

Being, Not Doing

Learning To Hear And Follow Jesus

Does God Speak To Us Today?

- Over the years there have been many books that profess to teach us How to Know the Will of God.
- Some speak of formulas, or mystical ideas or are “me” centered while others imply God doesn’t speak except in the general moral commands given in the scriptures
- BUT, if we say we are in a “personal relationship” with God, does not that mean there must be meaningful 2 way communication?
- In spite of the challenges, we cannot abandon our faith in our ability to hear from God!

3 Problem Areas In Hearing God

1. **God's communication comes in many forms**
 - Heb. 1:1 – God spoke
 - What forms of communication are in keeping with the kind of relationship God wants to have with His people?
2. **We may have wrong motives in wanting to hear from God**
 - Many seek to hear from God solely as a device for obtaining their own safety, comfort and sense of being righteous. (D. Willard)
3. **Misunderstanding the nature of God and His purpose for us blocks His communication with us – Be or Do?**

A Conversational Relationship With God

- “The development of character, rather than direction for this or that, must be the primary purpose of the Father.”
(E. Stanley Jones)
- “Our failure to hear God has its deepest roots in a failure to understand, accept and grow into a conversational relationship with God, the sort of relationship suited to friends who are mature personalities in a shared enterprise, no matter how different they may be in other respects.”
- Heb.1:2 – but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son.

A Conversational Relationship With God

- John 10:2-4, 27; He calls His sheep by name, they know His voice and they follow Him
- John 14:21-24 – Out of a love relationship with God, He MANIFESTS Himself to us and we will know what to do
- Matt. 25:14-30 – The first 2 servants served out of relationship with the master, doing their best for the master with what they had received.
- The 3rd servant said, 25 “Here you have what is yours” duty
- Much of seeking the will of God is to do “duty”
- A conversational relationship with God is similar to that of a husband and wife

An Invitation To Relationship With God

- Matt.22:34-40 – “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind... Love your neighbor as yourself.”
- This was Jesus’ summary of the 365 laws of the OT.
- John 13:34,35 - “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you are to love one another. By this will all people know you are my disciples.
- John 14:12-15 - Do what I do...Keep my commandments. What were Jesus’ commandments?

What Does A Conversational Relationship With Jesus Look Like?

- Heb.1:3 – Jesus is “the exact imprint of God’s nature”
- Matt.5:1-12- The Be Attitudes are more values than actions
- Matt.15:10-20 – Out of the heart comes evil thoughts, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person!
- Matt.5:21-37 – It’s the thought that makes us guilty!
- 5:38-48 – Do acts of Love to undeserving people, not gain rewards, but because it is what Jesus would do in reflecting the character and love of God to an undeserving world!

What Does A Conversational Relationship With Jesus Look Like?

- Matt.6:1-18 – Religious activity is done out of the love relationship with the Heavenly Father, not for the praise of people!
- Matt.6:19-34 – Are we driven by self reliance and money or by reflecting the character of Jesus? Matt.8:20
- I don't care what my grandchildren do when they are playing, as long as they are being loving and considerate of others.
- In a close marriage relationship, a lot of things don't need to be said and many questions don't need to be asked

What Does A Conversational Relationship With Jesus Look Like?

- **1 John 4:7-12** – Let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves is born of God and knows God... If God so loved us, we also ought to love one another...if we love one another, God abides in us and His love is perfected in us.
- **Ps.16:11** – You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forever more.
- **God speaks by the Holy Spirit through the Bible, Prayer, church and circumstances to reveal Himself, His Purposes and His ways. (Blackaby)**

Developing A Conversational Relationship With Jesus

- It begins by learning to Love God with all of our being.
- With people, a love relationship develops by spending time together, learning what makes the other person tick.
- It grows by spending time reading or listening to the Bible to understand what makes God tick.
- It flourishes by loving people as God loves people.
- Learn to discern what is of God and what is of the flesh.
Heb.5:14 – through practice, discern good from evil

Key Points To Remember

1. Our prayer life with God should be more concerned about who we are than what we do!
2. Religious activity done in the flesh is repulsive to both God and people.
3. The majority of God's will for us is revealed in Bible as loving people as Jesus loves people.
4. Immersing yourself in God's word is the key to knowing what God would have us do.
5. When we love our neighbor as Jesus wants us to, other opportunities will develop to act as Jesus would