

True Disciple #21 – Hearing God

Welcome to True Disciple #21. This is Rod Nichols and once again I want to commend you for continuing on your path to becoming a true disciple. Remember that true disciples are people of action, not just study. True disciples hear from God and then do what God says and that's the topic of this week's message – Hearing from God.

I remember when I was early in my walk with the Lord and I would hear people talk about hearing from God. I wondered what that was like. Were they hearing a booming voice from heaven or did He show up and speak with them? Now that I've walked with the Lord for over 20 years, I know how God speaks and that He expects us to be listening.

I love the last part of Isaiah 50:4, "He (God) awakens me morning by morning, He awakens my ear to hear as the learned." Every day God awakens our ear to hear Him. Now, the scripture is not talking about the ears on either side of our head. Those ears can't hear the voice of God, because they are flesh. Rather God is talking about your spiritual ear. You see, your spirit has an ear to hear God.

The scripture tells us that Jesus grew in wisdom and stature. In other words, He learned to hear the Father, which resulted in wisdom. In John 12:49 Jesus says, "For I did not speak on my own, but the Father who sent me commanded me to say all that I have spoken." Jesus heard what Father God was saying and then repeated it to His disciples and the crowds who listened to His teaching.

In John 10:3-5, Jesus tells a parable/story about a shepherd (who is Jesus) and some sheep, "The gatekeeper opens the gate for him (shepherd) and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him, because they know his voice."

In this parable Jesus was teaching those who had an ear to hear that He was the shepherd and they were to recognize and follow His voice. Sheep that follow the shepherd are kept safe, whereas those who wander off after other voices end up in trouble.

So, how do we learn to recognize and hear God's voice?

1. **Meditate in the Word of God** – The Bible is not just a book. It is the living Word of God. In the first book of John, he refers to Jesus as the Word. So, we could easily say that the Bible is the Word of Jesus. Whether Old Testament or New, Jesus, the Son of God was speaking to men, who wrote what they heard. When you read the Bible, imagine that Jesus is sitting with and speaking to you. The more you meditate in the Word, the easier it is to recognize and hear God's voice.
2. **Prayer** – When we pray, we're having a conversation with God. Now, if you are like me, I often feel like the conversation is pretty one-sided with me doing all the talking. That's the problem. Like any good conversation, we talk and then let God respond. Now, it won't be a conversation like you might have with another person, but if you are quiet, you will hear the still small voice of God inside your spirit. Thoughts will arise and when they do, make sure that it's the voice of the Lord and not your inner voice or the voice of a stranger. God's thoughts will always line up with His Word and His goodness. They will never condemn and will always be delivered in love.
3. **Other People** – God will use your Pastor, church leaders, special speakers, friends, and family members to speak with you. We must be ready to listen with our spiritual ear, which goes beyond the words that are coming out of their mouth. Listen for the Spirit message that accompanies the physical message.
4. **Circumstances** – God will use things in life to speak to you. You may have made a bad decision and are heading down the wrong road. In Numbers 22:21-39, we see this happen to Balaam. He made a wrong decision and was heading down the wrong road on his donkey, when an angel showed up. Balaam was not following the Lord, so he could not see or hear the angel, but his donkey could. The donkey kept moving away from the angel, who was going to kill Balaam. When Balaam got angry at the donkey, God spoke through him and then Balaam was able to see and hear the angel. When something doesn't seem right, it's time to get quiet and seek the Lord's voice.

God is speaking all the time, we just aren't listening. As true disciples, it's critical that we hear the Lord, so we can follow Him. He will lead us to those who are in need of help or are ready to hear the good news of salvation.

One of my favorite stories of hearing from God was about a man driving home from work. He had been pressing into God in the Word and prayer and as he was driving felt impressed to stop and get a gallon of milk. He knew that they didn't need milk, but sensed it was the Lord speaking, so he bought the milk. Then he let the Lord lead him on multiple turns, until he ended up in front of a house. He knocked on the door and a young woman with a screaming child answered the door. He said, I believe God sent me to deliver this milk, do you need it. The woman broke into tears and said, "yes, I've been praying that God would provide some milk for my child and He sent you."

Now, that's a true disciple and he wasn't any more special than you are. If you will start listening, God will do the same for you. Plus, He will give you wisdom to make good decisions in life, excel in your job or business, be an exceptional husband/wife and parent, and serve in the body of Christ and out in the world.

God's talking, are you listening?

That's it for message #21. If you've missed any of the other messages, you can always find them at www.TrueDisciple.Info and click on the green Weekly Messages button under the current message on the front page. As with all of these messages, I hope you will be a doer of the Word and not a hearer only. Listen for God's voice and then follow Him into the world as a true disciple.

Have a great week and may God abundantly bless every aspect of your life!