

Hearing God's Voice

Prayer School 2022

John 10:27

"My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me."

(Review)

III. *"They follow me."*

A. The Fruit of Hearing is Following.

1. The natural, genuine fruit of having really **heard** God speak is that we do what he says!

John 10:1-4

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens.

The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

- The whole point of this parable is that the Shepherd speaks to his sheep, and they **follow** him.
- Like the sheep in the parable, because we recognize God's voice and we trust him to lead us, the natural thing for us to do is to follow.

We have listened to what he's told us – we obey.

- We make the change he's told us to make.
- We take the step forward he's told us to take.
- We pray for those he's put on our hearts, in the way he leads us to pray for them.

2. Romans 10:17 *"Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."*

- So, we usually think of this as an instruction for how to get faith, which is true.
- But, if we read it thoughtfully, what it's really saying is simply that when you **hear** the Word of God, the natural byproduct is faith (subtle, but important distinction).

(more than saying, "how do I get faith?", it's more saying, "what happens when I hear and internalize what God says to me.")

- Faith in action is following – obedience.
 - When we have heard what God has said, it produces the fruit, the result, of believing and acting on what we heard.
3. If what I hear the Lord say to me produces no fruit, then I haven't really **heard** him.

Isaiah 55:10-11

"For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it."

(So, the **fruit** of hearing is following...)

B. The Measure of Hearing is Following.

1. To the degree we've really heard the voice of God, we will obey Him.
- A teacher knows you listened to them in class by how you do on the test.
 - A parent knows you listened to them if you do what they told you to do.
 - God knows we have heard him when we obey him.

Rom. 2:13

"For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified."

1 Samuel 15:22-23 (spoken to Saul)

"Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. But rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has also rejected you from being king."

Matt. 7:21

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. .'"

Matt. 7:24-27

"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock."

And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

(The **measure** of hearing is following...)

C. The Blessing of Hearing is in Following.

Rev. 1:3

"Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near."

Josh. 1:8

We see that the point of meditating in the Word of God is *"so that you may be careful to **DO** according to all that is written in it. For then will you make your way prosperous, and then will you have good success."*

1. Most Christians have a deep desire to be in God's presence, and to hear Him speak to them.
 - But just being with him and **hearing** his voice is not the ultimate goal is it? At least it's not God's ultimate goal!

Luke 11:28

A woman says that Jesus' mother was really blessed to have him, to have been around him his whole life.

He responds, *"Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it."*

- God does not speak to us for information only – rarely will an email from the Lord begin with, "Just FYI..."! [*I love information, data – but God does not just come and speak to me so I will have more information!*]
 - The ultimate goal is that by hearing His voice, we will internalize what He says and be changed by it. *James 1* talks about *"the engrafted, or implanted, word which is able to save our souls."*)
 - The goal is that, by obeying his voice, the will of God is done on the earth as it is in heaven.
2. Many times people get very excited with the fact that they heard God speak, but with no regard for what he actually said!
 - The blessing is in the doing not the hearing.

- I've been in many corporate meetings where one by one, people stood up and prophesied, each time followed by clapping or worship, with everyone excited about the fact that God manifested himself and spoke to us.
- But then the next person stood and prophesied, or we moved on with worship, or with preaching or announcements, with no regard whatsoever for what God said, and how we should respond to it!

The blessing is in the doing, not the hearing!

D. Practical Thoughts.

1. Be quick to hear God's voice.

James 1:19

"Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger..."

- Sometimes it's hard to hear the voice of God because we're simply not good listeners.
- We don't listen to other people, so we're not in the habit of doing what James says here.
- You might think, *'well, I'm not good at listening to people, but I'm good at listening to God.'*
 - But John tells us that *"whoever does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen."*
 - So, if I could take a little liberty with that principle and say then, that *'whoever does not listen to his brother whom he has seen does not listen to God whom he has not seen'!*

2. Be quick to capture (*preserve*) what He says to you.

- When someone tells you something important that you need to remember or take action on, like an appointment, or an address, or phone number, you make a note of it.

Who could tell you anything more important than what God could tell you?

- Some people keep a prayer journal.
- Sometimes I use my phone to voice record notes while it's fresh in my mind.

3. Be quick to obey.

Instant obedience to God's voice ensures we do not hear the voice of the enemy.

John 10:6

"A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers."

- Once God has spoken, don't continue to listen for another voice!
- Listening for the voice of God is not about options! It's about obedience!
 - You don't get options, you get to obey.
 - We yielded up our options when we surrendered our lives to him as Lord
 - - **Now we hear him speak, we quickly obey what he says.**

The fruit of hearing is following.

The measure of hearing is following.

The blessing of hearing is in following.

"My sheep hear my voice, I know them, they follow me."

**** Our whole life is intended to be about hearing the voice of the Lord, who knows us and following him. ****