 14:21 Jesus said, *“Whoever has My commands and **obeys them**, he is the one who loves Me. He who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I too will love him and **show myself to him.**”*

The person with an obedient heart shows that they love God and are loved by the Father and the Son (relational love) and Jesus says that He will keep making Himself known personally to this kind of person.

God is looking to speak to people who've developed an obedient heart, a heart that is willing, that wants to obey.

When the choice to obey or disobey confronts them, they experience the normal human struggle to make the right choice but most often choose obedience instead of the alternative.

Obedience is meant to characterize not just specific acts of obedience but our heart, our life, the deepest places of our soul; resumé describes you as obedient.

Obey now. Delayed obedience often becomes disobedience.

James 1:22-24 says, *“Do not merely **listen** to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. **Do** what it says. Anyone who listens to the Word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately **forgets** what he looks like.”* (like now)

Is God calling you to obey in a specific area of your life: at home, work, with friends, with Him, in the church? If you know it is Him speaking don't procrastinate, don't rationalize it away, go for it now!

### 4. God speaks clearly to your **QUIETED** heart.

(Job 6:24, Ps. 23:2, 76:8, 131:2, Is. 30:15, 32:17, Ps. 37:7, 46:10, 1 Kings 19:11-12, Mk 4:7, 18-19, Lk 10:38-42, Zep.3:17)

**(Mark 4:18-19)** Jesus parable; seed sown (God's Word); Four soils (heart condition) that determine the effectiveness of God's Word in a life. One soil was full of thorns; these people heard the Word, *“but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the Word, making it unfruitful.*

Life's worries, the lies about wealth, and desires for other things = crowded, busy, distracted, noisy life.

Kind of describes the kind of world we live in, the culture we go out into every day, the challenges we face daily can make it really hard to quiet our hearts, to hear God's still quiet voice.

God's desire for you is a quiet heart. In Ps. 46 God tells us to, *“Be still (stop our anxious striving), and know that I am God”* and in Ps. 23 we see that it is God Himself Who leads us to *“quiet places.”*

The quiet heart is the kind of heart that can hear God speak.

Let's think about this together for the next few minutes as we quietly listen, watch and reflect upon the following video entitled, **“Noise.”**

### **NOOMA DVD “Noise” DVD**

Middle of 2007, this was what God told me, too much noise, begin to eliminate it and you will hear me more clearly; “How? This is impossible! Asking too much!”

Many of you are feeling like this right now.

(Job 6:24) **Teach me, and I will be quiet.**

(Zephaniah 3:17) **The Lord your God ... will quiet you with His love**

### **Closing comments**

So what kind of heart is able to hear God speak? The quieted heart; the obedient heart; the cleansed heart and the humbled heart. (Pray, 2<sup>nd</sup> hour)

This kind of heart, hearing God speak has been made possible by God's Son, Jesus; when He died and rose again He provided the power to bring forgiveness of sins to everyone who believed and power to live a life like we've just described, a life in relationship with God, hearing Him speak and following His lead.

Do you have this life? Have you believed in Jesus? You can today.

**Pray with me.**

Next weekend: Final message in this series: "***When God is Silent***" Have you experienced the "silence" of God? What's going on when this happens? Could His apparent silence really be a form of His communication with you? Next week we tackle this issue to try to find answers for this silence.