

Did God Speak to Your Heart?

Joe Slater

How do you know what God expects of you? For you to know His will, God would have to communicate with you, wouldn't He? So the logical question is, "How does God communicate with us today?"

In the past, God spoke "at various times and in different ways" (Hebrews 1:1). He spoke through angels, visions, prophets, etc. But does He still use those means today? While some sincere religious people think God speaks directly to them, the Bible teaches that God's communication with us today is limited to His written word (i.e. the Bible).

God "has in these last days spoken to us by His Son" (Hebrews 1:2). Jesus said His word will be the standard by which people will be judged at the last day (John 12:48). The apostles of Christ and certain other Christians in the first few decades of the church's existence were supernaturally guided by the Holy Spirit to reveal, confirm, and record the complete will of Jesus Christ (John 14:26; 15:13). Paul even said, "If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 14:37). Since the apostles were guided into "all truth," how much truth does that leave to be revealed today? (Hint: "None!")

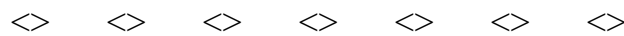
Still, some are claiming that God speaks directly to them. "The Lord spoke to my heart . . ." is an oft-heard refrain. Several things beg for answers. First, if the Lord really speaks to your heart, then you ought to write down what He says so the rest of us can benefit from it. We would be obligated to accept what you write as Holy Scripture. (If not, why not?)

Second, what does the Lord tell these folks that isn't already in His word? And if it is in His word (the Bible), then why does He need to speak those same things to someone's heart?

Third, we can hardly help but notice that, as often as not, the people who claim God speaks directly to them are not in agreement with each other. Does God "speak" one thing to one person and something contradictory to the next person? No, God is not a God of confusion (1 Corinthians 14:33).

But wait! Wouldn't it be more "spiritual" to hear directly from God rather than hearing Him through His written word? No, indeed! The rich man in torment thought his surviving brothers would listen to miraculous communication, so he pleaded that Lazarus might return from the grave to warn them. But Abraham told him, "If they do not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead" (Luke 16:31).

Relying solely on the written word is not unspiritual. To the contrary, it is unspiritual to refuse to heed the written word, demanding something additional.



WHY WOMEN TALK MORE

A study demonstrated that women talk twice as much as men do. Men use about 15,000 words per day, while women use 30,000.

A husband showed the study to his wife. She told him women speak twice as many words as men because wives have to repeat everything.

He said, "What?"

via Preacher Talk

Low Places Don't Rule

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

Habakkuk had numerous low points in his work as a prophet of God. Many of them came from not understanding God. He struggled with what he thought was contrary to God's holiness. But he concludes his book on a high point. *"The Lord God is my strength, and He has made my feet like hinds' feet, and makes me walk on my high places"* (Habakkuk 3:19). His low places did not rule his life.

We all experience our own individual low places, and we all have our individual high places. When we are in one of those low places in life, we trust in the heart of God. God will lift us up onto high places. Walking by faith trusts God's motives as well. I believe that those low places are never supposed to work against the believer.

Circumstances arise that plunge us into the valley of despair. Sometimes those circumstances are self-orchestrated. The less the amount of time I am in one of those low places, the better I like it. But even in the low places, I know that God's purpose for me is right, regardless of what my mind sometimes wants to tell me.

Even when we suffer from self-inflicted pain we need to realize that God is still overseeing in our lives. He has a good desire to bring us to Himself, to draw us to Himself. Whether the circumstances change or not, we serve a God Who loves us and has proven it beyond any event or circumstance that might cause us to doubt.

Remember, never let the low places rule your life.

--Dennis Russell (Santa Maria, CA)