

HEARING FROM GOD

Being close to God means communicating with him, which is almost always a two-way street. In our ongoing friendship with God, we tell him what is on our hearts in prayer and learn to perceive what he is saying to us. It's this second part of our conversation with God that many find to be so difficult or even unapproachable. How can you be sure God is speaking to you? The answer is that we learn by experience. The key is to focus more on building our personal relationship with our Creator and less on individual actions and decisions.



WHEN YOU MEET:

Week starting Monday 24 March

Connect:

- Spend some time greeting and welcoming each other.
- We are intentionally not getting to the 'how' of hearing God too early to allow us to understand the 'why'.
- It's important to flag at the start of the series that 'hearing from God' can be difficult because we all come with different histories and experiences.

Pause & Pray:

Take a few minutes to pause and clear your mind, letting go of what may be filling your heart and mind. Share with God what's going on for you at this moment. Allow Him to remind you that you are at home in Him and His immense love for you. He doesn't need anything else from you right now - just your stillness. Pray, asking God to speak to each person through the time together as we reflect on God's word.

Summary:

Our picture or idea of what God is like and how God sees us plays a profound role in our prayer life and hearing God. We all have a skewed picture of who God is. If we have a screwed-up picture of God and start with 'practices', we will end up being more screwed-up.

Read & re-read the passage:

Read a selection of Scriptures, slowly:

- Psalm 23
- Hebrews 12
- John 17:20-26

From the readings, what stood out to you? Be encouraged that God may be speaking to you through His Word - the Scriptures.

MORE RESOURCES: PODCASTS

- 'Ruthless Elimination of Hurry' - John Mark Comer
- 'How to Pray' + 'How to Hear God' - Pete Greig
- 'Beholding' - Strahan Coleman





Questions:

- 1a. What comes into your mind when you think about God today?
- 1b. "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us." (A. W. Tozer) Share your thoughts on this quote, do you agree?. Where do you think people's ideas about God come from?
2. How has your view of God and what He is like changed throughout your life?
3. Read John 17:20-26. Verse 26 says (with utter precision and without nuance) that God loves you in the very same way that God loves His Son, Jesus. What do you think about this?
4. We all hide parts of ourselves. What are some of the most common ways that we sometimes hide myself from God and from those around us?
5. Between now and the next time we meet, spend some unhurried time considering if / when you ever feel "not good enough" to communicate with God? Where does that feeling come from? How does that perception of yourself affect your relationship with God? Journal and write down your thoughts and reflections.

Pause:

Spend a couple of minutes quietly reflecting on what resonates with you and what you will take into the week with you. If you are planning to reflect on question #5, when do you plan to do that?

Pray: Share prayer points and pray for one another.

Finish with this written prayer:

Read Matthew 6:9-13

Our Father, because he is the Father of all who have chosen to walk in the way of Jesus. Holy is your name, distinct from any other. King of kings, but of a kingdom both here now and not yet fully revealed. Gift me today with everything I need for today. Forgive me for the ways I have sinned against you. Set me free from the temptations and idols of my heart. Deliver me from all that is evil.

Jesus, will you make these words alive to me again today? Give me the confidence to know that you care about my daily bread, attend to my debts, and free me from temptation. Let me trust that in your presence, I am delivered from evil.

Holy Spirit, I pray for a renewed sense of belief and trust that your words hold life, authority, and power.

*I think of a friend I know who is struggling to pray, struggling to believe that your kingdom is good. I pray particularly for someone who is doubting their faith. Will you give them a renewed vision of your holiness and goodness
Father, be first in my heart today. Before I attend to my own needs and worries, anchor me in your holiness and power. Let me see all my daily needs through the expectation of your loving care.*

Amen