

Come and Listen

Isaiah 55:3 "Come to me with your ears wide open. Listen, and you will find life. I will make an everlasting covenant with you. I will give you all the unfailing love I promised to David. NLT

Isaiah 55:3 Pay attention, come close now, listen carefully to my life-giving, life-nourishing words. I'm making a lasting covenant commitment with you, the same that I made with David: sure, solid, enduring love.
The Message



▶ **God does speak.**

- Job 33:14–15 But God speaks again and again, though people do not recognize it. 15 He speaks in dreams, in visions of the night when deep sleep falls on people as they lie in bed. NLT

▶ **His sheep hear His voice.**

- John 10:3–5 The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice and come to him. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 After he has gathered his own flock, he walks ahead of them, and they follow him because they recognize his voice. 5 They won't follow a stranger; they will run from him because they don't recognize his voice. NLT

God is constantly speaking to people. But too often, we miss out on hearing God's messages,

▶ **We are hiding,**

- Genesis 3:8–9 Toward evening they heard the LORD God walking about in the garden, so they hid themselves among the trees. 9 The LORD God called to Adam, "Where are you?" 10 He replied, "I heard you, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked." NLT

▶ **We are running,**

- 1 Kings 19:11–13 "Go out and stand before me on the mountain," the LORD told him. And as Elijah stood there, the LORD passed by, and a mighty windstorm hit the mountain. It was such a terrible blast that the rocks were torn loose, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. 12 And after the earthquake there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire there was the sound of a gentle whisper. 13 When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And a voice said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" NLT

▶ **We would rather someone else hear for us,**

- Exodus 20:18–19 When the people heard the thunder and the loud blast of the ram's horn, and when they saw the flashes of lightning and the smoke billowing from the mountain, they stood at a distance, trembling with fear. 19 And they said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen. But don't let God speak directly to us, or we will die!" NLT
- Oswald Chambers – “Many don’t want to hear from God. They would rather listen to His servants than to Him

▶ **We would rather do it our own way**

- Psalm 81:11–16 "But no, my people wouldn't listen. Israel did not want me around. 12 So I let them follow their own stubborn desires, living according to their own ideas. 13 **Oh, that my people would listen to me! Oh, that Israel would follow me, walking in my paths!** 14 How quickly I would then subdue their enemies! How soon my hands would be upon their foes! 15 Those who hate the Lord would cringe before him; they would be doomed forever. 16 But I would feed you with the finest wheat. I would satisfy you with wild honey from the rock."

▶ Things to consider in Coming and Listening:

1. God created us to be in close relationship with Him.
 - John 15:13–16 There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command. 15 I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn't confide in his slaves. Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me. NLT
 - John 16:12–15 "There is so much more I want to tell you, but you can't bear it now. 13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. 14 He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me. 15 All that belongs to the Father is mine; this is why I said, 'The Spirit will tell you whatever he receives from me.'

2. **We must want to hear His Voice!**

- 1 Samuel 3:10 And the Lord came and called as before, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel replied, "Speak, your servant is listening."
- Look up the phrase "Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand!", with a concordance.
- Hebrews 5:11 There is much more we would like to say about this, but it is difficult to explain, especially since you are spiritually dull and don't seem to listen. NLT

3. Understand God communicates in many ways:

- By His Word

- Matt. 4:4 Deut. 8:3 Psalms 119:105
- God's Word brings revelation and eternal life.
- Consistent study of God's Word provides opportunity for God to speak specifically to us.

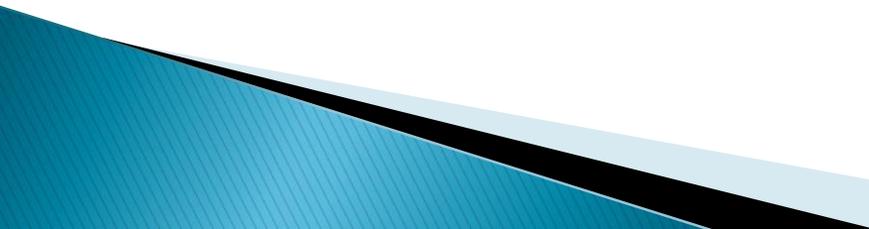
- Spirit to spirit

- Romans 8:14–17
- All communication is centered in Christ Jesus.
 - Luke 2:26 Simeon received revelation by the Spirit.
 - Acts 20:18–24 Spirit confirmed Paul's ministry.

- Through Dreams
 - Dreams were a major way God spoke to people in the O.T.
 - Notice in the birth of Jesus the use of dreams for Joseph and the Wise men.
 - Think about dreams you may have had and the impact they had or are having!

 - Through Prophetic Words or Gifts of the Spirit – 1 Corinthians 12:7–11

 - Circumstances/Situations
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- Other ways we see in scripture but not as common or familiar:
 - Visions – Daniel 7, Zechariah 4:1, Joel 2:28
 - Trance (deep sleep) – Acts 10:10
 - Audible Voice – 1 Samuel 3, Matthew 3:13, 16–17, Matthew 17:5, Acts 9
 - Angels – Luke 1:11, Acts 5:17–20, 8:26–27, 12:7, Hebrews 13:1–2
 - Nature – Psalms 19:1–4, Romans 1:20
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4. Don't Underestimate the Importance of the Renewing of Our Mind

- Romans 12:1–2 So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life — your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life — and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. 2 Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you. The Message

5. Set aside time regularly to listen!

6. The Experience of Recognizing God's Voice

- a. When thoughts recur, pray about them to discern if they may be coming from God.
- b. Keep in mind that God will *never* send you a message that contradicts the Bible's principles.
- c. God's voice carries the weight of authority within it, and expresses a spirit of peace, confidence, joy, reasonableness, and goodwill.
 - a. Peace is the Umpire for doing the will of God
- d. If you think that God may speaking to you, ask Him to confirm so as you study and meditate on the Bible, as you're alert to the circumstances you encounter, or as you experience the Holy Spirit's impressions in your mind.
- e. Share with others you trust in the discernment process.