

How To Hear God's Voice Clearly

by Beth Jones

Several years ago, we lived out in the country, and our friends had a little girl who was our daughter Leah's age. They enjoyed playing together each week, and Leah especially loved going to their farm in another rural city where they had all sorts of farm animals.

One day as a gift, the father offered to give Leah a baby lamb of her very own for her to raise until winter. We only had experience with cats, dogs, birds, and one flying squirrel (that's another story!), so we were all so excited about this. I thought this would make a GREAT homeschooling science project, too!

The father brought the baby lamb to our house, and even built a small pen for her in our back yard. Leah named her "Bambi," and every day she couldn't wait to go outside and play with her new little lamb. Everywhere that Leah went, the lamb was sure to go! She fed the lamb with a baby bottle full of milk, and Bambi would greedily suck every sweet drop.

As Leah walked around the yard, the lamb would skip, run, leap into the air, and bleat, making Leah laugh so much. Soon the lamb began to recognize Leah's voice, and she would follow only her – even if Ray or I spoke to Bambi and tried to get her to follow us with a bottle of milk! She now was trained to hear her shepherd's voice (shepherdess)!

This is the way it is with God and us. Jesus said in John 10:27, "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal

life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.”
If we are God’s sheep, we will hear His voice.

But I don’t know how to hear His voice!

Let’s face it. Sometimes it’s hard to hear God’s voice. We question ourselves and think, “Was that really God?” None of us wants to miss God.

The first requirement for hearing God’s voice clearly is that you are saved. If you are not, please take a minute right now to receive Him as your Lord and Savior. Jesus died on the cross so that you and I could spend eternity with God forever.

Just pray this simple prayer of faith: “Lord God, I believe that you sent Jesus to die on the cross for me over 2,000 years ago. By faith I believe that He died so that I could be restored to God and live with Him forever. I believe that Jesus’ blood washes away all my sins – past, present and future. I want to live for you, God. Please come to live inside of me and make me brand new. Help me to obey Your word and to grow closer to You each day through reading the Bible, worship, fellowship with other believers, and obedience to Your word. I give my life to You, God. Let Your will be done in my life and let me fulfill my destiny in You. I am now Yours. In Jesus’ name I pray, amen.”

If you are a born-again Christian, and you’re still not sure of what God’s voice sounds like, here are some practical ways you can learn how to listen to Him, to be sure it’s Him:

Read and study the Bible. If you are a new Christian, it takes time to learn to recognize God's voice. God has a still, small voice. (1 Kings 19:12) It's often a faint impression – the same one that led you to go forward to the altar to be saved, to respond at that Christian concert to give your life to Christ, or to pray in the privacy of your bedroom that night.

Sometimes God's voice can sound very much like your own voice, what you thought was your "conscience." One of the best ways you can train your ear to hear God's voice is to read and study the Bible. God can not lie, and He will never violate His own word. (Titus 1:2) Psalm 119:129-130 says, "Your testimonies are wonderful; therefore my soul keeps them. The entrance of Your words gives light; It gives understanding to the simple."

Pull away each day with God to pray. We live such busy, hectic lives, filled with hard work, distractions, and so much noise every day. It's so important that we set aside time every day to spend with God to hear His voice, to be still and silent before Him.

Just soak. Enjoy His awesome, loving presence. You don't have to say anything; God just wants to be with you. He is your very Best Friend. Listen to Him. Let His love wash over you. Let Him tell you how much He loves you. He will speak great and mighty things to you in the secret place of prayer as you call to Him. (Jeremiah 33:3)

God's voice will give you peace. Author and speaker Joyce Meyer says, "Let peace be your umpire." God's voice will always be accompanied by an inner peace. If you hear a voice that leaves you feeling judged, condemned, rejected, scared, confused, angry, etc., then it is not God. Jesus promised us His peace when He ascended to heaven. John 14:27 (NLT) says, "I am

leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid.”

His Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth. If you are a born-again Christian, the Holy Spirit came to live inside of you when you were saved and has sealed you for the day of redemption. (2 Corinthians 1:22) The Bible says that the anointing which abides in you from the Holy Spirit will guide you and teach you all things. (1 John 2:27) God's Holy Spirit will speak quietly to you and will guide you each day as you yield to Him. Be led daily by His Spirit, crucifying the deeds of the flesh. Cultivate the fruit of the Spirit in your life:

“But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives.” (Galatians 5:22-25, NLT)

Repent of sin. Any hidden, unconfessed sin in our lives will keep us from clearly hearing the voice of God. Sin blocks our ability to obey and receive from God. It puts up a wall between us and Him. King David should have immediately confessed his sin of lust, seeing Bathseba bathing on the rooftop. If he had just admitted his struggle to God or another man, it may have prevented him from committing adultery with her and then having her husband Uriah killed in battle. (2 Samuel 11-12)

But there is hope for us when we do struggle with sin. Jesus Christ died so that He could build a bridge between us and God, so we could be forgiven

and be able to have an intimate relationship with God for all of eternity. If you know of any sin in your life, just tell God and repent. "Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and forget not all His benefits, who forgives all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from destruction."

(Psalm 103:2-4)

If you ask God to forgive you and turn away from your sin, He will forgive you. You will then be able to hear His voice with much more clarity.

Release any unforgiveness or bitterness. It is extremely hard for us to hear God's voice when we are harboring unforgiveness or bitterness in our hearts. Think how hard it is to listen to your husband or wife when you are angry at them and are holding a grudge. It is the same way in our relationship with God; any unforgiveness or bitterness puts a barrier between our ear and His mouth! Our unforgiveness also turns US over to the torturers!

(Matthew 18:23-25)

Joyce Meyer says that our fellowship with God will flow freely if we are walking in love and forgiveness, but it is blocked when we have unforgiveness in our hearts.

<http://www.joycemeyer.org/OurMinistries/EverydayAnswers/Articles/art48.htm>

To have that overflow of God's presence and anointing in our lives, to hear Him crystal-clear and to obey His voice, we need to walk in forgiveness and agape love.

Obey God. Obviously if we are not obeying God, and are just running around doing our own thing, being rebellious and thumbing our nose at

God, He is not going to bless us. And it will become harder and harder to hear His voice when we are in deliberate sin and disobedience.

When we obey God, though, it helps us to walk in the “anointing of ease.” Life flows much more smoothly. We feel His pleasure, His smile upon our lives. We will be able to respond to God quickly because we are hearing His voice clearly and are walking in His perfect will.

Jesus said in the garden of Gethsemane in Luke 22:42 (The Message), “He pulled away from them about a stone's throw, knelt down, and prayed, “Father, remove this cup from me. But please, not what I want. What do you want?”

As we continually deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Jesus, we will be able to recognize His voice much more quickly and to say yes to God.

Seek wise counselors. We are not always smart enough to figure everything out on our own! Sometimes we need advice from others who are older, wiser, more godly and more mature than us.

For example, if a couple senses that God is preparing them for the mission field full-time, but it means that they will have to give up the husband's regular paycheck every two weeks at his present job and now will have to rely on fund-raising and others' support, this is a BIG decision that can affect their entire family - especially if they have children. They need to seek the Lord, His word, and godly counsel and confirmation for the final decision and the right timing.

Proverbs 24:6 (Amplified) says, “For by wise counsel you can wage your war, and in an abundance of counselors there is victory and safety.”

Rest assured, dear friend, that God will never lead you astray! He wants to bless you, guide you, and help you. If you pray to Him, He will answer. (Psalm 66:19) As you hunger for His presence, He will fill you. You will come to know your Shepherd's voice, just as Bambi the little lamb knew our daughter Leah's voice and followed her wherever she went.

As you continue to walk with God on this journey called life as Enoch did (Genesis 5:24), using these practical tips listed above, you will learn to distinguish God's voice from all others. You will KNOW His voice, for you are His sheep. And you will come to love it more than any other's.



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www.bethjones.net

elizabethdjones@gmail.com

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