



Harvest Warriors **NEWSLETTER**



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Warring to Harvest

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God

wants to
TALK
to **You**

If you are a servant of Jesus Christ, do you know that God Himself wants to talk to you? God desires fellowship with His people. The word “fellowship,” means a “sharing, unity, close association, partnership, participation, a communion.” All these things involves communication! Communication means talking.

“ . . . that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.” 1 John 1:3

The Bible is clear, God desires to talk with us, to communicate with us. What an incredible and precious privilege this is!

The Apostle Paul wrote:

“Now the Spirit expressly says that . . . “ 1 Timothy 4:1

And in Hebrews, God Himself says:

“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying ‘Know the Lord,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them.” Hebrews 8:10-11

From all these scriptures it is clear that God speaks directly to His people. It is His desire for His people to get to know Him and to “hear His voice.” This is

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”

—John 10:27

not just a promise for the days of the early church when the Canon of the Bible was being written, it is for us today. **“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.” (Hebrews 13:8)** It is God’s desire to speak to each one of us individually and personally!

But, how can we learn to “hear” God speaking to us? Is it actually possible for a human being to literally “hear” God’s voice? The scripture says it is, that’s good enough for me. God’s Word does not lie.

Many people struggle with this issue. I have had countless requests from people asking that I teach them how to learn to “hear” God’s voice. That is why I am writing this newsletter. When I first entered into a close walk with the Lord, this was one of the biggest struggles of my life. I read so many books, and heard so many people talk about “hearing” the Lord. “The Lord said this, and the Lord said that.” But I wasn’t hearing Him say anything! And no one could tell me how to get started. Finally, I did what I should have done in the very beginning:

I asked the Holy Spirit to teach me Himself.

I want to share with you the quickest way to learn to “hear” the Lord’s voice, and some of the struggles you will have along the way.

There are many ways that God communicates with us. You will notice that I always put the word “hear” in italics. That is because I am not referring to a literal audible voice. Very few people ever hear the Lord speak to them in an audible voice that they can hear with their physical ears. Some do, but not very many, and certainly not very often.

What are some of the other ways God speaks to us?

God speaks through His Word, the Bible. God’s Word, the Bible, is described as being “living and active.” (Hebrews 4:12) Many times God will speak to someone through His word. How does He do that? As the person is reading and studying the Bible, a particular section or verse will suddenly jump out at him. He will become aware of the verse, and have a new understanding of it that he never had before. Many times, he will just “know” without any doubt that God is giving him that verse for instruction, or for a promise. This is the Holy Spirit giving that person the sudden

awareness of the verse. The Holy Spirit works through our mind.

Sometimes God will speak through another person. However, this is rare. This is called exercising the gifts of “word of knowledge,” or “prophecy.” The scripture I quoted in Hebrews makes it clear that God does not desire to speak to His people in this way on a regular basis. He prefers to speak to each one of us individually. Unfortunately, we have a large portion of the current Christians running around seeking a “word from the Lord” from various self-proclaimed “prophets,” because they cannot hear from the Lord for themselves. Sadly, too many of these “words” are not from God at all, but are from the flesh of the person giving the word. Look around you. The many

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popular prophets of today almost never give anyone a word of correction. Instead they always tell everyone that “God has a BIG ministry for them,” or that “they are going to become very rich so that they can sew into the kingdom of God.” Their words minister to the flesh of the people receiving them, not as the two-edged sword described in Hebrews 4:12. I strongly recommend you read a book by John Bevere

called Thus Saith The Lord. In it he helps you sort out what prophecies are from God and which ones are from the flesh.

IF God chooses to speak to you through someone else, usually it is to bring confirmation about something He has already been saying to you, or to bring to your attention something that you would not be able to hear directly from Him because it is not to your liking, or is completely outside anything you can think about or imagine. God does not speak to you through another person either frequently or regularly. If this is going on in your life, I challenge you to turn away and learn to “hear” God’s voice for yourself.

God speaks to us directly. The Holy Spirit will speak to your spirit, and then the words will be placed into your brain as a thought. This is the normal and most frequent way that God speaks to His people. This is why, in Hebrews, God said that He would write His laws on the minds and hearts of His people. God communicates directly to our minds and hearts.

What is the difference between our “minds” and

“hearts?” We think with our mind, and we feel and desire with our heart. For example: look at someone who is involved in all sorts of worldly things, drinking, partying, etc. When that person accepts Jesus, all at once he no longer desires to do the things that once meant so much to him. Why? Because God has changed his heart. Once his heart is changed, he no longer desires the things he once did. Now he desires the things of God.

When God speaks to our minds, sometimes it is in the form of a clear thought with definite words, sometimes it is simply a new understanding of something that we did not understand before, sometimes it is a strong “impression” of something.

The problem is that there is more than one source of thoughts in our mind. We generate our own thoughts, God can put thoughts into our minds, and demons can too. Paul makes this very clear:

“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing [thought] that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:4-5

We see from this scripture that spiritual warfare is mostly fought in our minds. It is absolutely necessary that we control our thoughts and discern where they come from — us, God, or demon spirits.

Sound confusing? Sometimes it is. But the Lord enables us to sort it all out. Demonic thoughts usually tempt us to sin or discourage us. God NEVER tempts us to sin. Our sinful desires can tempt us as well, but we can also fight against these temptations in our mind. However, demonic thoughts ALWAYS try to bring us into sin, or turn us away from God. This is why we receive such strong instruction in Romans 12:2:

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” Romans 12:2

How do we renew our minds? By intensive study of God’s Word, through praise and worship, and meditation on and memorization of God’s Word. King David recognized this:

**“How can a young man cleanse his way?
By taking heed according to Your word . . .
Your word I have hidden in my heart,
That I might not sin against You.” Psalm 119:9 & 11**

Why am I writing so much about our minds? Because our mind is the place where God speaks to us, so we must have it cleaned up and transformed so that God can use it for this purpose.

O.K. so how, exactly, can you learn to actually recognize when God is speaking to your mind? There is one good way that I have found to be the quickest.

We need to understand that our natural mind does not dwell on or think about God’s word, or the things of God, unless we discipline it to do so. (1 Corinthians 2:14) Therefore, the best way to learn to “hear” God’s voice is as follows:

Step 1: Memorize scripture verses that uplift and glorify Jesus Christ.

Step 2: Ask the Holy Spirit to act. Ask Him to bring those verses that you have memorized into your conscious thought during the day when you are busy thinking about something else, such as your work.

You see, when you are busy thinking about something else, such as your work, your natural mind will not choose to think about scripture verses. The only way you will think about them is if you make a conscious decision to do so. But if you are busy thinking about something else, and suddenly you realize that a scripture verse is running through your mind, it can only be placed there by one source — the Holy Spirit.

The more scripture verses you memorize, the more the Holy Spirit will have to bring into your conscious thought. He is capable of over-riding your busy mind to put a scripture verse into it. Demon spirits will not

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want to place a verse into your mind that uplifts and glorifies Jesus. Your natural mind won't do it either, unless you stop and make the decision to think about the verse. This is the quickest way to learn to recognize when the Holy Spirit is speaking to you.

As you do this, God will then bring other thoughts to your mind. Usually, it will be something corrective. God will bring to your attention something in your life that is not pleasing to Him. The quicker you obey to get rid of that thing, the quicker He will speak to you again. In my own life, the Lord used the issue of the seat belt in my car to teach me to "hear" Him. At that point in my life, I hated wearing a seat belt! In fact, I had so conditioned my mind that I would never even think about fastening it when I got into my car. As I continually asked the Holy Spirit to teach me to hear His voice, He used my seat belt. Sometimes, when I got into my car, He would speak to me, telling me to fasten my seat belt. I know that had to be the Lord, because I certainly would never have thought about it. If I obeyed, the Lord would speak to me again fairly quickly about something else. If I did not obey, I wouldn't hear from Him again for a number of days. God did not always tell me to fasten my seat belt when I first got into my car. Sometimes He would wait until I was on the road to some time, then tell me. Why? Because God never gets into a routine, and He won't allow us to get dependant on a routine either.

Let's talk about the issue of Scripture memory for a moment. This is very difficult for most people to do. I want to give you an easy and painless way to memorize scripture. It is vitally important that each one of us memorize scripture, so here is an easy way.

Think about your normal day. Most of us have at least one time of day when we have to do something that doesn't require much brainwork. For us ladies, perhaps it is washing dishes, or doing our hair. For you men, perhaps it is shaving, or commuting to work. Each of you will have at least one time of several minutes of relatively brainless activity each day. Use that time for scripture memory.

Get some 3 X 5 inch cards. Start on week one by writing on one card a verse or perhaps a section of two or

three verses. Write the reference, then the verse, then the reference. Like this:

John 3:16

"For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

John 3:16

Look at your card, and say the reference, then the verse, then the reference, over and over again, out loud, until you can say it through 3 times perfectly without looking at the card. This won't take you very long. On day two, do the same thing, also day three, four, etc.

On week two, add a second card and a second verse. Start out with saying the first verse through three times out loud, then go on to learn the second verse. Always say the reference before and after the verse. On week three, add a third card, and so on. If you will say a

scripture verse through three times each day for three months, it will be locked into your brain forever. At the end of three months, you can begin to drop off the first verses as you continue to add verses to your memory. You will be amazed how faithfully memorizing scripture will change your life and your relationship with God!

Here are a couple of pitfalls to avoid. Always memorize from one version of the bible only. If you try to memorize from more than one version, you will become very confused. Never memorize two verses, or sections of scripture in a row from the same book of the bible. It is too easy to get the references mixed up in your memory. Memorize from different books each week. For example, memorize from Luke the first week, from John the second week, from Corinthians the third week. Then if you want to go back to Luke on the fourth week that's fine.

Will I always hear from God Clearly?

Unfortunately, the answer to this question is a resounding "NO." As long as we live in this flesh and blood body affected by sin, we will many times have a struggle to hear from the Lord. You will never reach the place

The quicker you obey to get rid of that thing, the quicker He will speak to you again.

where you will always hear from God clearly and without mistake. Unfortunately, too many Christian leaders make it sound like they never have a struggle to hear from God. That is simply false. Everyone does, even the Apostle Paul sometimes had difficulties. He described this as follows:

“For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.” 1 Corinthians 13:12

What Paul is saying here, is that as long as we are in these bodies of flesh, we see the Lord “as through a glass darkly.” It is like looking through a glass that has been darkened so that we cannot see things through it clearly. Now we know the Lord only partly, but in that wonderful day when we arrive in heaven, then we shall know the Lord as clearly as He knows us now.

Sometimes the Lord will speak to us so clearly that there will not be any doubts in our minds at all. But more frequently, we will struggle. We will have to seek and pray for clarity. Sometimes we will wonder, did that thought come from me? Did it come from a demon? Or did it come from God? Always, when you are in a situation such as this, stop and take the time to pray and ask God to bring along some kind of confirmation. He will do so eventually, IF the thought was from Him. You cannot set either a time or conditions

for His answer. Remember, god is God! You do not control Him in any way.

Do NOT fall into the trap of assuming all your thoughts are from God. All too often we are lead astray by our own desires, thinking that God is speaking when it is actually only our desires speaking.

Remember God says:

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the Lord. ‘For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.’” Isaiah 55:8-9

This is why it is so important to know God’s Word.

God will never tell you anything that goes against His Word. How many times have I had someone tell me that God “told them they were supposed to marry someone,” when they were currently already married to someone else! God would NEVER say such a thing. They are simply accepting their own sinful desires as being from God.

How can I keep from being deceived?

The answer is that you cannot always keep from being deceived. Sometimes you will make mistakes, and sometimes you will be deceived. Sometimes you will think God told you something when He did NOT.

NEVER think you have reached a place where you cannot be deceived!

Sometimes the Lord will speak to us so clearly that there will not be any doubts in our minds at all. But more frequently, we will struggle. We will have to seek and pray for clarity.

Why would God allow us to be deceived? He does not desire for us to be deceived, but if we do not stay humble and dependent upon Him, then this is the best tool He has to humble us. We must always search out everything. Every time we think God has spoken to us, we must measure it against His written Word. We must continually be humble and ask the Lord to keep us from being deceived and making mistakes.

I once had a brother tell me that he thought God told him something, only to find out later that it could not have been from God. He said to me, “It just isn’t worth it! I don’t ever want God to speak to me again is I am vulnerable to making a mistake!”

Look, we are human, and sinful. We will sometimes make mistakes – and big ones. But hearing from God is the most precious thing a human being can ever receive. Yes, we will have struggles. Yes, sometimes we will think we are hearing from God and make big errors as a result. But we CAN trust that God’s Word is sure:

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.” Romans 8:28

God honors the desires of our hearts! As long as we

desire to walk pleasing to Him, He will work everything out, even out biggest mistakes.

If we stray out of God's will, as long as we remain humble and teachable, God will eventually bring us back to where we should be.

Satan will ALWAYS try to attack your personal relationship and communication with God. Do not ever let him stop you from seeking to "hear" God's voice.

Do I need to blank my mind to hear?

Absolutely not! Never think that you need to clear your mind, or blank your mind to hear from God. That is why God commands us to take every thought captive. We are to be in control of our thoughts at all times. If you blank your mind, you have just opened a door for demon spirits to enter in and take control. This is the very basis for all forms of occultic meditation. There is a big difference between occultic meditation, and Christian meditation. Christian meditation is ACTIVE. You are actively thinking about God and His Word. The Holy Spirit is perfectly capable of over-riding our active minds to speak to us.

Can you set the stage, so to speak, to hear from God? Yes, you can, through prayer and contemplation of God's Word. That is why we should set aside some time each day when we get by ourselves with nothing to distract us, to read our Bible and pray. Often God will speak to us by ourselves with nothing to distract us, to read our Bible and pray. Often God will speak to us during these times, but not always. God can, and will, speak to you any time of the day. Do not be disappointed if God does not always speak to you during your quiet time. In fact, He may not speak to you every day. Remember, He will never allow you to get dependant on a routine.

What about when I am in a crisis?

When we human beings get into a crisis situation where we are under tremendous emotional stress, it is very

difficult for us to hear from God. In fact, people rarely hear accurately from God when their emotions are extreme. I'm not sure exactly why that is, but I think it is because our flesh is so stirred up at those times that it is very difficult for the Holy Spirit to break through our emotions. That is why it is so vitally important to be in a covenant relationship with God. If you have not done so, please read my book Standing On The Rock. God wants to prepare you ahead of time for the times of crises. He wants to make covenants with you that you can stand on during those times of intense emotions, because He knows that it is so difficult to speak to you then. If you have a covenant to stand on, you will already know God's will in the time of stress and will not have the desperate need to hear from Him. God understands our emotions through and through, and wants to prepare us for them.

Satan will ALWAYS try to attack your personal relationship and communication with God. Do not ever let him stop you from seeking to "hear" God's voice.

We serve a wonderful God. The most precious thing anyone can have is a direct personal relationship with God. However, it takes work, patience, and persistence. You will not learn to hear God overnight. Just as in any relationship, it takes time to get to know God and recognize His voice. You have to work, and seek, and pray. But, it is well worth the effort.

We always have to operate in faith.

The scripture tells us it is impossible to please God without faith. As we grow in learning to hear God's voice, each step is a step in faith. I well remember the time several years ago when Daniel and I had just purchased our valley. The Lord spoke to Daniel and told him to contract to have a certain amount of work done in the valley, and our first building built. This came to several thousand dollars, which we did not have. The Lord told Daniel to sign the contract, that He would provide. So Daniel did.

It was not until several days later, when we were traveling to a speaking engagement that Daniel told me about signing the contract. "The driveway will be in

and the building built by the time we get back,” he told me. Then he mentioned the amount all of it would cost. I about fainted! “Daniel!” I exclaimed, “This speaking engagement is at a church of only 35 people!” I have never seen Daniel turn so pale. He started to stutter. Finally he said, “Well God said that He would provide, He didn’t say that the love offerings at the speaking engagement would provide.” All I could say was, “I sure hope you heard right.”

We were gone a total of two weeks. Daniel struggled all those two weeks. Had he really heard from God or not? We did three different speaking engagements during those two weeks. None of them were big. We never counted the love offerings, we were afraid to. We simply put them in a briefcase and left them there. When we arrived home, our driveway and building were built, and the bill was waiting for us. In fear and trembling, we finally got out the briefcase and began to count the money. I’ve never seen so many one-dollar bills in my life!

I KNOW the Lord multiplied the money in that brief

case, because in the end we had just enough to pay the construction bill plus all our other living expenses for that month! But, if Daniel had never taken that step in faith that God had indeed spoken to him, we would never have accomplished the building of this valley. In fact, every step we have taken had been a step in faith. Faith means taking risks! God will test you. He will command you to do something, and then He won’t

make the provision until you have stepped out in faith to obey Him. This has certainly been true in our lives. Hearing from God ALWAYS involves faith. You have to have faith that God did indeed speak to you. Many times you have to act in faith. Remember, God values our faith more than fine gold. He is constantly testing it and growing it. He has tested us repeatedly, and I am sure He will continue to do so. God has to develop our faith and ability to hear Him so that we can walk successfully through the difficulties we face in the coming last days prior to His return. He doesn’t always answer you in the way you

expect, nor in the time period you want. But His word is sure.

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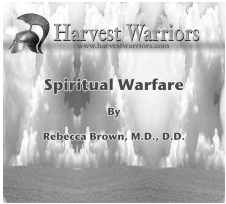
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