

Sunday, March 12, 2023
LEADING OF THE SPIRIT
PART 3: HEARING THROUGH OTHERS

John 10:1-10 (NIV)

Recently, we have been talking about the leading of the Holy Spirit. As you have just read, it is normal for God's people to hear His voice and it is vital to us that we do.

We will live or die based upon our ability to hear from God.

In the NT era, God speaks/leads His people in six primary ways:

1. Scripture
2. Spirit to spirit communication
3. Impressions
4. Communication through others
5. Signs
6. Dreams/Visions

Scripture is the highest revelation of God to man. Every other spiritual communication is to be judged by it.

We've already talked about Spirit to spirit communication and impressions from the Spirit. Today, let's talk about communication through others. The primary ways that God speaks to us through others:

1. Preaching/Teaching
2. Prophecy
3. Counsel
4. Confirmation

God often speaks a personal direction to us through preaching and teaching. It is important to remember your "fail safe" here just as you do in any other communication. While God can and has spoken to humanity through a "jackass", it's important that if you are going to allow someone to speak on an ongoing basis into your life, you consider the source. A prophetic word is another way God can speak to you through others. Prophecy is not to be treated as Scripture. We always obey Scripture, we judge prophetic words by the Scripture. We should also judge prophecy by

the fruit it will produce. Does it work toward maturity, repentance, and reconciliation? More important factors in a few minutes.

Counsel is another way God speaks to us through people. This covers everything from going to a counselor to receiving advice from a friend or colleague. The same principles apply here as apply to any other communication from God through others. Finally, God speaks to us through confirmations. There is scriptural precedent for this:

2 Corinthians 13:1 (NIV)

God established confirmation early on in His relationship with Israel to assist them in making big decisions (Deut. 17 & 19 regarding conviction of murder. Matt. 18 regarding resolution of differences among believers). According to 2 Corinthians, it is also used to recognize truth. God confirms His direction/word to us so that we are sure of what He wants us to do.

Confirmations are usually used in discerning God's will in the 5% of personal direction Scripture doesn't speak specifically to.

So to put a wrap on this, here are some solid directions in discerning God's will in communication through others:

1. Does the word contradict the written Word of God?
2. Does the word contradict the character attributes of God?
3. Does the word bear witness with my spirit?
4. Does the word have two or three confirmations? (Especially in that which is not specifically covered by Scripture)
5. Does this word come from a source that has a proven lifestyle of godly character and good fruit?

Next week: signs, dreams and visions.

Today's Scriptures:

- John 10:1-10 (NIV)
- 2 Corinthians 13:1 (NIV)