

Resonate- How to hear God's voice – Part 3 – through one another.

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BIG IDEA – God speaks through others in the faith community, the body of Christ.

scripture focus - Ephesians 4:15-16 NLT “Instead, **we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ,** who is the head of his body, the church. He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. **As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.”**

ME

The third and last part in this resonate series is hearing God's voice through one another. Hearing God through His Word is straightforward. God wrote the Bible through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit moving on humans. We read, listen, and take time to be in God's presence. Hearing God through the Holy Spirit takes practice to listen and obey. But hearing God through the body of Christ; the individual gifting of others is so encouraging.

WE

Hearing God through one another is timely, encouraging, and natural. Because we are being disciplined and making disciples, hearing God's Word and the Holy Spirit speaking through a brother or sister in Christ is so bonding and inspirational. This way of hearing God also encourages each one of us to use the gifts God has given

us to speak encouragement and affirmation to others – believers or nonbelievers.

We will speak...writes the apostle Paul!

GOD

Many of the New Testament writers, through letters to churches or individuals, are doing so as what we call “Holy Writ.” In other words, they are inspired and directed by God to write, and those words are what makes up our modern-day Bible. These letters were assembled with the Gospels to form the New Testament Canon. **See Wayne Grudem’s Systematic Theology in my notes.**

The words and stories we speak, or the words we sing or write are not considered to be “Holy Writ or Canon” (recognized as inspired of God – [Bible Canon Link](#)) today. But the Biblical writers clearly direct us to the **Holy Spirit directing us to speak to each other for encouragement, inspiration and sometimes (rarely) correction or admonishment.**

In fact, it's not just critical that we do so, it makes up another part of the way we hear God's voice.

And, just like hearing God's voice through the Bible, and hearing God through the Holy Spirit, hearing God's voice through one another there are rules of how this works.

Yes, there are the same filters or ways to make sure that what we hear is not just true, but helpful to our understanding of God and further growth as a follower of Jesus.

First, let's look at the idea that we can and should be both speaking to each other and hearing God's voice through one another.

Paul's letter to the church in Ephesus is a good place to start.

He writes in **Ephesians 4:15-16** NLT “**Instead, we will speak the truth in love**, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.”

The phrase “speaking the truth” is really just one word in greek, it’s, “Truth-speaking.” We should be using the truth, God’s truth, the written, authoritative Word of God as the basis of our words to each other!

It is interesting that Strong’s Concordance says, this “truth-speaking” includes **Spirit-led confrontation where it is vital to tell the truth so others can live in God’s reality rather than personal illusion**. More on the use of confrontation or correction later.

However, Paul immediately attaches the motivation of this truth-speaking to the overarching principle of love!

There is no cause, no reason that we should be speaking to anyone without the purity of love. One commentator phrases it as “**being true in love.**”

In the next section of his letter, Paul instructs the church that speaking to one another should be normal and regular. In Ephesians 5:18-20 he writes, “**speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit.**”

Hebrews 3:13 says “**But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.**”

Second, let’s look at what kinds of words we should be speaking or hearing.

Like we just read, **all** the words should be “in love,” but let’s look at what is most helpful to all of us.

James, the brother of Jesus and early church leader says, these words we speak should not be evil and full of criticism and

judgment! **James 4:11-12 NLT** “**Don’t speak evil against each other, dear brothers and sisters. If you criticize and judge each other, then you are criticizing and judging God’s law. But your job is to obey the law, not to judge whether it applies to you. God alone, who gave the law, is the Judge. He alone has the power to save or to destroy. So what right do you have to judge your neighbor?**”

Let God do what only He can do! Our job is to speak and encourage each other out of God’s wisdom, to be helpful. In James 3, he writes, “**But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.**”

We begin to see how this works when we speak love, wisdom, mercy, and peace. Not only are these words and motivations Godly and helpful, but they are also what people want and need in their life!

Third, whether they are words of encouragement or the rare times we need words of correction, BOTH are to be subjected to the same test or filter we use in hearing God’s voice through the Holy Spirit.

One great example of the Holy Spirit active and speaking to someone and then just moments later that same person speaking out of their “flesh” or their fearful heart is found in a conversation Jesus was having with his disciples.

Matthew records the moment.

One moment your friend, your brother or sister in Christ may be hearing from God and speaking truth, the next moment it could be from their own heart or even the devil!

Hearing From God: Matthew 16:13-17 NLT “When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “**Who do people say that the Son of Man is?**” “Well,” they replied, “some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets.” **Then he asked them, “But who do you say I am?” Simon**

Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Jesus replied, “You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being.”

Wow! What a moment! The Holy Spirit revealed or spoke to Peter in answering a very important question. Good job – gold star Pete, you got it.

So, Peter heard from the Holy Spirit, and he spoke it out in response.

Ah, but then in the very next paragraph Peter is influenced from another voice:

Matthew 16:21-23 NLT **“From then on Jesus began to tell his disciples plainly that it was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem, and that he would suffer many terrible things at the hands of the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. He would be killed, but on the third day he would be raised from the dead. But Peter took him aside and began to reprimand him for saying such things. “Heaven forbid, Lord,” he said. “This will never happen to you!” Jesus turned to Peter and said, “Get away from me, Satan! You are a dangerous trap to me. You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God’s.”**

What happened? **Peter in one moment hears the Spirit and speaks truth, the next hears his own desires and speaks a lie!**

Jesus called out the source as Satan and those words were another temptation that there would be **another way to accomplish the will of God! That way would avoid suffering and death. That way was a snare, stumbling-block, a trap – a flat out lie!**

Even though we need to and want to hear God’s voice through one another, it is critical that we still use the 1 John 4:1 filter! “Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world.”

Which is it? Hear God's voice through one another or don't because it's too risky? Three words: trust but verify!

You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God

Is the word you hear out of love and follows the general characteristics of who God is? **He is loving, sowing wisdom, mercy, and peace.**

US

Sure, it's risky, but it's worth it!

Would we rather be in a relationship with someone who never speaks to us! That doesn't work in our human relationships. Why would we think it would work when it comes to our relationship with God?

God wants to speak to us through His Word, through the Holy Spirit and through one another!

It takes time, some practice, patience, and some prudence. But don't just go through life without hearing God's voice.

ME

A simple illustration of what just happened last week. I was driving to meet with someone in our church and just happened to take a street that reminded me of something that had happened two years ago. When I had driven down that street before, I felt prompted to call someone I was just thinking about.

Now, I've told you many times, that I believe in providence not coincidence, **so when I think of someone, I ask God, "want me to call them?" If I hear a yes, I do it. I try not to hesitate.** I heard the voice of the Holy Spirit say, "do it." I called and the conversation was

incredibly timely and encouraging for both me and the friend I was calling.

So, while driving down the street I simply asked God again, "should I call him again?" The Holy Spirit again said, "yes!"

I called. This time it was even more amazing because my friend had just earlier received some sad news about a family member and had been wondering what he should do or say in this difficult time. It was really weighing on him. Then, shockingly just a few hours later, out of the blue, I call and say, "I was just thinking about you, what's up?"

He was not only able to share with me his sad news, but I was able to bear some of the emotional stress of that news! And, bonus, we were able to pray for him and his family member right then.

Does God really see us? Does He really know what we are going through? Yes, and yes! And in those moments of grief or gladness, trauma or triumph, God does speak to us from His Word, and the Holy Spirit. However, those are rather private moments that no one else knows about.

When God taps another brother or sister on the shoulder and says, "hey just reach out to on my behalf," it is an amazing moment!

It not only let's someone know that God is active, but it also lets them know they are not alone! We are here for each other.

My word for us today is; be open to hear God's voice through one another but also, to be open to **be God's voice to someone else!**

Yes, it takes practice, patience, and some prudence, but the experience will be PRICELESS!

NOTES

Scriptures

Ephesians 4:15-16 NLT "Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love."

Ephesians 5:18-20 NIV "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Hebrews 3:13 NIV "But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "Today," so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness."

James 4:11-12 NLT "Don't speak evil against each other, dear brothers and sisters. If you criticize and judge each other, then you are criticizing and judging God's law. But your job is to obey the law, not to judge whether it applies to you. God alone, who gave the law, is the Judge. He alone has the power to save or to destroy. So what right do you have to judge your neighbor?"

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Matthew 16:21-23 NLT "From then on **Jesus began to tell his disciples plainly that it was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem, and that he would suffer many terrible things** at the hands of the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. **He would be killed, but on the third day he would be raised from the dead. But Peter took him aside and began to reprimand him for saying such things.** "Heaven forbid, Lord," he said. "**This will never happen to you!**" Jesus turned to Peter and said, "**Get away from me, Satan! You are a dangerous trap to me. You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God's.**"

John 7:16-18 MSG "Jesus said, "I didn't make this up. What I teach comes from the One who sent me. Anyone who wants to do his will can test this teaching and know whether it's from God or whether I'm making it up. A person making

things up tries to make himself look good. But someone trying to honor the one who sent him sticks to the facts and doesn't tamper with reality."

James 3:13-18 NIV "Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, **by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom.** But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness."

1 John 4:1 "Dear friends, **do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit.** You **must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God.** For there are many false prophets in the world."

Words from one another from one moment to the next...

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From God: Matthew 16:13-17 NLT "When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" "Well," they replied, "some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets." Then he asked them, "**But who do you say I am?**" **Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."** Jesus replied, "**You are blessed, Simon son of John, because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being.**"

From the Devil, the very next paragraph: Matthew 16:21-23 NLT "From then on Jesus began to tell his disciples plainly that it was necessary for him to go to Jerusalem, and that he would suffer many terrible things at the hands of the elders, the leading priests, and the teachers of religious law. **He would be killed, but on the third day he would be raised from the dead. But Peter took him aside and began to reprimand him for saying such things.** "Heaven forbid, Lord," he said. "**This will never happen to you!**" Jesus turned to Peter and said, "**Get away from me, Satan! You are a dangerous trap to me. You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God's.**"

Even though we need to hear God's voice and want to hear God's voice through one another, it is critical that we still use the 1 John 4:1 filter!

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Questions

Q: Have you experienced hearing God's voice through another person?

Q: What was it like? Was it helpful or critical?

Q: What do you think about Paul's encouragement to speak God's word to each other?

Q: What kind of words would you like to hear from another person, representative of God's voice?

Q: Have you been prompted by God to speak or share with someone?

Q: Have you been bold enough to speak a good word to another?

Q: Did it go well?

Commentary

Strong's Concordance

Truthspeaking - *alētheúō* (literally, "truthing") – **speaking reality (truth) into a person's life**, making a record of what God deems is truth (reality, fact). *alētheúō* (literally, "to truth") **includes Spirit-led confrontation where it is vital to tell the truth so others can live in God's reality rather than personal illusion.**

Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers

Ephesians 4:15

The correct rendering is, **being true in love**; including in this the “being true” to others, by speaking truly and acting honestly towards them (as in Galatians 4:16), but including also the “being true” absolutely—that is, the loving the truth, and clinging to it at all costs.

Benson Commentary

Ephesians 4:15-16

That is, by wisdom and grace derived from him; the whole body — Of true Christians; fitly — Or orderly; joined together — Every one being put in his proper place and station: or all the parts of his mystical body being fitted for, and adapted to each other, and most exactly harmonizing with the whole; and compacted — Knitted and cemented together with the utmost firmness; that is, closely and firmly united to Christ and each other, by the Holy Spirit, in faith and love.

Jamison-Fausset-Brown Bible Commentary

in love—"Truth" is never to be sacrificed to so-called "charity"; yet it is to be maintained in charity. Truth in word and act, love in manner and spirit, are the Christian's rule.

THE NEW TESTAMENT CANON – Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*.

The development of the New Testament canon begins with the writings of the apostles. It should be remembered that the writing of Scripture primarily occurs in connection with God's great acts in redemptive history. The Old Testament records and interprets for us the creation of the world, the calling of Abraham and the lives of his descendants, the exodus from Egypt and the wilderness wanderings, the establishment of God's people in the land of Canaan, the establishment of the monarchy, and the Exile and return from captivity. Each of these great acts of God in history is interpreted for us in God's own words in Scripture. The Old Testament closes with the expectation of the Messiah to come (Mal. 3:1–4; 4:1–6). The next stage in redemptive history is the coming of the Messiah, and it is not surprising that no further Scripture would be written until this next and greatest event in the history of redemption occurred. **This is why the New Testament consists of the writings of the apostles. It is primarily the apostles who are given the ability from the Holy Spirit to recall accurately the words and deeds of Jesus and to interpret them rightly for subsequent generations.**

Internet Links

[God Speaking To Us Through Other People](http://openbible.info) – open bible.info

[How to Hear God's Voice for Others - Ali Kennedy](#)

"I'll never forget the first time someone laid their hands on me and prayed. Though I had grown up in the church among many wonderful Christians, it really wasn't a common practice to pray *with* others."

"I have no doubt that many of those promises to pray from a distance were genuine and effective, for God hears all our prayers. But there was something different about the moment when my friend laid hands on me and I actually heard the words she prayed – out loud – over me."

[Hearing God's Voice: 12 Ways to Hear and Discern God's Voice - The Ministry of a Christ's Ambassador](#), Bill Gaultiere – SOULSHEPPERDING.