

Losing your Religion:
Conversations with God
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Luke 8:8 (NIV) "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

1. WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO HEAR GOD?

- 1.1.** It proves that you are in God's family.

John 10:27 (NLT) "My sheep recognize My voice and follow Me."

- 1.2.** It protects you from mistakes.

Proverbs 3:6 (MSG) "Listen for God's voice in everything you do, and everywhere you go; He's the one who will keep you on track."

- 1.3.** It produces personal success.

Psalms 32:8 (NLT) "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you."

2. PREPARING TO HEAR GOD SPEAK:

- 2.1.** Cultivate an open mind.

Luke 8:5 (NIV) "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up."

Luke 8:12 (NIV) "Those along the footpath are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes along and takes away the word from their hearts, so they cannot believe and be saved."

- 2.1.1.** The hardend soil = A CLOSED MIND.

- 2.1.2.** Three things that cause closed mindedness:

- Fear
- Pride
- Bitterness

James 1:21 (NLT) "Get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives, and humbly accept the message God has planted in your hearts, for it is strong enough to save your soul."

2.2. Allocate time to listen.

Luke 8:6 (NLT) "Other seed fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. This seed began to grow, but soon it withered and died for lack of moisture."

Luke 8:13 (NLT) "The rocky soil represents those who hear the message with joy. But like young plants in such soil, their roots don't go very deep. They believe for a while, but they wilt when the hot winds of testing blow."

2.2.1. The shallow soil = A SUPERFICIAL MIND.

Hebrews 10:25 (TEV) "Don't give up the habit of meeting together; Instead, let us encourage one another."

2.3. Eliminate the distractions.

Luke 8:7 (MSG) "Other seed fell in the weeds; the weeds grew with it and strangled it."

Luke 8:14 (NIV) "The seed that fell among weeds stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way, they are choked by life's worries, riches, and pleasures, and they don't mature."

2.3.1. The soil with weeds = A PREOCCUPIED MIND.

1 Kings 19:12 (NLT) "... there was the sound of a gentle whisper."

2.4. Cooperate with what God says.

Luke 8:15 (GN) "The seeds that fell in good soil stand for those who hear the message and retain it in a good and obedient heart, and they persist until they bear fruit."

2.4.1. The good soil = A WILLING MIND.

Luke 8:15 (LB) "...They listen to God's words and cling to them and steadily spread them to others who also soon believe."

3. SIX OF THE WAYS GOD SPEAKS TO US:

Job 33:14 (CEV) "God speaks in different ways, but we don't always recognize His voice."

3.1. God speaks through the Bible.

2 Timothy 3:16 (CEV) "Everything in the Scriptures is God's Word. All o f it is useful for teaching and helping people and for correcting them and showing them how to live."

Psalms 119:105 (TEV) "Your Word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path."

3.2. God speaks through gifted teachers.

Ephesians 4:11-12 (CEV) "Christ gifted some of us to be apostles, prophets, missionaries, pastors, and teachers, so that His people would learn to serve and His body would grow strong."

Romans 12:6 (GW) "God in His kindness gave each of us different gifts. If your gift is speaking God's word, make sure what you say agrees with the faith."

1 Corinthians 2:13 (TEV) "We do not speak in words taught by human wisdom, but in words taught by the Spirit, as we explain spiritual truths to those who have the Spirit."

3.3. God speaks through Godly friends and family.

Proverbs 12:26 (NLT) "The godly give wise advice to their friends; the wicked lead them astray."

Proverbs 12:15 (TEV) "Stupid people always think they are right. Wise people listen to advice."

Proverbs 27:6 (NLT) "Wounds from a friend are better than many kisses from an enemy."

3.4. God speaks through impressions or ideas from the Holy Spirit.

John 14:26 (Ph) "The Holy Spirit... will be your teacher and will bring to your mind all I have said to you."

Romans 8:16 (NLT) "The Holy Spirit speaks to us deep in our heart and tells us that we are God's children."

Job 33:14-17 (LB) "God speaks again and again, in dreams, in visions of the night... as they lie on their beds. He opens their ears in times like that and gives them wisdom and instruction, causing them to change their minds, and keeping them from pride... and from falling into some trap."

3.5. God speaks through pain.

Proverbs 20:30 (GN) "Sometimes it takes a painful experience to make us change our ways."

Psalms 119:71 (NLT) "The suffering You sent was good for me, for it taught me to pay attention to Your principles."

3.6. God speaks through silence.

1 Samuel 28:6 (MSG) "Saul prayed to God, but God didn't answer—neither by dream nor by sign nor by prophet."

Job 34:29 (MSG) "If God is silent, what's that to you? If He turns His face away, what can you do about it? But whether silent or hidden, He's there, ruling,"

Psalms 50:14 (LB) "I want you to trust Me in your times of trouble, so I can rescue you and you can give Me glory."

Sermon Discussion Guide
Conversations with God

OPEN YOUR GROUP WITH A PRAYER. THIS IS ONLY A GUIDE – SELECT THE POINTS YOU WANT TO DISCUSS.

1. Why do YOU think it is important to hear God's voice?
2. What is keeping you from hearing God's voice? How can you overcome these obstacles?
3. In which of the six ways, mentioned in point 3, do you hear God's voice best?