

## HEARING FROM GOD

Taken from 40 Days of Grace by Rich Miller

Our responsibility is to trust what God says in His Word and to walk in the truth of what He has done for us and in us. However, believing the truth can sometimes be easier said than done. Satan's strategy includes "impersonating God's voice in your life;" therefore, you need to be able to discern whether what you are hearing is from God or not. What you "hear" will usually not be audible, but will take the form of impressions, sometimes very strong impressions, ideas, and thoughts. The following are some principles of contrast between how God speaks and how the devil does:

**TONE OF VOICE:** God's voice is gentle and loving, welcoming, and urging you to return to Him when you have sinned. Satan's voice, on the other hand, is accusing, nagging, and mocking. It generates fear, confusion and rejection and can even create doubt about what is right and wrong.

**THE HOLY SPIRIT IS SPECIFIC:** God urges you to confess and repent and gives you assurance of forgiveness and cleansing. The devil brings a blanketing, choking general sense of guilt and shame as though everything is wrong and there is no clear action you can take to remedy the problem. A sense of weakness and hopelessness can result.

**GOD'S STRATEGY IS ENCOURAGEMENT:** God lets you know you are loved and urges you to believe there is real hope for change. The devil's tactic is discouragement. He sends the message that you are weak, unloved, shameful, worthless and there is no hope for change.

**IN CHRIST, GUILT AND SHAME ARE REMOVED:** God restores completely. The devil will replay past memories of sin, guilt, and shame to cause you to believe that you can never really be free.

**GOD'S DESIRE IS ALWAYS TO WOO HIS CHILDREN BACK TO HIM:** He speaks with kindness, tolerance, and patience. There is always a chance for a new start and new hope. Satan wants you to believe that God is offended by your sin and that you are unworthy of His love or to come into His presence.

**THE LORD WILL DIRECT YOU TO SCRIPTURES THAT ENCOURAGE YOU:** God will remind you of His unchanging promises and steadfast love. God is faithful and forgiving. Satan uses the Law against you to press you to justify yourself in a vain attempt to rely on your own righteousness. He may also convince you that you have committed the unpardonable sin or at least get you to doubt that you have been 100 percent sincere in your confession of sin so that you will end up confessing and repenting of the same things over and over.

**GOD WANTS YOU TO BELIEVE THE FACTS OF HIS WORD NOT TO RELY ON FEELINGS:** God's promises are true even if you do not feel it. Satan wants you to rely on your feelings, not on God's Word. Sometimes our feelings of doubt, fear, self-pity, God's unfairness feel more true than what the Bible says. However, if we believe our feelings, we play right into Satan's hands. If we know the truth, we are set free (John 8: 31-32).

**GOD ALWAYS URGES US TO RETURN TO FELLOWSHIP:** God urges us to return to fellowship and communication with Himself and the body of Christ, because He knows that is where long-term joy and healing are found. Satan wants you to withdraw from other Christians. This isolation makes you not only susceptible to a deeper spiral downward into sin but also makes you vulnerable to false doctrine.

Be a student of God's Word. Memorize God's promises and pour God's truth into your life. The closer you walk with the Lord, the easier it will be to discern His voice.

Remember God wants to talk to you, and prayer is the means of communication.

This prayer may be helpful:

*Dear Heavenly Father,*

*I want to be aware of your presence in my life. I want the assurance of your presence to grow stronger and more consistent. How many times have I thought that I was just battling my own thoughts when in reality I have been wrestling against dark powers without realizing it?*

*Please give me discernment, Lord, so that I can choose Your truth and reject the devil's lies which are bombarding my brain. Thank you for exposing some of the devil's tactics so that I can wage and win spiritual war and walk free from the traps of false guilt and false shame and false view of You that the devil wants me to accept as truth.*

*Amen*