

ARE YOU LISTENING

OCTOBER 18, 2020

This week, a teacher left me a voicemail, but did not identify himself. After a few words, however, I recognized his voice. It was a voice of a man I worked with several years ago, but haven't worked with for the past years - but I still recognized his voice. I have noticed on Zoom, I recognize lots of voices. It amazes me how I pick up on the voices of people with whom I've had various levels of interaction, but even without video I recognize their voice.



It's all fine and good that I recognize the voices of the people I know, but do I recognize the voice of the Holy Spirit? Do I recognize His gentle whisper guiding me throughout my days? Do I hear everything God says to me? Am I listening?

Another very important question is, do I recognize the voice of the enemy? Yes, Satan has a voice, too. He speaks lies into my mind, he makes me question what God said. He is the deceiver, and he seeks to destroy. We see in Genesis 3, that Satan had a whole conversation with Eve. He initiated the conversation with a question, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden?'" She apparently didn't realize his method of trickery. He caused her to question God. He made God seem ridiculous, "Did God *really* say...?" His question begs the side-eye emoji! His word made it seem like God was withholding a good thing. Rather than responding, "Get behind me Satan," Eve continued the conversation and entertained the ideas suggested by the evil one. We all know what happened later. While I'm recognizing voices, I must make sure that I also recognize Satan's voice - it's real. He tells me I am not good enough, not important enough, I am unworthy, that I won't succeed. He tells me I shouldn't waste my time doing the things God told me to do! He tells me I shouldn't look into my future and see prosperity or greatness. He tells me I am not loved, that I am kidding myself. Satan's voice is dark, it is deceiving, and it only speaks lies.

I've found that the only way to quiet Satan, is that I must choose to listen to the other constant voice - the voice of God. God's voice comes as a gentle whisper - so soft, so gentle that I could easily not even hear it. In fact, there are times, I probably didn't hear it, but because of my faith, I know it was there. There have been a couple of times when I heard His voice while reading His word. It happened once when I was reading John 15 about the vine, and another time when I was at revival and the minister opened with Psalm 23. There have been other times, too, when I heard the unmistakable voice of my Heavenly Father, but those two instances I

specifically recall as I was also reading Scripture. On each occasion, I recall only hearing a headline, but when we read Genesis 6, we see that God speaks much more than headlines. He didn't just tell Noah to build an ark, He gave him the details.

¹³So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth. ¹⁴So make yourself an ark of cypress wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out. ¹⁵This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide and thirty cubits high. ¹⁶Make a roof for it, leaving below the roof an opening one cubit[e] high all around. Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks. ¹⁷I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish. ¹⁸But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you. ¹⁹You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you. ²⁰Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive. ²¹You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them."

Imagine what would have happened if Noah had only heard the headline! The ark may not have had enough space for all of his family and the animals! What if Noah didn't hear, or didn't listen to God's instructions about using Cypress wood or coating it with pitch? The ark may have taken on water, or it may not have floated when the water began to rise! Destruction could have been the result.

Take time today to decipher the many different voices you encounter each day. There's the voice of your spouse, your children, people at work, people on social media, there's Satan's voice and there's God's voice. Be sure you know the difference. Take time each day, quiet time, during which you can spend time with the Lord and concentrate on His voice. You won't hear it over the other noise. Or you will hear it, but maybe just the headline, and that's not enough for you to do His full will. Are you listening? God is speaking and what He says to you is just for you. Amen.

Thank you for reading!
Kim