

## Lesson 14 - Hearing and Meeting with Father

### Being Friends with Father

1. **Being aware of your belonging** to God as His son or daughter is the starting place to developing a personal intimate relationship with Father God. (**Acts 17:28**)
2. We are called to a place of friendship with God. Thus **He is going to tell us what He is doing**. He finds ways to communicate with us, share His heart and what He is doing in us and in others that He brings to us. (**John 15:14, John 16:14**)
3. Our spirits are the part of us that is made to communicate and to receive all that Father God wants us to experience and know.
  - Being aware of our spirits and developing our spiritual ears and eyes is important.
  - Too often our bodies and souls dominate our spirits and we find it difficult to receive all God has for us.
4. **We are a spirit. We have a soul:** through which we think, feel, respond, imagine, and choose. **We live in a physical body** through which we act. We are interconnected and the more we understand this, the more effective we will be in receiving and ministering healing.
  - We are made in the image of God. God is a spirit, thus we communicate with our spirit to His Spirit. (**Read Gen. 1:26, John 4:23-24, Isaiah 42:5, Prov. 20:27**)
  - God desires that we develop our spirit and our spiritual senses so that we are able to receive all that He desires to give us. (**Read 1 Cor. 2:14, Rom. 8:6-7, Heb. 4:12, 1 Thes. 5:23, 3 John 2, Ps. 103:1-2**)
5. **We allow our spirit to be ruled by our soul much of the time. We need to learn to be led by the Spirit through our spirit.**
  - We are trained by the world to act based on what we see, think, feel, etc.
  - Our soul needs to be restored to God's perspective. (**Ps. 23:3**)
  - Our mind needs to be renewed to God's thoughts and ways. (**Rom. 12:2, Isa. 55:8-9**)
  - The power and the presence of the Holy Spirit, revealing Christ and the Father, are vital for our walk and any ministry we may be called to do.
6. We live in a fallen world. Our hearts or spirits have been wounded. Our sin or other people's sin has separated us from God and others. We also struggle to accept ourselves.
  - In Henry Wright's book, **A More Excellent Way**, he states that disease is a result of separation on three levels (sometimes from former generations):
    - a. **Separation from God** and His Word, His person, and His love.
    - b. **Separation from you**, yourself-not-accepting yourself, not loving yourself, guilt and condemnation.
    - c. **Separation from others** – breaches in relationships, hatred, bitterness, envy, jealousy, competition, performance, drivenness, lack of nurturing, lack of love...
  - God wants us **whole** in our spirit, soul and body. (**1 Thes. 5:23**) He wants us to experience restoration in all our relationships and thus bring healing to every area of our lives.

### Reconnecting Our Heads and Our Hearts

1. Most of us have grown up with a **Western society mindset**.
  - We have been trained to think logically about most everything. Everything is well thought out, balanced and reasonable.
  - Too often our faith becomes a series of logical decisions, rather than anything that we feel or experience.
  - Our walk with God may rely more on rules than on a relationship.
2. **Science, logic and reason** have been given a higher place in our Western society since the time of the Renaissance. Men's minds have almost made them gods of our society.
  - The **goal** of human development has been to become **rational, logical, and scientific**.
  - **Faith and feeling have been devalued** and looked down upon. Faith is not seen as essential for human existence, but instead it is seen as a crutch for the uneducated.
  - We have disconnected from our hearts and elevated our heads.
3. Our society has made a **false separation between thinking and feeling and between reason and faith**.
  - We have lost our ability to use all means to explore the issues of life.
  - Faith, intuition, feelings, and creativity are considered illogical or unscientific.
  - Spirituality is based on the creative, emotional, intuitive, and feeling mind which society devalues.
  - Satan wants this separation as it drives people away from going after God and makes it more difficult to discuss spiritual issues.
4. Leanne Payne in her conferences says, "When the **rational mind replaces the feeling mind, then our souls are devalued.**"
  - When this happens, we lose our emotional, creative, feeling, and intuitive nature. That is the part we use to hear and experience God. It is like pointing a satellite dish to the ground and wondering why you are not receiving a signal.
  - We become **damaged in our ability to sense or communicate with God**.
  - We also **lose our capacity for intimacy** as close relationships need us to feel and be vulnerable with others.
  - The rational mind will interfere with significant relationships especially spouses and children.
  - **Communication becomes one-dimensional, filled with words but without feelings**. It would be like sending a message of love and compassion via a telegram rather than a face-to-face visit.
  - We were not made to interact with people or God on just an intellectual level.
5. Christianity and the Church have been contaminated by this head-heart split
  - The Church is filled with people who worship reason and logic.
  - The intellectual side of faith has been given greater place to avoid criticism from society that devalues experiences and feelings.
  - The Church has **substituted head knowledge with walking with God**. We can talk about it better than we can live it.
  - If God moves in a supernatural way, people become confused since they do not know how to receive anything except through logic or reason.

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- **Our ability to feel and hear God has almost shriveled up to nothing.** Sometimes when God moves supernaturally, people try to rationalize or explain it away.
  - This false separation of reason and faith only applies to Western churches. The churches in the non-Western world have no such separation. They are some of the fastest growing and see more miracles.
6. Grant Mullen says, “**Working for God has become our substitute for receiving God’s love. We have lost our emotional capacity to experience anything supernatural.**”
- We may believe the right things but feel nothing.
  - We may substitute activity for our lack of relationship.
  - We usually wither emotionally where we have been wounded thus we have intellectual relationships. Thus we split our head from our heart.
  - Many people in the church feel isolated, lonely, unable to respond to God or experience true intimacy and unable to worship.
7. God, who is Love, is ready and able to make us every bit whole, so make a quality decision to let Him lead you into the great adventure and plan He has for you and your life!

### We are made to Hear God

1. As God’s children, **we are to know His voice. (John 10:27)** Just like you can pick out the voice of your spouse, children, or close friends, we should be able to recognize God’s voice. “He who is of God hears the words of God,” but unbelievers will not be able to recognize His voice. **(John 8:47)**
2. While God spoke to the prophets long ago, in these last days He has spoken to us in His Son. **(Heb. 1:1-2)** Our confidence in hearing His voice will grow as we get to know Jesus better.
3. His Spirit will speak, guide, and reveal to us all that He hears from the Father and Son. **(John 16:13-14, 1 Cor. 2:1-16)**
4. When we read the Bible, God desires that we hear Him speaking the words to us afresh. The words that Jesus spoke are spirit and are life. **(John 6:63)**
  - God desires that we know His voice so we live out of a vital relationship with Him and not have His word lead to law and religion.
  - The more our hearts are filled with the light of His Word, the greater our ability to hear God’s voice directly and accurately.
5. We have all heard God before, but too often we let the enemy get us to doubt that it was God or we thought it was simply us. Has God ever spoken to you through...?
  - A verse or phrase may have “jumped out” at you. Did the Holy Spirit seem to highlight a certain scripture or word?
  - The words of a pastor, teacher, or minister of the Gospel touch your heart deeply, answer a question you had or cause you to see a need for change in your life.
  - He may use the words of a song during worship to bring truth to your heart. God may take information in your head and transform it to revelation in your heart.

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- Convicted your heart about something that grieved Him. But on the other hand we should also wait on Him to affirm what pleases Him or what He likes about us.
  - Each time a name or face of someone comes to your mind it is God's way of asking you to lift them up to Him. You may ask Him what he /she needs, or how you might encourage them.
  - You may have felt a nudge to make a phone call, write a note or do something else to bless and encourage someone. It is God's heart wanting to touch that person through you.
  - It is "**normal**" to hear God's voice in our every day routines.
  - God wants you to stay in faith that He has, is, and will speak to you in many ways as you listen and expect to hear. Clarity of hearing is directly proportional to faith.
6. God desires that we read the logos, the written Word of God, and meditate on it (chew on it, ponder it) until that Word comes alive (becomes rhema).
- A rhema word is when the Spirit gives your spirit a word for a specific time or situation.
  - We should read the Bible with a listening heart, one that says, "God I want to know You, not just about You!"
7. The following are some things to consider when listening for His voice:
- God may use **someone else's mouth to reveal His will** whether it is a word of knowledge, God's wisdom or some other message.
  - **Divine appointments** or God-incidences tell us God is working to bless and guide us. We see God in those "just-then" moments bringing His plan to pass. (Ruth 2:4-Ruth & Boaz meeting, Acts 10 Peter going to Cornelius' House, and all Jesus' divine interruptions)
  - He may give a **dream** to reveal what will happen if we keep going the way we are.
  - We may have a **vision** which is much like a dream except that we are awake. He may show us things that our minds cannot understand.
  - He speaks directly to our hearts. An **inner voice** talks directly to our minds from within in the form of thoughts, words, or sentences.
  - **First impressions** are often God. The next thought is often the enemy trying to rob the word and reason you out of it.
  - Your **spirit affirms** what you heard.
  - It is often the opposite of what you think normally, thus it **offends the mind**.
  - **Peace** is the umpire of the heart.
  - **Being still in your body and quieting your heart and mind** will help you hear. During this time focus on Him and His Word.
  - Keep your heart listening, even when you are doing other things
  - Test it to see if it agrees with His Word
  - Test to see if it reflects His character (NOT nag, accuse, shame, condemn, control, etc.) and the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, etc.)
  - Share what you heard with others: spouse, pastor, spiritual leader to get their input
  - Fasting can also help you train your spirit to rule over your soul and body.

### Preparing to have Communion with God

1. There are some practical guidelines which will help us as we draw near to God. We need to prepare physically, mentally, and spiritually. **Physical tension, distractions, over-control, much activity, and analytical thought all hinder our experiencing God.**
2. The first ingredient we need is **physical calm**. Some characteristics of being calm are a steady, even heartbeat, calm, easy breathing, relaxed muscles, and no tension. God desires that we enter His rest through faith in Him and obedience. (**Heb. 4:9-11**)
3. We need **focused attention**, not allowing other thoughts, things or people to distract us. We should fix the eyes of our heart on Jesus, the Lover of our soul. (**Heb. 12:1-3**) This includes ordered thoughts and a focused mind.
4. **Letting be** is the next area. This involves not being driven by our desires, being able to let go mentally of problems and situations we have no control over, and being patient. We choose to cease striving or being anxious and simply know our God. (**Ps. 46:10, Phil 4:6-8**)
5. We live in a state of **receptivity**, abiding in God and fully depending on Him. He desires that we stay “stuck” on Him, allowing an awareness of God flowing through us. We get all our ability, strength, wisdom, and understanding from Him. Relying on the Holy Spirit is a way of life.
6. We live life from the place of a **spontaneous flow**. There is a river of living water whose source is God Himself. He desires that we tune into and live out of His spontaneous flow. This includes a sensitivity to and a willingness to follow the inner promptings of Spirit. an awareness of creative expression flowing within, and not wanting to live in “boxes.”

### Seeing with the Eyes of Our Heart – A Part of Hearing

1. The Bible records that several people saw the Lord. From Moses and Jacob having face-to-face meetings (**Gen 32:30, Ex. 33:11**); David writing about “beholding your face in righteousness (**Ps. 17:15**); and Isaiah seeing the Lord high and lifted up (**Isaiah 6:1-8**)
2. Spiritual eyesight, the eyes of our heart, is not valued or emphasized in comparison to our intellect and rational thinking. There is too much spiritual blindness. **Revelation 3:18** speaks of the churches needing to “get salve to put on your eyes, so you can see.” We need the eyes of our heart, our spirit, healed so we can see truth, wisdom and revelation.
3. **God calls us to behold Him**. It is in beholding Him we are changed. (**2 Cor. 3:18**) Often when God or angels spoke to man, they first said, Behold (look, see). Then they said, “Don’t be afraid!”
  - **Behold** is used 1400 times in the Bible
  - **Lo** is used 200 times. It means behold, lo and behold, look and see with heart-eyes.
  - Look up a few of the verses that focus on beholding the Lord: **Ps. 27:8, Isa. 40:9-10, Matt. 12:18, John 5:19, Heb. 12:2-3, Rev. 3:20.**
  - Ask the Lord to open your eyes, heal spiritual blindness, and guide you into the holy imagery where He can meet with you. Invite Him to draw near even now.

## Hearing & Meeting with God

4. Our heart's posture should be one of **devotion to our God**. Encounters with God are works of His grace.
  - We don't make Him come to us by our own efforts. Love does not demand or manipulate.
  - Having a **humble heart** is a mark of self-surrender to God's will and mercy. (**Isa. 66:2**)
  - Our attitude should be that of waiting at Jesus' feet to receive all that He has for us like Mary did. (**Luke 10:39**)  
Quietness and being replaced doing.
  - Our hearts should **long for a divine romance with our God**. The ones that know God intimately are those who love Him deeply and thirst for His presence. (**Ps. 42:1-3,7-8**)
  - If your heart is one of deep devotion like a lovesick bride, He will come and embrace you.

### Meeting Place Prayer (Reflective/Contemplative Prayer)

1. **Seeing Jesus plus hearing Jesus = meeting place.**
2. Some people have an "inner sense" of what He is saying. Some people hear his audible voice. Some people "see" with the eyes of their hearts. For some it may be like watching a video. He knows how you would best see and hear Him. That is how He manifests His presence to you.
3. There are many ways and places where you can meet the Lord:
  - See yourself in a passage of scripture. As you meditate on His Word and wait on Him, ask Him to speak to you.
  - Remember/see yourself in a specific time and place. Invite Jesus to reveal Himself to you there. Invite Him to speak truth to your heart there.
  - Think about one of your favorite places and picture it in your mind. See the details of it. See yourself there. Then ask Jesus to reveal Himself to you there. See His face. What expression is on His face? Ask Him why and let Him speak truth to you.
  - Beholding Him we are changed. Go to your meeting place often. Let Jesus hold you close to His heart and hear His heart beating with love for you.
4. Your friendship with God will grow deeper and sweeter as you spend time with Him.
  - Prayer is meant to be a dialogue with the Lord. Ask the Lord questions and wait expecting Him to answer them.
  - Get a journal to write down what He says. It serves as a great encouragement during the dry, challenging times.
  - Approach your time with the Lord with anticipation and freshness!