

Experiencing God — How God Speaks

Review

- **The hope for this series: stabilizing people, maturity in Christ.**
- Previous three realities: 1. God is active 2. God pursues a love relationship with us 3. God is inviting us into what He is doing

Reality 4: God speaks through...

1. God speaks by His Holy Spirit through His word, the scriptures.

- The anchor, foundation.
- It's only by knowing God's Word—His voice—do you discern His further speaking.

God has been giving revelation throughout history.

Hebrews 1:1–2 (NIV) ¹In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. [emphasis added]

Jesus taught that He was the fulfillment of the scriptures and further revelation.

- Jesus gives credit to God for what is said in the Old Testament.

Matthew 15:1–3 (NIV) ¹Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, ²“Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don’t wash their hands before they eat!” ³Jesus replied, “And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition?”

Matthew 5:17–19 (NIV) ¹⁷“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. ¹⁹Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus told the disciples that they would receive further revelation.

John 14:25–26 (NIV) ²⁵“All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NIV) ¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Peter 3:15–16 (NIV) ¹⁵Bear in mind that our Lord’s patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. ¹⁶He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.

The key to knowing God’s will/voice starts with knowing the scriptures.

1 John 4:4–6 (NIV) ⁴You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. ⁵They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. ⁶We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.

John 10:1–5 (NIV) ¹“Very truly I tell you Pharisees, anyone who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. ²The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger’s voice.”

2. God speaks through His people.

- God’s plan: go make disciples who understand the word of God and the commands.
- God uses people to deliver the gospel and the teachings.

Matthew 28:19–20 (NIV) ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Romans 10:14–15 (NIV) ¹⁴How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? ¹⁵And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

2 Timothy 2:2 (NIV) And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.

3. God speaks through prayer.

- Prayer changes us rather than God.
- We go to the Lord to pray about what He has revealed to us in His word and through people.

Matthew 6:9–10 (NIV) ⁹“This, then, is how you should pray: “ ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, ¹⁰your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”

John 15:7 (NIV) If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

4. God speaks through circumstances.

Colossians 4:3–4 (NIV) ³And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. ⁴Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.

Psalms 37:4–5 (NIV) ⁴Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. ⁵Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this:

Questions to ponder and discuss at home and in your life group:

Complementary passages: Isaiah 55:8-11

1. What has God revealed about Himself, His purposes, and His ways? (What is He like, what is He doing, how does He go about doing it?)
2. How do you regularly create time to listen to God—through His word? In prayer? With other believers? How has silence been a part of hearing God for you?
3. How do you respond when you feel convicted about something while reading the Bible?
4. What seemingly ordinary circumstances could God be using to direct your life?