

Be Still And Know That I AM God

Shortly after repenting of my sins and making Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior (i.e., becoming born again), a man from the church I was attending spoke a message to me one night. I was in my car, ready to leave the parking lot, when he approached me, motioning for me to roll down the window. When I did, he said, “Be still and know that I am God.”

I didn't take much thought to his words at the time, but I wish now that I would have prayed on the scripture that he quoted and asked the Lord what it meant. It wasn't until many years later, when God spoke this message to me again as I read it in the Bible, that I finally understood the depth of what He was instructing me.

For much of my Christian life, I'd been hit or miss (and most of the time, miss!) when attempting to hear God's voice. In fact, I longed to be “led by the Spirit” as others, who were clearly able to discern God's direction for them. Though I knew the Word was how God revealed His will for me, there were many other factors I did not know concerning hearing God's voice.

For instance, I didn't realize that God's Holy Spirit must direct us when it comes to God's Word, in order to make it personal for us. Now don't misunderstand me. I'm not saying that God's Word cannot be applied to our lives just as it is. We can claim all of it that applies to us--with supernatural results--because every promise in Christ Jesus is *yes* and *amen* to the glory of God the Father (2Co 1:20). However, I wasn't aware that God's Spirit uses the Word as a sword, and in order to counsel us, we must let the Spirit rightly divide it for our particular circumstance. An example: there is a scripture that says we should “turn the other cheek” (Mat 5:39). But there are also scriptures that imply we should not just remain passive while others abuse us. (Acts 22:25; Mat 10:23; Luk 17:3). How do we reconcile both of these principles? How can we turn the other cheek, and yet set our boundaries with others? Simple. God's Holy Spirit must use whatever scripture fits our situation, for there is a time and a season for all things (Ecc 3:1).

Yet, this was not all the Lord had been longing to show me. In all of my business, in all of the many thoughts that bombarded my mind, He spoke through the scripture one day and I saw it in a whole new light.

Psa 46:10a Be still, and know that I am God.

I'd always wondered what it meant—what being still had to do with knowing Him. Then it clicked, as He opened the eyes of my understanding to behold the revelation of what had been said to me so long ago as a new Christian. Be still...and

know that I am God. My wonderful Lord was telling me that I will know Him—know His voice—when I am still before Him and have quieted my mind to hear Him. Oh, what a marvelous revelation!

This scripture began my quest to know God more intimately and to hear Him more clearly. The Lord then revealed many other scriptures that confirmed this initial revelation, which I will now share with you.

When the prophet Elijah heard from God, he heard a still, small voice. God was not in the wind, the earthquake, or the fire, but in the quiet voice set apart from outward distractions.

1Ki 19:11 And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake:

1Ki 19:12 And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire *a still small voice*.

1Ki 19:13 And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?

But how do we recognize the still, small voice?

When the prophet Samuel was a young boy, he did not yet understand how to hear from God. As the Lord spoke one night, “Samuel, Samuel,” the boy went in unto Eli the priest, supposing that he was speaking to him. Eli told him, “I did not call you. Go back and lie down.” Again, the Lord spoke, and again Samuel went to Eli, who once more told him to go lie down. After the third time, Eli realized God was talking to the boy, and instructed him to answer, “Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth.” (1Sa 3:1-18)

As young believers in the Lord, learning to know and distinguish God's voice is something that comes about through practice.

Heb 5:13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

Heb 5:14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who *by reason of use* have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

By reason of use, believers have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. The Greek word for *use* in this scripture translates to *habit*, or *practice*. Though this passage of scripture is referring to learning the Word of God and its doctrines, or teachings, it can also apply to learning to hear the voice of the Lord (through either His Word, or through the various other ways that He speaks to His people). But what are some other ways that God speaks to us?

The Bible gives account of God speaking to people through dreams and visions, by angels, by the voice of the Holy Spirit, by an outward audible voice, by an inward thought or inclination of the heart, through other people by prophecy, tongues and interpretation, or other gifts of the Spirit, and by exhortation, teaching, rebuke, etc. In all of these methods by which God communicates to us, we are instructed to “test the spirits” and “prove all things” (1Jn 4:1; 1Th 5:21). Therefore, the only way to do this is by becoming intimately acquainted with God and His Word in such a way that we will know the counterfeit. Jesus told his followers that his sheep hear his voice. He explained,

Joh 10:4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for *they know his voice*.

Joh 10:5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

David, a shepherd himself, wrote of God's loving care for His own sheep. He also gave us an important clue to being intimate with our Great Shepherd:

Psa 23:2b He leadeth me beside the *still* waters.

Still waters are a place of rest and a place of quietness, as opposed to turmoil and chaos.

Martha, our Lord's friend, knew all about turmoil and chaos. When Jesus was at her house, she was cumbered (distracted with care), and complained to him that her sister Mary was not helping with the serving; instead, Mary was seated at the feet of Jesus, listening to him. Jesus responded,

“Martha, Martha, thou art *careful* and *troubled* about many things. But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.” (Luke 10:41, 42)

Jesus told Martha that she was careful (anxious) and troubled (disturbed) about many things. He commended Mary for sitting at his feet, listening to him.

Friends, that is the place where God wants us to be. He wants us to be at His feet, still (quiet, relaxed, and having ceased from struggling), and listening to Him. This is how we will learn to hear His voice.

The Bible declares,

Pro 19:21 There are many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand.

The word *devices* in this scripture means *contrivance, intention, plan, plot, advice,*

imagination, thought. So there are many thoughts, plans and imaginations in our hearts, but the counsel of the Lord shall stand. That is, if we allow it to stand! We must learn to hone in on it and cast down all other imaginations that would exalt themselves against the knowledge of God.

2Co 10:5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

When Isaac went out into the field in the evening, the Bible tells us he went out to *meditate*. That is the exact word used in the scripture:

Gen 24:63a And Isaac went out to *meditate* in the field at the eventide.

The word means to *meditate, muse (pensively), commune, speak, complain.*

Paul instructed Timothy to meditate on (*take care of, revolve in the mind- imagine*) the things which he knew.

David often meditated on (*pondered, imagined, mused, prayed, communed with*) the Word of God (Psa 1:2; 63:6; 77:12; 119:15, 23, 48, 78, 148). He also knew the practice of being still before God:

Psa 4:4 Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and *be still*. Selah.

Sadly enough, there are people today who claim God does not speak to us in any way other than through His Word. But this is not biblical. In the book of Acts, after the day of Pentecost and the wonderful outpouring (and indwelling) of the Holy Spirit, the apostles and disciples heard from God in various ways as I described earlier. Paul heard the voice of the Lord Jesus, saw visions, and received counsel from a prophet (Act 9:3-7; 16:9; Act 21:10-14). Both an angel and the Holy Spirit spoke to Philip (Act 8:26, 29). There are many exciting accounts in the book of Acts concerning how God spoke to His sheep. But of noteworthy interest is the fact that both Paul and Peter were so caught up in communion with the Lord that scripture actually says they were in a *trance* (we're not talking New Age, Occult, demonic stuff here, but just intense conversation with the One True and Living God):

Act 10:9 On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour:

Act 10:10 And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a *trance*,

Act 10:11 And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it

had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth.

Act 22:17 And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I {Paul is speaking here} prayed in the temple, I was in a *trance*;

Act 22:18 And saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me.

Both of these devout Christian men were in prayer at the time, deeply communing with God, and both of them stated they were in a trance. But what does the word *trance* mean in the original Greek?

ΓΙΒΗ trance

ΚΟΤΑΟΙΣ

ekstasis

ek'-stas-is

From **G1839**; a *displacement* of the mind, that is, *bewilderment*, “ecstasy”: - + be amazed, amazement, astonishment, trance.

The Thayers Greek Lexicon expounds:

- 1) any casting down of a thing from its proper place or state, displacement
- 2) a throwing of the mind out of its normal state, alienation of mind, whether such as makes a lunatic or that of a man who by some sudden emotion is transported as it were out of himself, so that in this rapt condition, although he is awake, **his mind is drawn off from all surrounding objects and wholly fixed on things divine that he sees nothing but the forms and images lying within**, and thinks that he perceives with his bodily eyes and ears realities shown him by God.
- 3) amazement, the state of one who, either owing to the importance or the novelty of an event, is thrown into a state of blended fear and wonderment

Prayer is much like this Thayer's definition I put in bold letters. The one praying, when at all possible, should take his mind off all surrounding objects (distractions) and wholly fix his gaze on things divine, so that he sees nothing but God within.

Prayer is not just rattling off our requests to the Big Man in the sky. Prayer is conversing with God. And conversing, or conversation, is a two-way street. Yet, sometimes we are so busy talking to God, that we neglect to listen for His response. He has things to say to us, and thoughts to convey to us. In fact, when God instructs us to “be still, and know that He is God,” the *know* here has a deeper meaning than we would think.

To *know* means to learn to know, to perceive and see, to find out and discern, to discriminate, distinguish, know by experience, to recognize, to be instructed, to have knowledge, be wise, etc.

In the Bible, when a man and woman had sexual, or intimate, relations with one another, scripture states that they *knew* each other. And since the husband/wife relationship is to represent God's marriage relationship with His people (the Church--or Body of believers--as the Bride, and Jesus as the Groom), we can see why God uses the word *know* to describe His intimacy with us. We are to desire intimacy with our Lord and Savior; our Creator and Sustainer. We are to love Him with all of our heart, mind, soul and strength.

How would you feel if your husband or wife ignored you and refused to communicate with you? How would you feel if whenever you spoke to them, they refused to listen? God is a jealous God, and He does not want anyone else to take His place in our hearts! He wants us to search for Him with ALL our heart, and He promises that He will be found of us.

Jer 29:12 Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.

Jer 29:13 And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with *all your heart*.

Searching for God with ALL our heart means putting aside every thought and distraction that would keep us from focusing upon God whole-heartedly. If we're seeking to hear from God, but our minds are on the dishes or the car or the kids or that new computer we bought, then we really are not searching for Him with ALL our heart. Our heart is divided.

To hear from God, *we must decrease and He must increase* (Joh 3:30). We must cast aside every weight, every care, every anxiety, every idol in our heart that we put before God, and in this way, *we will decrease*. Then, in the depth of our heart, we shall hear from God as *He increases*; the *still small voice* rather than the wind, earthquake and fire.

Pro 20:5 Counsel in the heart of man is like *deep* water; but a man of understanding will draw it out.

Notice, Solomon tells us that God's counsel is deep, but that a person of understanding will draw it out. It must be *drawn out*. We must go to the well and *let down* a bucket, as the Hebrew translates. We must search for God as for hidden treasure.

Pro 2:3 Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding;

Pro 2:4 If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures;

Pro 2:5 Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

If we search for God's knowledge as we would search for hidden treasure, we will *know* God. Remember, where our treasure is, there will our heart be also (Mat 6:21). If our treasure is in earthly things, then our heart will be there also. We must not let anyone or anything take us away from focusing on God. Scripture says we must set our affection on things above, and not on things on the earth (Col 3:2). To *set our affection on* means to *exercise the mind*, to *entertain*, to *be mentally disposed* (more or less in a certain direction).

Where did Jesus tell us the kingdom of God was? He said,

Luk 17:21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, *the kingdom of God is within you.*

The kingdom of God is *within* us. And scripture reminds us that

1Jn 4:4b Greater is *he that is in you*, than he that is in the world.

God inside us is greater than he (Satan) in the world. He's also greater than any worldly thoughts that would try to come in and block the lines of communication with God, whether the thoughts be from us or the evil one. All we need to remember is, *Be still*, and *know* that I am God.

Some good ways to do this are:

1. Set apart some quiet time to be alone with God
2. Go to a place where you won't be interrupted
3. Spend time in praise and worship, and prayer. Pray in the Holy Ghost to build up your spirit Jude 1:20/1Co 14:4 (see teaching on *The Difference Between the Gift of Tongues and Speaking in Tongues as Evidence of the Holy Spirit Baptism*)
4. Listen for God's voice, casting down all distractions of the mind and focusing on Him alone
5. Fast at times, because when you deny your flesh, it is easier to focus on your spirit, and to become attuned to God's Spirit
6. MAKE SURE THAT WHAT YOU ARE HEARING LINES UP WITH THE WORD OF GOD!

As we practice being still and hearing from God, we will improve at it. God desires to speak to us, and He's definitely not limited to an inward voice. However, as we get in the habit of seeking to know Him and focusing on Him, as well as

meditating on His Word in our hearts, we will become attuned to hear from Him in any other ways that He chooses to communicate.

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All scripture taken from the *King James Bible*

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