



**THE POWER OF
OPEN EARS**

*HEARING WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS
SAYING*

“The Lord God has given Me The tongue of the learned, That I should know how to speak A word in season to him who is weary. He awakens Me morning by morning, He awakens My ear To hear as the learned.” Isaiah 50:4

God is always speaking, and the Bible tells us that every morning He shares instructions with us. When the Holy Spirit speaks to us, He brings rebuke, instruction and inspiration, all designed to ensure we fulfil our destinies both in time and eternity. This means that when we don't hear from God, we lack His counsel in these areas, which is a dangerous position to be in—especially in dark days such as these.

Unfortunately the reality most of us experience is that we can't claim to hear the Holy Spirit on a regular basis, not to speak of every morning and there are many reasons why this is the case.

How then do we hear from the Holy Spirit and how can we operate in a manner that we constantly know what God is saying concerning every area of our lives? Stay connected as we dig into these and more. May the Holy Spirit use this series as a tool to awaken our ears to hear Him.

Day 1

Multitude of Voices

“There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification.” 1 Corinthians 14:10

It's God's desire that's our spiritual ears are open to hear and understand what His Spirit is saying to his people, particularly in these last days. This is because He doesn't want us to be ignorant of His instructions so we can be in alignment to His program for each season we're in. So if God desires that we hear Him, where does the break in communication come from?

The Bible tells us that there are many voices in the world, all of which are significant and the level of significance is based on the attention we give to the voice. There are 4 main voices that contend for our attention: emotions, flesh, the enemy and the Holy Spirit. Today we're looking at the first three.

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.” 2 Timothy 1:7

When we listen to the voice of our emotions we make decisions and take actions based on feelings - good or bad. This is why the Bible gives so many admonitions about managing our emotions and exercising the power of self-control the Lord has given us.

“For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.” Galatians 5:17

Focusing on the flesh and its desires also drowns out the voice of the Holy Spirit as the two are constantly in conflict with one another.

“You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God.” Ephesians 2:2

The voice of the enemy makes us rebel against anything that's of God so we're always in disobedience to the Holy Spirit. The dangerous thing about this voice is that it may not tell us to do anything that's obviously wrong, however the promptings it gives us will derail us from God's plan for our lives.

These 3 voices are extremely loud and will easily drown out the Holy Spirit's voice if we don't intentionally submit our thinking processes and lifestyle to the Holy Spirit's lordship.

Prayer: Lord help me be sensitive to the voice I allow to lead me on a daily basis

Day 2

What Are We Hearing?

If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear.” Then He said to them, “Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given.” Mark 4:23-24

The statement Jesus made makes it clear that not everyone has ears to hear. As we clarified earlier Jesus wasn't speaking about the ears attached to our head but the ones attached to our spirit. If our spiritual ears are closed, this automatically means we can't hear Him and receive anything from Him.

“You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you.” Acts 7:51

Consistently hearing the Holy Spirit requires a willingness on our part to receive what He has to say to us. The Holy Spirit speaks to us for three main reasons, to provide inspiration, rebuke and guidance therefore not hearing from Him will cost us these critical tools for walking with Him. When we can't hear Him clearly resistance will be our default posture and we will not fulfil our God ordained destiny.

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;” 2 Timothy 4:3

“I correct and discipline everyone I love. So be diligent and turn from your indifference.” Revelation 3:19

One of the things that stops us from hearing the Holy Spirit is what the Bible calls itchy ears: a desire to only hear things that are pleasant and don't cause us to reflect deeply on our walk with God. As important as His inspiration is, we won't experience real transformation if we don't allow the Holy Spirit to rebuke us. It's this acceptance of His rebuke and the change it brings within us that leads us to follow His guidance.

Prayer: Lord deliver me from itchy ears. Help me to accept every aspect of what You say to me through the Holy Spirit because I know You love and want the very best for me.

Day 3

Becoming An Active Listener

“This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.”
Joshua 1:8

Hearing has more to do with the physiological act of hearing sounds than it does with making sense and connecting with the person who's talking to you. In contrast, listening is a voluntary action whereby one makes conscious efforts to understand the sound once it reaches the brain. Listening to the Holy Spirit involves taking in what He's said and consciously and intentionally processing it – this is what we call meditation.

An active listener has a genuine interest in and desire to understand what is being said. When we practice active listening, we're more interested in listening to what the other person is saying, rather than formulating our response. If we feel we don't know how to engage the Holy Spirit, the first place to start is the Bible because all scripture was inspired by Him. As we engage the Bible, a question we must always ask the Holy Spirit is: “What is the Lord saying?” This is an important question to ask regardless of how many times we may have read the scripture or how familiar we think we are with it. The Holy Spirit can always bring a new dimension based on where we are and what He wants to highlight.

“Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive his approval. Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth.” 2 Timothy 2:15

Listening to the Holy Spirit requires diligence on our part – intentionally creating an environment and setting out time specifically to spend in the study of the word and maintaining communication with the Holy Spirit throughout the day. So, we shouldn't feel discouraged if there seems to be no response from Him immediately we engage in studying the Bible.

'Don't you realize that all of you together are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God lives in you?' 1 Corinthians 3:16

We carry the Holy Spirit in us so as we go through the day expecting to hear from Him, we will become more conscious of and cautious about what we see, hear and say. Reason being that we won't want to engage in anything that may muffle what He's saying to us.

Prayer: Holy Spirit please help me become better at listening to You. Help me identify the things in and around me that stop me from hearing clearly and grant me the grace to deal with them appropriately.

Day 4

Engaging the Holy Spirit

“Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the Lord...” Isaiah 1:18

The Lord has given us an open invitation to have a conversation with Him, but it's up to us to respond appropriately to His invitation. Imagine having a conversation with someone and the person makes no contribution to the discussion - asks no questions or seeks any clarifications. Very likely we will wonder if the person is actually interested in what we've been saying. Now let's picture this from a spiritual perspective when we say we want to hear from the Holy Spirit, but we make no effort to engage Him. He will not decide for us if we're interested or not, rather we must demonstrate our desire to know more of Him.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.” Proverbs 3:5-6

“So we have not stopped praying for you since we first heard about you. We ask God to give you complete knowledge of his will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding.” Colossians 1:9

Acknowledging someone involves indicating to them that their input is valuable. When we acknowledge the Holy Spirit we're saying to Him through our actions that we need His input and by doing so we open ourselves to His guidance, direction and much more. The Holy Spirit isn't a wicked taskmaster setting us up to fail. When we're not clear on what we think He's saying or unsure of how to move forward with an instruction, He expects us to come back to Him to provide the clarity we require and He will do so.

“So David asked the Lord, “Should I go out to fight the Philistines? Will you hand them over to me?” The Lord replied to David, “Yes, go ahead. I will certainly hand them over to you.”” 2 Samuel 5:19

Enquiry is a tool David often deployed and we see the results in the numerous battles he won. Likewise as we actively engage the Holy Spirit in our decision making, He makes our paths straight and aligns us with God's agenda.

Prayer: Holy Spirit please teach me how to engage You and acknowledge You in all my ways on a daily basis.

Day 5 Give God Time

“Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!” Psalms 46:10

“... my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine.” Isaiah 55:8

We live in a time where everything seems to move at a fast pace and subconsciously, we expect the Lord to engage with us at that speed and on our terms. However, God is sovereign, and He doesn't change His ways to accommodate the times we're in and one of His ways is how he communicates with us. When we go through the Bible, we see that while God has a lot to say to us, He's not in the habit of rushing His communication. This tells us that if we want to hear His thoughts, we must give the Lord time to speak. This also means we must have a posture of being expectant to hear what He has to say and open to how and when He chooses to say it.

“Then the Lord said to Moses, “Come up to me on the mountain. Stay there”...And the glory of the Lord settled down on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days. On the seventh day the Lord called to Moses from inside the cloud.” Exodus 24:12, 15-16

“And the Lord came and called as before, “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel replied, “Speak, your servant is listening.” Then the Lord said to Samuel, “I am about to do a shocking thing in Israel.” 1 Samuel 3:10-11

““Go out and stand before me on the mountain,” the Lord told him... And after the fire there was the sound of a gentle whisper.” 1 Kings 19:11-12

'Then as I looked, I saw a door standing open in heaven, and the same voice I had heard before spoke to me like a trumpet blast. The voice said, “Come up here, and I will show you what must happen after this.” ' Revelation 4:1

We see examples of God having critical discussions with Moses, Samuel and Elijah and each time He wasn't in a hurry and neither did He rush what he had to say. This doesn't only apply in Old Testament times as even in speaking to John in Revelations, Jesus called John to come up higher to discuss. John may very well have wondered why the conversation couldn't continue where he was since Jesus was already speaking to him, but it was part of His way. There's power in recognizing God's sovereignty and being willing to align with His agenda rather than try and force Him into ours.

Prayer: Lord help me to be still and teach me to be comfortable with waiting for You because I know You will speak to me.

Day 6 The Role of the Watchman

'Then the lookout called, "O Lord, I stand continually by day on the watchtower, And I am stationed every night at my guard post' Isaiah 21:8

In Biblical times, cities had watchtowers where the watchmen would stay to see if who/what was coming into the city. This way they could alert the necessary people if there was danger or something positive was coming. Watchmen were very important and understandably couldn't afford to be distracted otherwise that would create opportunities for things to bypass their attention and create issues.

"I will climb up to my watchtower and stand at my guardpost. There I will wait to see what the Lord says and how he will answer my complaint." Habakkuk 2:1

Nowadays we're supposed to be the spiritual watchmen engaging the spirit to see what is ahead be it good or bad so we can respond accurately. Habakkuk speaks of three key activities associated with the watchman: climbing, standing and waiting. Climbing the watchtower speaks to shifting our perspective from the natural to the spiritual realm by engaging in prayer. Standing speaks to the resilience we need to stay steady and focused on why we're there. Waiting speaks to the patience factor, giving God the undistracted time needed for us to receive what he has for us. All of these require the help of the Holy Spirit as we take up our positions as spiritual watchmen of our lives, families, territories etc. so we can hear what the spirit is saying.

The benefit of understanding our roles as watchmen is that it helps us minimize distractions as we choose to intentionally shut down the unnecessary things that distract us and deliberately focus on anchoring ourselves on the reason we want our ears to open. Some people may physically shut everything down and isolate themselves, but being free from distractions speaks more to a heart position such that we're mindful of the interferences we permit in our space as we protect our eye, ear and heart gates making sure we are constantly watching and alert.

Prayer: Lord help me to take up my position as a responsible watchman for all that concerns me. Holy Spirit give me the grace to watch, stand and wait on You until I hear clearly from You.

Day 7

Power In Insufficiency

“For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.” I Corinthians 13:12

Whatever we think we know of God or of life is just a tiny part of the bigger picture, but as humans we like to think we're in control which gives us a tendency to fill in blanks with our assumptions. Even where we know we may not have full information, there's a tendency to superimpose our perspective on the situation rather than ask God for His. God reserves the right not to show us the full picture of what He is doing for two main reasons. Firstly if God were to show us the full picture of our lives and what our fulfilling destiny entails we may run away from the process as it won't always be pleasant. Secondly, there are some things that we simply won't understand even if He reveals them to us because our minds cannot accommodate it.

“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the Lord. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:8-9

Regardless of what we know or think we know, God is always way ahead of us. He expects us to acknowledge our insufficiency by trusting Him to guide us and show us more, rather than us embellishing or assuming. It's prideful to think we don't need God as that means as far as we're concerned, we're the ones in charge of our lives. But the Bible tells us clearly that, “...It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps.” (Jeremiah 10:23) and Jesus also told us Himself that without Him we can do nothing (John 15:5).

And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” II Corinthians 12:9

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,” Ephesians 3:20

It's possible to be involved in activity but still lack spiritual direction or do what that has eternal impact. On the flip side when we acknowledge our weaknesses and humble ourselves before Him, the Lord superimposes His strength on our weaknesses and gives us the capacity to do much more than we could ever have imagined.

Prayer: Lord, I acknowledge my limitations and ask for the grace to seek You, ears to hear You and a heart totally yielded to You.

Day 8

Contending with Slumber

“His watchmen are blind, They are all ignorant; They are all dumb dogs, They cannot bark; Sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.” Isaiah 56:10

It's difficult to speak to someone who's asleep as the person either doesn't hear what is being said or misinterprets the message because they heard wrong. Likewise, the Holy Spirit may be speaking to a person but because that person is asleep spiritually such a person cannot hear what the Spirit is saying. It's very easy to fall asleep if there's nothing compelling us to stay awake and alert.

“...Let the watchman be fully alert.” Isaiah 21:7

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” Matthew 6:33

What keeps us alert is an altar that is on fire and the key to being permanently on fire is spiritual hunger. Unfortunately, the devil has manipulated majority of us into replacing the hunger for God with hunger for the things God can give us. So when we engage in prayer we are asking for things rather than the transformation that will bring us the things we are asking for. But Jesus told us that our main priority should be seeking first the things of the kingdom.

“Turn my eyes away from vanity [all those worldly, meaningless things that distract—let Your priorities be mine], And restore me [with renewed energy] in Your ways.”
Psalms 119:37 AMP

Having a posture of focusing on God's priorities does two things for us. First it aligns us to His agenda. Second it keeps us energized spiritually so we don't fall into slumber. Our spirits will consistently be alert, receiving direction, instruction, warning etc. and we will also have the energy to pursue God's heart.

Prayer: Lord wake me up from spiritual slumber. Keep me spiritually alert and energised so I don't miss or misinterpret what You're saying to me. Let Your priorities be mine and keep me from distractions and energy drainers.

Day 9

Choosing An Obedient Ear

“The Lord God has opened My ear; and I was not rebellious, nor did I turn away.” Isaiah 50:5

The Lord’s desire is that we function using our spiritual faculties, especially our ears so we hear what He is saying to our spirit, accurately discerning what He’s saying or doing and gain the necessary insight into what’s really going on in the spiritual realm. This keeps us sharp and focused and gives us the added advantage of being able to address root causes rather than focus on symptoms when confronted with the issues of life.

The Lord is always providing guidance or direction but we can choose not to listen. The Bible tells us that it’s possible to hear, but still turn away from what God is saying to us. It’s possible to receive direction, insight, etc. but still choose to do otherwise. We always have a choice, and our choices influence our outcomes.

“I hear the Lord saying, “I will stay close to you, instructing and guiding you along the pathway for your life. I will advise you along the way and lead you forth with my eyes as your guide. So don’t make it difficult; don’t be stubborn when I take you where you’ve not been before. Don’t make me tug you and pull you along. Just come with me!”” Psalms 32:8-9 TPT

“Do not stifle the Holy Spirit.” 1 Thessalonians 5:19

We can trust God to always do His part, but let’s not forget that we also have an active role to play in hearing from God. When we consistently disobey the Holy Spirit, we stifle His work in our lives. The Holy Spirit won’t force us to go in a direction we don’t want to go and when He sees that we’re constantly ignoring or disobeying His instructions, He will eventually withdraw. Not because He doesn’t love us, but because our actions tell Him that His input isn’t required in our lives, and no one wants to stay where they’re not welcomed or appreciated. If we sense we’re no longer hearing from Him, our distinct step should be to ask for mercy and then go back to the last instruction He gave us and do it.

Prayer: Lord I apologize for the times I have ignored and disobeyed You and I ask for mercy. Give me the grace to recall Your last instruction to me and obey You fully

Day 10

Hearing Consistently

'And the fire on the altar shall be kept burning on it; it shall not be put out. And the priest shall burn wood on it every morning, and lay the burnt offering in order on it; and he shall burn on it the fat of the peace offerings. A fire shall always be burning on the altar; it shall never go out.'
Leviticus 6:12-13

We know that the Lord gives us instructions daily, therefore we must also be prepared to hear Him daily. We have seen that it's possible for some spiritual ears to either be closed or dull such that we either don't hear the Holy Spirit at all, or when we do it's not clear. The comforting truth is that this doesn't have to be our reality as it's possible to consistently hear the Holy Spirit accurately and be led daily by Him.

One of the things that determine our ability to hear consistently is the state of our altar. Because the Holy Spirit lives in us, we are mobile altars that carry His presence everywhere we go. But if our altars lack fire, then we will become dull of hearing and eventually become spiritually deaf – unable to hear what the Holy Spirit is saying. The remedy the Bible offers us is to ensure we service our altar daily so the fire never goes out. This means meeting with the Lord daily and asking Jesus to cleanse us with His blood which speaks of mercy. It also means bringing our personal ambitions, character traits, desires, etc. before Him and asking the Holy Spirit to remove whatever doesn't align with His agenda. As we do this in sincerity, we are putting fire on the altar and allowing the fire of the Holy Spirit to move as He desires.

'But Jesus often withdrew to the wilderness for prayer.' Luke 5:16

'While Jesus was here on earth, he offered prayers and pleadings, with a loud cry and tears, to the one who could rescue him from death. And God heard his prayers because of his deep reverence for God.' Hebrews 5:7

Prayer and personal sacrifice were a lifestyle for Jesus, focusing squarely on His assignment. This meant His altar was consistently alive and vibrant and His ears open to hear what the Holy Spirit was saying to Him. Jesus represents a pattern for us to follow and as we follow His lifestyle of consistency in prayer, study of the word and a willingness to be led by the Holy Spirit, we will also be able to state like Jesus that we always do what pleases the Father (Jhn 8:29).

Prayer: Lord I choose to live in a manner that allows me to hear You daily. Help me be consistent maintaining a vibrant altar so my life always pleases You.

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