
HEARING GOD

HOW TO HEAR AND DISCERN THE WORD OF GOD IN YOUR LIFE

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THE DILEMMA

In most of the various Christian groups, the preachers, pastors, and priests, as well as many of the authors and laity, will preach their messages under the all- powerful claim that God gave them the message. We hear many statements such as – “God says this,” or “The spirit led me to say that,” or “Scripture tells us such and such,” etc.

While they are each claiming their messages and instructions are from God, many times they are in direct opposition to each other. We hear preachers saying that a particular passage of scripture means one thing, while some other author claims it to mean something entirely different. We also see passages of scripture that directly seem to contradict each other. It is no small wonder that we have so many different Christian churches. But how can we understand this? Can we ever worship in spirit and truth when almost everybody understands a different truth and claims the Spirit or bible told them that truth? How can we claim that God protects His word and then see so many different ways of reading it? How is it possible to know any truth?

Before tackling these questions, I’d like to provide my opinion as to why we are in this state.

In our being, we have three modes of existence, three bodies. We have a physical body, a spirit, and a soul. The word of God comes to us in many ways, but whether it enters through the eye, the ear, or the heart, the first place it goes is to the spirit. Here the word is heard by the spiritual ears and is translated into a language that we understand (Rom 8:26). It matters not whether the spiritual ears received it directly from the Spirit of God or whether they heard a person speak or whether they read a book, including scripture. In all these cases, they hear the word with their spiritual ears. If they have no spiritual ears, they do not hear the word. God is in the business of growing spiritual ears.

Once the word has been heard, it is then translated and sent on to the heart and mind. This is the area of the soul. The soul interprets the word. Unfortunately, the soul is also the home of our idols. All our wants and desires and preconceived ideas are housed here. Our traditions, our pressures, etc., all find a home in our soul. So, our interpretation is skewed by all the elements within our soul.

Once interpreted, the word is then sent on to the body where it is applied. That is, the word is acted (or not acted) upon. We preach a message, teach a lesson, do something, or do nothing, but we act upon the heard, translated, and interpreted word. Of course, the body has its own problems. There are issues of self-control, temptation, laziness, and gluttony. To mention a few.

As you can see, there is plenty of opportunity for us to get the word of God wrong. First, we may not even hear it. Then, we could hear it, but mistranslate it. These first two errors are because of faulty spiritual ears.

Once we pass the barely heard and/or mistranslated message on to the soul, the soul completely corrupts the message based on our traditions, ideologies, and desires. This is just as true when we read scripture as when we received the word from the spirit. Either way, first we must hear the word through the spirit and then move it through this process. Eventually the corrupted message reaches our body for action. We act, teach, or preach incorrectly, but we have enough spiritual memory to remember that the word originally came from God, and so in our incorrectness we say, “God told me...”

It is very much like the old game of telephone, only the consequences are much more serious (see Ezekiel 14, Jeremiah 23).

This is why one person can have a completely different interpretation of scripture than another person, and why one person can hear God saying one thing while another hears God saying something opposite. It is not God who is having trouble communicating. It is all part of His plan, but it is our idols and sin that prevent us from understanding truth. The problem becomes complicated by the fact that once in a while we get it right! When this happens, we quickly build up a sense of pride in our “closeness” to God or to the truth. This causes future interpretations to become clouded and we are back where we were before, but now we have followers who watched us “get it right.” They feed the pride and soon we are hearing God saying all sorts of things that He simply is not saying. Many cult followings and denominations had just such a start – an original truth that has had many lies piled on top of it. None of us are immune to this problem. The times when the true voice of God is heard, translated, interpreted, and then acted upon correctly are rare.

Understanding these concepts allows us to see why there are so many different opinions about what is true.

INTRODUCTION

As we continue down this path, I want to preface these modules with a warning. Some of what I must say in order to convey this message will not sit well with some of you. I do not mean any personal accusation by any of it. My statements are generalizations with no particular person or denomination in mind. If you find yourself wearing a shoe with incredible comfort - it is purely coincidence. But I also ask that before you reject these concepts - please weigh them in your spirit. Ponder them before the Lord. Then do as you feel led.

Also, I am trying to keep these modules very short - there is so much more detail I could offer to those that are genuinely interested. I will be skimming over some topics where we could dive much deeper. I guess I'd need to hear from you if a deeper dive is desired and how you would want to go about accomplishing it.

AGES AND FEASTS

Before we can get straight to the solution to this situation, I need to give a basic framework upon which to hang future modules. If you have been reading my other writings, you may know that I believe that the feasts are indeed the markers for the appointed times in the cyclic, spiral calendar of God. There are many smaller fulfillments and some major fulfillments of each feast and the calendar has not yet been completed. But the spiral does not only represent on the universal scale. It manifests itself within the corporate body of Christ as well as down to the individual walk of each believer. Some have said that the feasts are tied to the Messiah - and of course they are - but in the same way that everything is tied to the Messiah. He is the Lord of the Sabbath - He is the Lord of the Feasts - He is the Jubilee. But the feasts also apply to the individual believer as well. And this is directly tied to our ability to hear the voice of God.

God is the God of the Ages and he has brought us through several of those ages so far. However, his plan of salvation throughout all these ages is the same for everyone. God uses several images / illustrations to help us grasp the ages. He speaks of harvests and various "fruits" of the harvests. He speaks of child bearing and pregnancy, He uses His feasts, He uses the stories of the early kings of Israel (Saul, David, and Solomon), He even uses the lives of the church fathers (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his sons - and all their wives). The church began long before the cross. Why is this relevant to hearing God? Because a big part of hearing and properly interpreting God is being able to say Amen to His plan. Not ours. We need to review the life of the corporate church and then we will apply that to us as individuals.

So, from a corporate sense:

- the church had its Passover experience when they left Egypt and this also began the Passover Age.
- the church was baptized in the red sea and came out of the "water" into life just as the sun was rising on the day of First Fruits.
- the church was given the law on stone at Mt. Sinai on Pentecost
- the church was given the opportunity to move onto the fall feasts when, on the day of atonement, they failed to cross into the promised land. On this day, they began to separate into those that could hear God and those that could not.

These were all foreshadows of the fulfillment in Christ:

- Christ fulfilled Passover and ended the Passover Age.
- Christ fulfilled First Fruits by ascending to His Father on First Fruits (this was not his Ascension in Acts)
- The Holy Spirit was given and began the process of writing the law on our hearts at Pentecost - starting the Pentecostal Age

The church has been in this Pentecostal Age since Pentecost of 33 AD. But we are coming to the very end of the current age.

Each of us, in our own walk also encounters this same sequence as God deals with us according to our own personal feast schedule. Christianity has forgotten about the Feasts and the beauty of God revealed within them, but in this closing of the age, He has wonderfully begun the process of restoring our understanding of His schedule vs our schedule. We have been of the mindset - get saved - go to heaven. It's what is in between that we often can't figure out and upon which most of our disagreements lie.

The feasts help us to understand how God is working with us. Our moment of belief is our Passover experience. In our being, we have recognized the uselessness of our own leavened work and claimed the blood of the lamb to cover our sin. We then symbolize this via baptism - we go down into the sea (die to the law of sin and death) and rise again with Him (to the newness of life) on our own personal first fruits. The next thing most of us tend to do? Where's the promised land? Let me in Lord! We're ready to move on to the Fall Feasts (even though, in our Christian walk, we never perceived it that way). But guess what - the "in between" is Pentecost.

Now I can hear all you Assembly of God folk saying - Amen brother, preach it! Sorry to disappoint, but I am not talking about Pentecost from the perspective of the Pentecostal movement that started in the last century or so. Though there is a connection to the timing of it all. I'm talking about Pentecost from the perspective of God and His feasts - I'm talking about Him writing His fiery law on our hearts.

You see, without experiencing Pentecost in our lives, we cannot experience the fall feasts - trumpets, atonement, and tabernacles. You are saved, but, believe it or not, that is not the end of God working with you! Praise the Father that he is not only the author of our faith, but also the finisher.

Pentecost is where we learn to hear, discern, and properly interpret the voice of God.

THE LAW

The word "law" or "the law" means different things to different people and in different contexts. The true law is the character of God. God walks in righteousness and is holy. It was illustrated in the person of Jesus Christ as the word incarnate.

Now a token of this law - a very finite morsel of it - was given to Moses at Mount Sinai and communicated to Moses at various other times. This is the Old Testament Law and is what most Christians think about when one says the word law. It was given at Pentecost and written in stone.

The Hebrew people then took the Old Testament Law and attached various meanings to it and wrote all this down into the Talmud. This is the Traditional Jewish Law. It is important to realize that to the typical Jewish person there is no difference between the Old Testament Law and the Traditional Jewish Law. If there was a difference, deference would be given to the Traditional Jewish Law.

Christians today have their own traditional law; that is, rules of do's and don'ts put upon them by society, their church, their fellowship, or themselves. This law includes their system of moral conduct as well as defining what is acceptable doctrine. I call this law, Traditional Church Teaching.

The Old Testament Law was not done away with when Christ came to this earth. Rather, that which it reflects, (the character of God), was illustrated by the ministry of Christ who fulfills the law. Jesus fulfills His own character. The essence of the law is love because the essence of God is love and the law is fulfilled in love. New Testament Christianity is not permitted to disobey this law anymore than Old Testament Christianity. **Salvation was never achieved by the law and it still is not today!**

There has been a shift from the physical to the spiritual as it relates to mankind's understanding of the law. Some of the Old testament laws have been completely fulfilled by Jesus, but the spirit and principals of those laws are still representative of the character of God. God has not changed and He still acts according to the principals of who He is.

1 Jo 3:4 Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.
Rom 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

John calls sin the transgression of the law, Paul then indicates that we cannot continue in sin or lawlessness. What law are we talking about?

Rom 7:6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.
Rom 8:2-5 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. (3) For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: (4) That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (5) For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

The law we now follow is the law of the spirit. The letter of the law is insufficient to guide us into all love, but the spirit of the law will allow us to walk in righteousness. This does not remove the righteousness of the Old Testament Law, nor does it remove our obligation to obey it. It simply points out that obeying the law does not mean following the letter, but the spirit, of the law. The Old Testament Law is a guide to a more perfect reflection of God's character and as we come into agreement with this law (through our Pentecost experience) we follow it not because of obedience, but because we agree with it.

To be clear - None of this is about salvation.

MAN'S SOLUTION – MANAGE AND CONTROL

Over the years, man has come up with their ways of solving the dilemma stated in our opening chapter. The next several pages will cover some of man's "solutions."

APPOINT SOMEONE ELSE TO HEAR THE WORD FOR US

God provided the church in the wilderness for our instruction. The experiences that occurred to the Hebrew children, are the very experiences that the modern church is experiencing. What began at the first Pentecost under Moses, began again at the Pentecost under the holy spirit. The 40 years in the wilderness equates to our 40 jubilees in the wilderness waiting for Christ.

Let's take a look at what happened at that first Pentecost. The people had the option to hear the word of God directly:

Exo 20:18 And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off.

Exo 20:19 And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.

Exo 20:20 And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.

Exo 20:21 And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.

Instead, the people were afraid of the consequences of hearing God's voice "lest [they] die." You see, the word of God burns. It is a consuming fire. At the Pentecost in Acts we see the flames upon the heads also representing the fire of God as it writes their law in the hearts of the people. To do this requires burning off flesh.

Deu 4:24 For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.

Deu 4:33 Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?

Deu 5:22 These words the LORD spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice: and he added no more. And he wrote them in two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me.

Deu 5:23 And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, (for the mountain did burn with fire,) that ye came near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes, and your elders;

Deu 5:24 And ye said, Behold, the LORD our God hath shewed us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire: we have seen this day that God doth talk with man, and he liveth.

Deu 5:25 Now therefore why should we die? for this great fire will consume us: if we hear the voice of the LORD our God any more, then we shall die.

Deu 5:26 For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?

Deu 5:27 Go thou near, and hear all that the LORD our God shall say: and speak thou unto us all that the LORD our God shall speak unto thee; and we will hear it, and do it.

Deu 5:28 And the LORD heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the LORD said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken.

Deu 5:29 O that there were such an heart in them, that they would fear me, and keep all my commandments always, that it might be well with them, and with their children for ever!

Deu 5:30 Go say to them, Get you into your tents again.

The Hebrew people told Moses to go hear from God and then he could just give them the message. They went back to their tents. But that is not the plan that God has for his people. He has created us to hear - and he speaks to us directly. He says:

Deu 4:36 Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he shewed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire.

The thing is, the Hebrew people weren't 100% wrong. The word of God does burn. Notice this was all a Pentecost event. God was setting the stage for our Pentecost experience. That is, as we hear the word of God, it burns off our flesh. It destroys our idols. It provides spiritual instruction.

Later, Jesus tells us to deny ourselves and take up on our cross daily. He who wishes to save his life shall lose it. etc. Paul says he dies daily. The truth hurts. The word of God burns off our flesh.

What did the new testament church do? Well, it followed the pattern of the church in the wilderness. It appointed men to hear the word of God for them. For the catholic churches, it is the pope and the priesthood. But we have also continued the policy into the reformation. Although, there is a basic understanding that God may speak to people, we have put such rigid restrictions upon this "word" that most have given up hope on hearing. Instead, they trust their pastor to bring them the word of God each week and they receive their instruction that way. But often, this word is corrupted by the process we outlined in the first module.

Once again, this is not the plan of God for Pentecost. This is a church stuck in Passover. And many Christians are also stuck in Passover. They believe, they have crossed the Red sea, and then they laid a foundation, built a house, and starting waiting for heaven. But God did not stop after he brought the people out of Egypt. He did not stop on the other side of the Red Sea. Just like then, the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire are still leading us into all truth. If we are not able to move when the spirit leads - we are not walking in faith. We are not fulfilling Pentecost in our life.

Rom 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Rom 1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.

Man's first solution is to appoint someone else to hear the word for them. Many don't do this consciously. We have simply grown up under this methodology. It never occurred to us that we could or should hear the word directly from God. If anyone does ever feel they may have heard the word of the Lord, they are usually shut down pretty fast by their peers or pastors. Often, they are ridiculed or corrected. Very rarely do people trust the words they hear let alone what others hear. We will cover more of this in a different module.

DENY OTHERS FROM HEARING THE WORD

The story of the old testament church continues in other biblical passages. As I mentioned earlier, the early kings illustrate another set of truths. Saul, Israel's first King was given to Israel according to the idols

of their heart. They demanded a king - and God gave them what they wanted, but not what was best for them. This is a pattern also for those of us who want to hear God. Often, He answers according the idols of our heart. But that lesson is not for this module....

The kingship of Saul represents, again, the church during Pentecost. It should be no surprise to anyone that Saul reigned for 40 years (40 jubilees). And because God is who he is, he made sure that Saul was appointed on which day?

Let's take a look:

1Sa 12:17 *Is it not wheat harvest to day? I will call unto the LORD, and he shall send thunder and rain; that ye may perceive and see that your wickedness is great, which ye have done in the sight of the LORD, in asking you a king.*

The wheat harvest first fruits were gathered at Pentecost. This, among other things, allows us to attach the reign of Saul to the church during the Pentecost age. Let's learn a lesson from Saul:

1Sa 14:24 *And the men of Israel were distressed that day: for Saul had adjured the people, saying, Cursed be the man that eateth any food until evening, that I may be avenged on mine enemies. So none of the people tasted any food.*

1Sa 14:25 *And all they of the land came to a wood; and there was honey upon the ground.*

1Sa 14:26 *And when the people were come into the wood, behold, the honey dropped; but no man put his hand to his mouth: for the people feared the oath.*

1Sa 14:27 *But Jonathan heard not when his father charged the people with the oath: wherefore he put forth the end of the rod that was in his hand, and dipped it in an honeycomb, and put his hand to his mouth; and his eyes were enlightened.*

1Sa 14:28 *Then answered one of the people, and said, Thy father straitly charged the people with an oath, saying, Cursed be the man that eateth any food this day. And the people were faint.*

1Sa 14:29 *Then said Jonathan, My father hath troubled the land: see, I pray you, how mine eyes have been enlightened, because I tasted a little of this honey.*

1Sa 14:30 *How much more, if haply the people had eaten freely to day of the spoil of their enemies which they found? for had there not been now a much greater slaughter among the Philistines?*

We need to come back to Jonathan again, because the story starts before this part of scripture. For now, we will focus on the fact that the "appointed" leader of the people insisted that the people not eat food until evening. In scripture, food represents spiritual hearing. Good food is the voice of God. So here we have the leader insisting the people not hear the voice of God and learn directly from Him. However, Jonathan didn't get the message. Ironically, the reasons he didn't get the message is because he was already following the spirit in his life which brought him out of the hearing of his father, the appointed leader.

Because of this, Jonathan took the end of his wooden rod (I hope you see the Cross here) and dipped it into the honeycomb and ate the honey by means of the rod. And then the bible says that Jonathan tasted its sweetness. NOPE. It says Jonathan's belly was full. NOPE. Verse 27 - it says *his eyes were enlightened!* This is a confirmation that we are not looking at food here, but truth. By means of the Cross, Jonathan heard the voice of God and his eyes were enlightened. And guess what - He wants this for each of us!

Now of course, the natural thing to do is kill this person. They contradicted our instructions, our understanding, and, of course, the correct hermeneutic! And so farther down in this passage we see that Saul prepares to kill his son for his "disobedience." Today, we don't so much kill each other - but we kill the spirit and we do what we can to stifle the truth that is revealed to individuals. In this case, the victory

Jonathan achieved through the Spirit of God was so great that the people stepped in and prevented Saul from killing his son.

Saul represents the church of the Pentecost age, and this church has not truly learned to walk in Pentecost. We will see that throughout Saul's life hearing God is a constant issue. But Jonathan, the offspring of Saul, lived in the fullness of Pentecost, heard the voice of God, and walked in the spirit with an eye toward Tabernacles.

Why would the church want to keep people from hearing the voice of God? There are some pure reasons. But there are also some impure ones.

1. It can cause confusion. People may hear the word of God but may not be interpreting or translating it correctly and without discernment, people might do all sorts of "ungodly" things. They might teach "errant" ideas. This can confuse the body. Often, we hear the verse "God is not a God of confusion." as an answer to this situation, but then we forget that God did confuse the language at the time of Babel and that Jesus spoke in parables so that the people could not hear and believe. Clearly, a little confusion is not the worst situation in the eyes of God. He'd much rather have confused people walking in faith, than certain people stagnating in death. This is especially true when we consider that many spiritual leaders - like Saul - are "authorized" to hear and speak for God, but their messages are no purer than those to whom they are preaching.
2. If people are able to hear the voice of God themselves, they may disagree with the leader. They may discover that the leaders are teaching in error. This is simply not acceptable and it is very difficult to build churches this way. It is much better to keep the flock babies in Christ. No meat for them. You see meat will begin to reveal the much-needed spiritual discernment (a later topic) that will reduce the confusion and solidify the truth. Often, this truth will differ from the current church / denomination teaching.
3. Some denominations don't prevent their people from hearing, or even imply anything negative about hearing. Instead, they have gone to the completely opposite side of the coin and insist that if you aren't hearing from God you aren't saved. This also is a shame and forces a skewed hearing of God that is so convoluted by the idols of the hearts of the people desperately trying to hear God so they can claim their salvation.

Notice the common thread of all three of these scenarios - fear. The same issue the Hebrew children dealt with. The same issue king Saul dealt with.

Now, I will be coming back to this, but I need to inject this comment at this point - we CAN hear the voice of God through teachers. This is one way that God does communicate with us and I will be coming back to this in a later section. But the key is to hear the voice of God in the teacher - not the voice of the teacher. See the difference? The voice of God comes in many ways, teachers are one of them, but they do not replace our own hearing of the voice of God. As a matter of fact, I hope you are hearing Christ through my words in this document. I don't want you to hear my voice. How can you know if it is my voice or the voice of God?

We will be covering that in the future section on Spiritual Discernment. I can give you a hint - it has nothing to do with using your mind to decipher day counts, your knowledge of history, the talmud, jewish

tradition, or the early church. It is not even determined by how much of the bible you know, have read, or have memorized. Understanding the stars and the astronomical tables will not help you discern spiritual truth. It is not a method of the mind at all. It is not dependent on being a pastor, priest, or missionary. But we'll save this bit for the Spiritual Discernment module.

The only way we can grow through our Pentecost experience is to hear the voice of God, let it burn off our flesh, destroy our idols, grow our faith, and rest in Him to bring us to Tabernacles!

INSIST ON THE "PROPER" WAY GOD SPEAKS

Warning: this module has the potential to stir the pot a bit. So far, we could have said Amen, as the modules dealt mainly with *leadership*. This one gets much closer to home as we all find *ourselves* saying many of the things that I will bring up in this module. Also, on the surface, many of our "excuses" or "tests" seem valid, or even necessary, but they are devices that prevent us from knowing Him, hearing Him, and walking in faith. To clarify, I will be illustrating common "objections/requirements" to hearing God. Some of those are used by us every day and have even been used on this forum - but I am not thinking of any particular person. Please don't take this personally - as I said before, if the shoe fits, then hold it up to the Lord and let him convict or confirm your position.

How many times have we heard people say something like, "If God is real, why doesn't He show himself?" Or, "If I could only see a miracle, then I'd believe.", or "If God audibly spoke to me then I would listen and obey." Of course, Jesus contradicts this saying, "[neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.](#)"

As the Pentecost church "matured", it began to find ways to control the hearing of the word of God. We have already covered a couple of these: appointing a leader to hear for them, insisting that the flock not eat / hear. But these solutions did not really control the situation. There were many pesky scriptures that implied that we would hear the voice of God and there was also the experience that some people continued to hear God and confuse the flock. The church couldn't outright deny the idea that God speaks to His people, so they came up with much more subtle ways of controlling it. It should be mentioned, that some denominations do outright deny that God still speaks to his people. They believe and teach that the gifts are finished and no longer required. Scripture is all we need.

But even outside of these denominations, we find restriction after restriction placed upon hearing of the word. We claim, "Certainly God speaks to His people, but...". There are certain acceptable ways of hearing and other unacceptable ways. Certain times are ok, other times are not. God is allowed to speak certain words, but not others. God must only speak with a certain tone or quality of voice. We'll get into the particulars, but first let's look at some scripture:

[1Ki 19:5 And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat.](#)

[1Ki 19:6 And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.](#)

[1Ki 19:7 And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee.](#)

1Ki 19:8 And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

1Ki 19:9 And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?

1Ki 19:10 And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

1Ki 19:11 And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake:

1Ki 19:12 And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

1Ki 19:13 And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?

Here we have a man of God who has heard the voice of God many times, has called down fire from heaven, has been fed by angels and yet still needed to learn how to hear God. Once again, this is a Pentecost story - as a matter of fact, Elijah is on the same mountain where God visited Moses during that first Pentecost. It is possible he is in the very cave that Moses was in when God passed by him. There are other hints of Pentecost in this story, but that would be covered in a more detailed writing.

Notice the similarity to our current day - Great and Strong wind (hurricane), earthquake (earthquake), fire (fires out west), but the voice of God was not in those things - instead it came in the form of a still small voice.

Now the parallel to our modern church is that we determine the proper way for God to speak. We expect that if God is going to talk to us (which we can't deny) then it better follow a certain pattern. I am going to list our modern day "earthquakes, winds, and fires" and if someone hears outside these parameters - then it was not from God!

1. Must confirm scripture - everything we need to know is contained in scripture already
2. Must be balanced
3. Must be confirmed by many witnesses
4. Must sound a certain way
5. The person hearing must have certain credibility
6. Must be accompanied by true results
7. Must be taken very lightly - should not be used to form doctrine

I will say right up front - all of these are 100% false. They seem very logical and even spiritual on the surface. I would even say that a huge part of the church teaches or enforces or insinuates these as necessary elements to applying the word heard by individuals. And, I would guess that some of you reading these words right now are thinking - "well now you've gone too far!"

These precepts, and others I have not listed, are our earthquakes, winds, and fires. Each of them comes from a heart of fear. I know that as you read this you can easily say, no - it is wisdom not fear. But remember, the wisdom of man is foolishness to the Lord.

1Co 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

You should read all of 1 Cor 2 at this point, but I won't paste it all into this module.

What seems like wisdom to us - even Christian wisdom - is not. Only spiritual wisdom is relevant in the interpreting of God's word. And that does not come from our human understanding, but is revealed through hearing the word of God, and confirmed in walking in the light of that which is revealed.

MUST CONFIRM SCRIPTURE

Let's tackle this one right of the bat because it is likely where most of you will have concerns about my mental state.

There are a couple ways that this is an improper restriction:

1. The real statement behind this is: Your word must be confirmed by my interpretation of scripture.
2. God can reveal things that simply aren't in existing scripture

Dealing with item 1, our interpretation of scripture may be formed by many things from personal study, denominational teaching, mentoring, even our own revelation from God. When someone says, "God told me...." we apply our understanding of God's word to either accept, ignore, or reject what that person says God told them.

Now - let me be clear about something - God has one word. He speaks it in many ways. One way is through scripture. But that is not the only way. Because we have the written word of God in the bible, we are tempted to believe that we can be "more certain" about our understanding of that word, than some other word that we hear in our spirit. But that is not true. As we pointed out in 1 Cor 2. Man can no more discern the word of God in the bible than in their spirit. The only way to discern spiritual truth is through the Spirit. Even if you are reading the words on paper right in front of you. You see, the *bible* is not a lamp unto our feet. The *word* is a lamp unto our feet.

It is funny, because we will fully believe this about unbelievers. We will be sure to preach that even if they read the word, they simply do not have the enlightenment of the spirit to properly understand - it takes the Holy Spirit to open our eyes and teach us. But then we assume that this same thing does not apply to ourselves. Hearing the word of God through the bible is just as impossible as hearing the word of God in our spirit. And I dare say, it is even more difficult, because we start from the assumption that we are understanding! We start with a clear idol in our heart/soul that says, "I understand this better because it is written down in the bible."

Although God does not contradict himself, from our perspective there are many contradictions in hearing God's word. Spiritual logic is different than carnal(fleshly) logic. Let's look at some examples.

- Peter on the rooftop being told to eat whatever food he wished - at the time, this would have been a violation of God's apparent word and the scriptures. Yes, we know better now, but that just proves the point that what was known at one time, according to scripture, was not sufficient.
- Hosea told to marry an adulterous woman - many would have found that reprehensible in the eyes of the law and the proper interpretation of scripture.

- Abraham told to sacrifice the child of promise. This could never have been confirmed by anyone's interpretation of scripture - even to this day.

I could go on and on, but these are fresh examples. There are multiple examples of people who heard from God and the word would have directly contradicted anyone's proper understanding of scripture.

Dealing with item 2, the scriptures cover a great many things. But not everything. And, as we know, the definition as to what actually comprises "the scriptures" has changed over time. In between those times, when one book may have been included and another not, was the scripture just as perfect? Was the word of God just as protected? Indeed, if we don't believe that God speaks to men outside of scripture, then how do we justify the canon itself? No, most believe that men, moved by the spirit of God, selected just the right set of books to include in scripture. The list did not come from scripture and therefore our very definition of what constitutes scripture was determined outside of scripture. There are many examples of movements of the Lord that cannot be found in the bible. God once spoke to me details about a particular person that I could not have known and were not in the bible. They were confirmed a few minutes later. Ironically, the message He was telling me was not even about that person, but about the church in general. This is another story and one that would be part of the detailed version of this study, but not this shortened version. The point is, God reveals things that are not in scripture. This happens throughout the scriptures. I would even add, that almost always when God talks he is revealing something new.

But, some would say, what about if it contradicts scripture. For example, "God told me to steal that loaf of bread". So once again, our interpretation of scripture is that when it says, "Thou shalt not steal." It means just that. Pretty simple, right? And sometimes, it really may be that simple, but not nearly as often as we have convinced ourselves. Once we make our determination on "the truth" we tend to think it should be obvious to everyone. It becomes an idol to us and it is obvious to us. We teach our friends and family, they grow up and teach their family, denominations start, over centuries, much of the church teaches this "truth", but it may have never been true in the first place.

For all of us who think - yes, I can see how that happens to others, but I am open to other ideas, watch out! Only by hearing the word of God can you burn off the idols in your own heart. You cannot be burning off the idols through one ear and pouring water on the Spirit through the other.

One of the common ways we "discredit" the word of God heard by others is to imply that the other person is not interpreting scripture correctly. We have a certain acceptable way to interpret the bible. We use words like Eisegesis, Hermeneutic, context, idiom, literal, etc. But each of these is a manmade construction. This does not mean that they have no value. But their value is limited and should certainly not be held to a higher standard than the word of God. Often, we would rather follow the religion of our hermeneutic than the very word of God. God is not limited to our concept of how to interpret his word. And often, I believe he intentionally sets our concepts on fire.

Now - in a future module, I will cover the idea how we can then make proper spiritual discernment and how we handle, as a body, the multitude of words heard by people that cause so much confusion in the body. I just need to lay a bit more foundation first.

MUST BE BALANCED

There are many concepts that sound great on the surface and are meant in the purest sense by the people speaking about them. Some of these concepts, though, are abhorred by the Lord. One such concept is balance.

There are a few things God says he hates, one of them is the state of being lukewarm. He would rather us be hot or cold. He is an "all in" type of God. He never asks us to be balanced. He asks us to give every last penny, to deny ourselves, come in last, turn the other cheek, love our enemies, be a sacrifice, love him with our whole everything, be foolish before the world, and downright die for his name's sake.

There is nothing further from a walk of faith than a balanced person.

Now I accept the fact that people mean different things when they use the word balance. And there is biblical evidence that we should not to be overtaken by every whim of passion. Zeal without knowledge is not the way of the Lord. From that stand point, balance may be a way of expressing this. But the word brings in so many modern hidden attachments that I think we should avoid expressing our walk with God by use of the word "balanced."

Our hearing must be accompanied with discernment. If that is what is meant by balance, well, ok. But then let's just say discernment instead of balance.

The God I know has a glorious history of keeping us off balance

MUST BE CONFIRMED BY MANY WITNESSES

This is an interesting one. The law is clear, truth should be confirmed by 2 or 3 witnesses. And yet, 2 or 3 witnesses often confirm lies. On the other hand, often when something is confirmed by 2 or 3 witnesses, we still dismiss it because of the other reasons discussed in this section of the proper way to hear God. Sometimes we insist on even more witnesses, or indirectly, we appeal to the many witness of the opposing position. How many times have we heard some way, "Most people believe" Or "Most biblical scholars agree...."

When we look at this - we only insist on the two or three witnesses when we already don't believe it. Even with the two or three witnesses, we find other reasons to dismiss the word.

We appeal to the superior numbers and use this to uphold our version of truth and deny the word heard by someone else. We have multiple scriptural examples where the majority was simply wrong. Here are a couple:

* The prophets of Baal outnumbered Elijah in 1 Kings 18

* The prophets to Ahab and Jehosephat outnumbered Micaiah 1 Kings 22

I could go on. What we see is that volume of numbers is not relevant to truth. As a matter of fact, in both of the cases above, we did not even have a second witness other than the events themselves. This ties into balance. The balanced person would weigh (with balances) the word they are hearing with the

“truth” from others and then determine if it is the voice of God. But the one walking by faith has learned to recognize His shepherd’s voice and obey regardless of mass appeal.

WHAT IS OUR PURPOSE?

We often answer this question with some form of statement that includes the words - "To glorify God." I don't disagree that this is definitely part of our purpose, but how? How do we glorify God?

Let's ask a different question - Why are our children here? What is their purpose? Certainly, it isn't to glorify their parents, right?

Well the two may be closer than you think. We raise our children teaching them right from wrong, disciplining them when necessary, scolding, praising, mentoring, coaching, teaching, etc. Our hope is that when they have grown, they can make good and proper decisions. We want them to be people with character who adhere to a code of ethics we find acceptable. We want them to make good judgements, to be happy, to learn from their mistakes. We want them to raise good children themselves. In so doing, they bring honor to us as parents.

Guess what - this is what God wants from us - his children. The metaphor can only go so far, but the ideas are the same. God accomplishes these goals through what I am calling Pentecost. In the church, we typically call this sanctification. But this word, by itself, is not very explanatory. By using Pentecost as a picture in various scripture passages the outworking becomes clearer. This is God's way of shaping us. Of course, God is a perfect parent - so in the end, our shape will look very much like Him and therein lies His Glory.

Throughout our spiritual walk, God is working on us. He is talking to us all the time. Due to what I outlined in the first module, we rarely notice.

In order to bring us into communion and agreement with God he must empty us of our flesh. Bit by bit He burns off our desires and beliefs. Little by little, one word at a time, he destroys the lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh, and pride of life within us. The Hebrew children were correct - to hear God is to be burned - and to die. Unless we die to ourselves, we will not be able to hear or discern the word of God.

Most of us would agree with the need to burn off our desires - but might stumble with the idea of burning off our beliefs. A personal story might be helpful.

Most of my spiritual life, I pleaded with God to speak with me. There were many years of apparent silence in return. But occasionally there would be a small word and that would force me to sacrifice a part of myself. Whenever I heard God, something more would need to be disposed of or given up. I am not necessarily talking about "sins" that I indulged in, but that would-be part of it. It reached beyond sins, and into ideas, goals, dreams, beliefs, etc. This happened for many years as piece by piece I became more and more empty of myself and more and more filled with His rest.

Then on the Day of Atonement 2004, 40 days before my 40th birthday, God gave me a significant message that He wanted me to write and send to the churches. The point was to talk about coming into the Rest of God. I was to distribute it to the church of America and I selected 4000 churches to receive this message. The message consisted of about 14 pages dealing with similar topics as this thread but with more specifics in certain areas. God also told me that during the 40 days from Atonement to my 40th birthday He was going to demonstrate to me a portion of His rest. He also mentioned that though I would send the message to the churches - not one would repent and/or respond.

During the next 40 days, I saw victories in my life that I had often cried out to the Lord as being too difficult to overcome. I walked in a righteousness and peace in ways that are difficult to explain and are hard for others to understand or believe. Unfortunately, after the 40 days, much of my old self returned. But my understanding of that time has been sealed in my spirit.

For the record - after sending out 4000 letters, not one church responded to my note.

One of the things that occurred during this time was an awareness of how worthless my belief system was. Some of it was downright blasphemous. I was a "strong" Christian. But over the years of eating what others had fed me, I had collected a lot of trash and I spewed it out like dung when I taught others. I use this term specifically because this is what God calls the results of the teaching of those who are not properly hearing, discerning, and distributing the word of God. God brought me to the core of my beliefs and showed me that much of what I believed was actually preventing me from hearing and discerning God's voice. Much of my belief system were idols in my heart. As a matter of fact, I was raised a pretty "good" boy. The sin in my life was actually less of a hindrance than my beliefs. But, during that time He also revealed to me the meaning of "Whatever is not of faith is sin." It was a very humbling experience.

Now, lest some of you feel that you can understand how my belief system should be struck down, but yours are solid and righteous, I assure you that I was a pretty normal Christian. I did not have some far-out beliefs. I was raised Baptist and had attended EV Free and other protestant denominations my whole life. I was active. I taught adult Sunday School. I adhered to the church statement of faith.

Until He broke me, showed me His rest, and changed my view of Him. Effectively, I started over with this basic understanding:

He Is and

He Is

who He says

He Is.

BELIEFS

HE IS AND HE IS WHO HE SAYS HE IS.

This core, which God presented to me, is a threefold witness to "I AM". It is a simple statement, but there is so much power in it. Let's take some time to pick it apart just a little.

He Is ...

God exists. No matter what else we know, feel, or believe about Him - He exists. There is no explanation that fits the evidence better. This evidence can be physical as in the wind, water, trees, stars, the Brooklyn bridge, etc. It can be metaphysical as in miracles, beauty, evil, love, etc. It can be logical as in rational thought, proofs, scientific methodologies, etc. And it can be spiritual as in the inner conviction within my spirit. He Is! This also demands his sovereignty. He is so pervasive that he need not clarify beyond - HE IS.

and He Is who He says He Is ...

This contains so much.

First, it implies that he tells us who he is! He is not an unknown God. He reveals himself.

Second, it demands His integrity. He tells us who he is - but he really is who he says he is. He is Holy and he keeps his promises.

That means I can be confident in Him. I can rest in Him. I can trust Him.

Next, it means this belief system is all about Him - not about me. It is him in the beginning, him at the end, and him all the way through.

In a way, this simple statement reflects, once again, the three main feasts -

He Is (Passover - believe in me), and

He Is

who he says (Pentecost - hear me)

He Is (Tabernacles - become one with me)

Some of you are concerned at this point. You are uncomfortable that this belief system does not talk about trinity, salvation, death on the cross, resurrection, heaven and hell, depravity of man, rapture, baptism, communion, righteousness, etc. Please feel free to add your favorite item to the list.

I understand your concerns. I promise I am not teaching "another gospel." But let's not jump too quickly away from this point. Because, my friends, this is THE point we need to really drill home. I cannot overstate this. These are just electrons on a screen to you right now, but I believe it would be good to bring this statement of faith to God and meditate on it. Ask Him to open the eyes of your heart in regard to it. Once we add anything to this - we are then free to add much to this and much of what we might add has the potential to be unnecessary and / or errant.

Then, once you have given this to God. Once you have died to your personal desires and beliefs. Then we can slowly, ever so slowly, ask the question: But who does He say He Is? Notice the essence of this question. We are not asking What. We are not asking How. We are not even asking Why. We are certainly not asking When. We are asking WHO. The whole point is to know Him, not doctrine.

For most of us, it will take years of burning off our flesh and destroying our idols before we can move onto this question with honesty. This burning happens each time we hear his voice and submit to his will. He who wishes to save his life will lose it. Our life must be lost, for His name's sake. We must daily, deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow him. We can only do this if we are hearing his voice. We can only correctly discern his instructions as we deny ourselves and allow ourselves to die.

[Rom 1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.](#)

It seems the smarter we are, the more school we have, the more seminary we have attended, the harder it is to simply know God. This is also true if we are rich, talented, healthy, etc. Now we might start to see why God needs to bring us low, in order to raise us up. We get in our own way so often. It seems so appropriate to study scripture, memorize, etc. But if we are not hearing the Spirit, we are just looking at words on a page, forming our own doctrine at the expense of knowing Him.

Who does He say that He Is?

The heavens declare it, the wind shouts it, the trees and flowers state it, all creation sings out his praises and tells us who he is.

[Rom 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:](#)

God speaks it out through everything. Sometimes very vocal, sometimes cryptic, sometimes silently, sometimes plain as day. He reveals himself in his word both written and via our spirit. In truth, it is all his Word. He Conceive, He breathes, He completes through his Word. We begin to see that he is all powerful, all knowing, he is more than one, yet one at the same time. He is the Father (conceives), the Holy Spirit(breathes), and the Son(Word). Because he is sovereign he may even communicate via Strong's numbers, gematria, pyramids, donkeys, stones, etc. But like all words, we must also use spiritual discernment. If we start with a preconceived desire/belief, we have already eliminated our ability to properly discern. I'll skip the scripture proof for now, but he often gives us words that agree with our idols.

He is in all, with all, and through all. He is in charge of every minute detail of every single event that happens. Nothing is outside of his control. Every experience you have, every breeze on your cheek. Every raindrop, every leaf in the wind, every howl of the wolf. Oh, my brothers and sisters, we so underestimate the power and intimacy that our Father delivers into our lives.

The simple process is:

We hear

Our faith grows

We obey through faith

We act in a way that burns off our flesh, destroys our idols, and brings about death to ourselves

We hear.....

This cycle repeats over and over and begins to grow our spiritual ears while also cleaning out our house. This in turn reduces the idols in our heart and allows for clearer understanding of the Word we hear. Over time, as God works to finish the faith he began in us we find ourselves coming into agreement with him. Indeed, as we come into agreement, we find ourselves doing that which he desires without Him having to tell us. His goals, as our father, are being completed. This is Pentecost. Hearing of the Word so that His Law is written in our hearts. It is necessary for us to achieve spiritual maturity. It is necessary for us to move into Tabernacles. Unfortunately, much of the church will stay at their Passover experience. Saved to Heaven, but not coming into agreement with God. But to those with an eye toward Tabernacles - Pentecost is the road home.

We will have our ups and downs. We are still stuck in this flesh. This is not a perfect path. We must be tried with fire until only the pure is left. For a bit of encouragement to those who are on this path - there is much dying. But the balm is lovely. He will hold us up - he does this for our good.

[Isa 54:5 For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.](#)

[Isa 54:6 For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God.](#)

[Isa 54:7 For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee.](#)

[Isa 54:8 In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the LORD thy Redeemer.](#)

There are times when he appears to have forsaken us - but this is but a moment. Be at peace - rest in him - for there is no better place, no drug, no belief system, no person who compares to knowing the savior and hearing his voice.

NOTE: For those who look at the scripture above and say, He is talking about Israel, you can't apply this to us, today. Oh, my friend, Yes! Yes, we can!

Now that we have the basic precept, we can begin to build on it. You'll notice that the basic belief system does not even demand scripture. But as we begin to answer that question, "who does he say that He Is?" We find only one set of documents that even come close to holding the truth. We call these documents the bible. They explain the beginning, the middle, and a lot about the end. Though, on the surface, they seem confusing and perhaps even wrong when it comes to science, history, and archeology, time after time, with new advancements in those areas, the bible is proven correct, not false.

The bible contains fulfilled prophecy, consistency in message over many years and many authors, and longevity of record. Also, those of us who believe it to be the word of God can see it's living nature. I have no doubt that when the time comes, God will reveal to us all the hidden features of the bible that we are not aware of and that will prove his wisdom and power and the authority of his written word.

With the bible our chosen written Word, we must still approach it with what we have learned so far - it is the word of God but that does not mean that we can translate, interpret, and apply it correctly by simply reading the words on the page. Anything eaten from the word must endure the same scrutiny as that which we ingest in other forms. I explained this in previous posts in this thread so please go back and review what I mean so that I don't have to restate it here. The key is that as we build upon our foundation, we must hold each new understanding lightly until such a time as it passes our spiritual

discernment - and then we can allow it into our belief system. But none of these beliefs that we add should ever be more important than simply knowing the God that the belief is about.

My friends know me to varying degrees. Some know what day my birthday is. Some know what colors I like. Some know my dreams and ambitions. But I would much rather my friends spend time being with me than study to figure out what color I like best. I would certainly rather have them hang out with me, then arguing about what day I was born. The point of the friendship is not what they know about me. The point of the friendship is knowing me through quality time and mutual philo love.

That last point bears repeating - the point of our relationship with God IS our relationship with God. NOT what we know about Him. But, some would ask, couldn't I be a better friend if I knew when your birthday was, or what colors you prefer? I could then give you tailored gifts on your birthday. Yes, this may be true, but what if you understood wrong? What if you thought my birthday was in December when it was in September? What if you thought I liked green when I actually prefer fuchsia? So along you come with your green gift in December and say, "I am honoring you with this special green celebration in December." I could certainly appreciate your desire and effort, but I already have a closet full of green stuff.

Now the astute person will say, see you just proved that we *do* need to add the detail to our knowledge, otherwise we can't honor God properly. There are really two responses to that. Yes. And No.

As we will find, when we begin to hear who God says he is, he is someone who likes to hide the truth. And he is someone who likes for us to search it out. (Some of you just breathed a huge sigh of relief!) But, He is also someone who would rather have us sit at his feet in love and worship, then run around doing a bunch of things in his name that he never asked us to do. So yes, we seek Him. Yes, we look under the rocks and in the crevices of scripture to gather nibbles of nourishment from His word. But, we hold each of those nibbles lightly in comparison to the much more vital relationship with Him.

Now, we all know these things. Some are likely thinking, well this isn't new. We even have a saying to protect this concept: "in essentials, unity; in doubtful matters, liberty; in all things, charity." The problem is that so often we don't adhere to this saying. But an even deeper problem is that we can't seem to discern which points are essentials, which doubtful, and which all. So we begin to separate on matters that aren't even essential to God. But the deeper problem than all of this is where it really gets scary. The deeper problem is that we place our beliefs higher than our relationship with God. In reality, even those of us who are super sincere about our walk can so easily place, WHAT we believe to be equal or higher than, IN WHOM we believe.

Yes - other people do that - but not me! Really? Test this yourself right now - How many of the things you believe could be challenged and removed from you before you started to put up walls? 6-day creation? Talking snake? Worldwide flood? Trinity? Second coming? Rapture? Virgin Birth? Eternal Damnation? Lordship Salvation? Grace based Salvation?

You see, we all have our point wherein we say - NO! You can't take that away! If you take that away then you're not saved! You don't even believe "the gospel." And if you take that away, you are a heretic. For the record - I'm not taking anything away in the posing of this question. Just using examples.

Now let's see this:

Mat 10:22 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

Mat 24:13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

Mar 16:16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Joh 10:9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

Act 2:21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Act 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

Rom 10:9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved

Rom 10:13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

I listed these verses to show what is not mentioned: doctrine, theology, eschatology, prophecy, dogma, etc. Romans 10:9 does give us a specific thing to believe, that God raised Jesus from the dead (we'll come back to this later).

Everything else may help us understand God. It may help us teach about God. But all that knowledge won't save us and won't save others. And often, it is that "knowledge" that drives others away and *keeps us from actually hearing the Word of God*. We each have our threshold on what one must believe to be saved. We have our threshold on what one may teach and not be heretical. But the actual gospel is much simpler than that.

Rom 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Am I saying that studying and understanding God better and trying to gain insight into the plan for the future is wrong? Absolutely not!

The whole point of this section, is to put our beliefs in their proper perspective. To hold them much lighter than we hold our relationship with Jesus. Jesus is going to save me because of WHO HE IS! Not because of who I am. I put my trust in HIM, not in my belief system. And as I do this, my ability to properly hear, interpret, and apply the Word of God in my life increases.

Ponder these things and meditate a bit on the following passages. Let it sink in.

- [Romans 4:13 - 5:18](#)
- [Heb 11:17-19](#)
- [John 11](#)
- [2 Cor. 5:18 - 5:21](#)

JESUS IS THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE.

This is a trifling fact to people who have been saved for many years. But let's not skip over it so quickly. We see that the disciples, Mary, and Martha all had the same lack of understanding. These people had been with Jesus when he healed, when he fed thousands, when he calmed the storms. Yet they still did not understand that he was the resurrection and the life. Like so many of us, they thought he meant, *I will cause the resurrection and I will give life*. They knew about Him. But they still didn't know Him. He is always in the present.

Abraham, though, knew Him (Gen 22:1-19). He did not consider his "dead" body, nor Sarah's "dead" womb to be a problem when he *heard* the Word of the Promise. And later, when He *heard* God and was told to offer Isaac as a sacrifice (into death), in faith, he obeyed. Let's look closer at that faith.

First, let's take the time to notice that three times, Abraham answered the voices he *heard* with, "Here I am". The first time from God, the second time from Isaac, and the third time, from an angel. He was completely available - not "wait a minute, but, "here I am". He heard the voice of God in many sources. He walked in the faith of what he heard. But what was the true source of that faith? We see Gen 22, that God rewards him because he did not withhold his only son. Once again, he was completely available to God. Even the very thing that God had promised him, he was willing to give up. He was taking up his cross daily, denying himself, and following the Lord.

But that is not really true, is it? I mean, yes, it is true, but it is not the full story. Sure, Abraham was a great guy. He gave his whole being to God, he trusted him, he followed him, he walked in faith and it was counted as righteousness. But why/how did he do that? There was no bible at that time. He had no one to compare notes with. What, about God, made Abraham give up everything and follow him?

We have the answer in Hebrews 11. The answer is that Abraham KNEW God and he knew that God was the resurrection and the life. Abraham KNEW God and he knew that He Is who He says He Is. God said he would make a great nation from Isaac. In order to do that, God would need to raise Isaac from the dead even if Abraham sacrificed him. Abraham new God would keep His promise and that He was able to keep His promise. But Abraham also KNEW God's character, and knew that God would provide a alternate sacrifice. Abraham KNEW God.

In John 11, Jesus wept. The people at the time thought it was due to his love for Lazarus. They did not realize, it was because of His love for them but they did not know him. They knew about him. They saw the miracles. But they did not know Him for who he really was. We only truly begin to know Jesus as we deny ourselves, pick up our cross, and follow him. What is your cross today? Ask him. He'll tell you. Then, walk in the faith of what you hear and this will burn off your flesh and perfect your faith.

This trifling fact of Jesus being the resurrection and the life is so much bigger than Christianity has understood. HE IS THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE. Every baby conceived, Every king crowned, Every sparrow flying, Every flower blooming, Every hair on your head, Every breath you take. It all happens because of the active work of Jesus. If Jesus had not died on the cross and rose again, nothing would exist outside of God. The only reason that anything is here at all is because of His work. He did not just save us so we could go to heaven when we die. He saved us to become all in all in Him.

[1Co 15:22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.](#)

1Co 15:28 And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

Rom 11:36 For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

The very fabric of our existence is because of what Christ did on that cross. HE IS THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE. I can't say it loud enough.

So, yeah, when the voice of God sounds within my spirit, I will respond in faith and allow him to burn me, because only in my death can I truly see Him - the Life. And I won't let my belief system and dreams get in the way of that, because my religion, my beliefs, and my desires are tombs of dead ideas and concepts, but He is Life! Even the most cherished beliefs are worthless compared to the Light that shines from the Eyes of My Lord.

Oh, there is so much more I want to say here! My spirit sings with songs of thanksgiving for the one who was and is and will forever be. My heart weeps for the Truth to be fully known and understood by his people. I long for the day when His righteousness shall cover the Earth like the waters cover the sea. We have so defamed the name of Christ in our attempt to define Him. Indeed, we have recast him into our image rather than be conformed into His. But He will rain down his truth upon an obstinate and stubborn people and He will glorify His name above all names and He will be faithful even in our unfaithfulness - not for us - but because of WHO HE IS.

GOD'S SOLUTION - SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT

Now let's take a look at God's solution to the dilemma posted in the opening chapter.

INTRODUCTION

It is important to point out that I don't believe there is a right and wrong way to discern. I don't think of it as a science. It is more of an art. Even the word "art" is not a good way to describe it. I am going to describe the discernment "process" as it works for me. I believe my approach is both biblical and spiritual.

First - I need to invent a word - spiralogos - I will use that word to represent the situation where God speaks to someone in their Spirit through an actual set of words, not just feelings or impressions. But it would not include audible words.

God speaks to each of us in different ways. Something that may be effective for me, may not work at all for someone else. He speaks to me according to what He knows I will grasp. To others, the very way He speaks to me, will be their evidence for the fact that I am not hearing from God. For example, a person (Beth), may be very adamant that every word of God in the spirit must be confirmed with an almost exact statement from Scripture. For her, if the word received cannot be 100% and almost identically confirmed from scripture, it was not from God. So, when God speaks to Beth, He may be very specific in His use of scripture. He may even use existing verses to confirm for her what He is telling her. Or, He may simply speak to her through scripture and not bother speaking to her in any other way. This does not make her more or less special in the eyes of God, nor does it make what she hears more or less vital to the body of Christ.

Others do not have the same reservations about exact confirmation from scripture that Beth has and therefore, God speaks to them in a different way. Also, there are gifts the Father gives that also influence how we hear the Word of God.

I'm going to get personal for a bit just to allow you to see some possible ways that God can talk. I will show you how He talks to me. - I will use specific examples in order to be as clear as possible.

For me, I hear God in multiple ways:

1. I hear him spiralogosly. This is so regular for me now that I take it for granted. Then I slap myself for taking it for granted because of how beautiful it is. He and I have actually shared laughter (at my expense) at the fact that I sometimes cry myself to sleep pleading to hear His voice and asking where He is and why He won't talk to me. Why would that induce laughter? Because the whole time I am praying this way, I am also communing with Him as part of my prayer. This is confusing, and hard to describe. But effectively, it would be like Bob and Tom having a conversation about why Tom never talks to Bob. Well, duh - they are talking about it right then. So, I laugh, and in my spirit, He laughs with me.

2. I hear Him through impressions - most people would think of this as intuition, but it is not that and it has taken me years to know the difference. It is a specific understanding of a situation that could not have been described with a few words. I simply know something I could not otherwise have known.

3. I hear Him through scriptural wisdom. I don't know what else to call this. I read scripture and can see the true meaning behind the words in a way that many don't. I can see the bigger picture from a piece of scripture that looks one dimensional on the surface. To me, it feels almost like x-ray vision. I see the words, but I see much more than that - I see the multiple meanings behind the words. I cannot simply read the bible. Every time I open the bible and start reading, I am injected into a cacophony of truth.

4. I hear God through my emotions. This one is a bit odd, but like a mood ring, my emotions change as a way of moving my spirit. I feel God and the feeling speaks to me.

5. I hear God in music - all kinds of music (both natural and manmade). This almost always amounts to God showing me His beauty and His glory.

6. I hear God through the voice, media, and writings of others - in this case, one needs to listen past the speaker, to the one within the speaker.

Now, I'm sure many of you have similar experiences. I'm also sure that many of you, if you haven't already given up on this thread, feel like I am not in touch with reality. It has taken me years to understand these various ways God was speaking to me and to know when to trust what I was hearing. Others may have heard God in other ways - I have never seen an angel, I have never heard an audible voice, I have never had a spiritual dream, I have never had a vision, and Jesus has not directly appeared to me. But that is just me.

I believe that everything that makes us what we are comes to play in the hearing of God. Some people need a more visual representation to either hear or believe what they hear and act on it. Others don't. Some people need words on a page, others don't. One isn't better than the other. Just different. Also, sometimes someone will hear or see something and not be able to explain it - such as a dream or vision - but another person knows the meaning. This becomes a corporate Word from God and is edifying to both parties.

In scripture, food represents spiritual intake. Hearing is how we eat spiritual food and it is what builds our faith. I will start using food metaphors at this point.

Taking a closer look at some of the ways we could hear God, we will notice that many of them apply to all three facets of our being. Let's take dreams as an example:

- We can have dreams from a purely physical source. Sometimes what we put in our body can cause us to see things or dream dreams. This is a modern take on the classic, *A Christmas Carol*, where Scrooge thinks that perhaps his vision of the dead Marley is the result of "...an undigested bit of beef, a blot of mustard, a crumb of cheese, a fragment of an underdone potato..."
- We can have dreams from a purely soulish source - what we put into our mind and heart can also induce dreams. Children who watch a scary movie tend to have scary dreams afterward. People who spend a lot of time studying eschatology are more likely to have rapture dreams.
- We can have dreams from a spiritual source - what we put into our spiritual being can cause spiritual dreams, some of these are from God. Some not.

To some degree, this is true for many of the ways we potentially hear God. So how can we tell the difference? And how do we limit the non-spiritual, and non-Godly words?

Picking apart the act of hearing God, we end up with these basic steps:

1. Presentation of the word (Scales) (Armor of God)
2. Identification of the source of the word (Fins) (Path of Righteousness)
3. Translation of the word (In the Spirit) (Grieve not the Spirit) (Faith not Sight)
4. Interpretation of the word (Cud) (Meditation)
5. Verification of the word (Split hoof) (Witness)
6. Purification of the word (Blood) (Do not eat the blood)
7. Application of the word (doers vs hearers) (Faith)

Beginning with the next module - we will start going through these steps.

PRESENTATION OF THE WORD

We left off with this basic process. Remember this is not a science - so documenting any of this limit a process that, by its very nature, is unlimited. But treating this like a loose framework, hearing God consists of:

1. Presentation of the word (Scales) (Armor of God)

2. Identification of the source of the word (Fins) (Path of Righteousness)
3. Translation of the word (In the Spirit) (Grieve not the Spirit) (Faith not Sight)
4. Interpretation of the word (Cud) (Meditation)
5. Verification of the word (Split hoof) (Witness)
6. Purification of the word (Blood) (Do not eat the blood)
7. Application of the word (doers vs hearers) (Faith)

Note: This sequence can take years from point 1 to point 7 - or it can all happen in a split second.

Note: God can supersede this process whenever He wants - if he needs us to hear and act - we will. Even if we are a donkey!

Note: Hearing God is not something you can just decide to do. Reading this material explains things, but will not produce an ability to hear God. This is something you grow into. Understanding these ideas may focus your growth, but this is not an overnight solution.

So now we get to the heart of the matter - How do we hear God? How do we know that what we hear is God? How do we know what God is saying? How do we correctly understand what He is saying? How do we apply it to our lives and the lives of others? You are wondering, why didn't I just start with this section? Why all that background, when this is where we really wanted to get? As we progress through this framework, the background will prove its usefulness.

[Mat 4:4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.](#)

In scripture, food represents spiritual nourishment. Just as in the physical realm, some food is better than others. We cannot live only on physical bread. We must also hear the Word of God. Jesus is not only referring to the Bible here. He is referring to *every word that proceeds from the mouth of God*.

As we covered earlier in the thread - the law of God represents his Character - and is spiritual. It just so happens that God has some laws involving what we should eat. When one looks at the spiritual meaning of these laws, we begin to see a pattern for how to properly consume spiritual food. We'll not get too deep into this analysis, but feel free to work through the food laws to whatever extent you wish. I'll just cover this from a very surface level. (It should be noted, that my interpretation of these food laws is still developing - but these surface principals seem appropriate).

[Gen 9:4 But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.](#)

[Lev 11:3 Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is clovenfooted, and cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that shall ye eat.](#)

[Lev 11:9 These shall ye eat of all that are in the waters: whatsoever hath fins and scales in the waters, in the seas, and in the rivers, them shall ye eat.](#)

[Lev 11:21 Yet these may ye eat of every flying creeping thing that goeth upon all four, which have legs above their feet, to leap withal upon the earth;](#)

[Lev 11 Do not eat birds of prey or scavenger birds. NOTE: this is a personal interpretation from a list of 24 birds we cannot eat.](#)

The first step in hearing God is the presentation of the word. Before anything else can happen, we must hear the word. For many, this step, in itself, is a challenge. We have been taught for so long that either God isn't speaking to us, or if He is, we can't possibly hear Him, and if, by some impossible chance He speaks to us and we hear Him, it is too dangerous to act upon it without confirmation from 12 passages of scripture, 6 deacons, and possibly a miracle. Ok - that was a bit sarcastic, but you get the idea. Effectively, we have been trained not to hear God.

Partner this with the noise of the world and the confusion of voices within our head - it is no wonder that so few people are hearing God and those that think they are all disagree with others who think they are!

So, what is needed in order for us to hear? Scales. Some may have wondered why I put this Hearing God thread in the Spiritual Warfare section. It is because the very act of hearing God is spiritual warfare, even in the most peaceful settings. There is a battle on for your soul. It starts by distracting and trying to kill your body. It continues through deceiving and corrupting your soul. And it moves upon your spirit as well to induce doubt, greed, lust, and pride.

Imagine a radio that could receive all stations at the same time - it would prevent the radio from being effective at all. Our spirits are constantly hearing - but the noise is such a cacophony, that we cannot distinguish the still small voice that is God's. And so, we must take on the mindset of a soldier, focused on the mission, and in tune with our encrypted chain of command. In order to do this, we must put on the full armour of God. Let's look at this common passage:

Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may **be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.**

Eph 6:12 **For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.**

Eph 6:13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to **withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.**

Eph 6:14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

Eph 6:15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

Eph 6:16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

Eph 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Eph 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Eph 6:19 And for me, that **utterance may be given unto me**, that I may **open my mouth boldly**, to make known the mystery of the gospel,

Eph 6:20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, **as I ought to speak.**

We see that putting on the armor is a necessary requirement in order to discern God and stand. We see that in the evil day, this requirement is crucial. Also notice verse 19 - in this context, Paul indicates he will receive "utterance" which in turn enables him (via faith, which comes from hearing) to act and speak boldly - as he ought to speak. Notice the sequence.

Armor - Stand - Ask - and then steps 1-7 - Paul wants to speak with authority what he ought to speak.

So, we eat only things with scales and fins from the water. We translate this to the spiritual truth that we must be wearing the armor of God(Scales) to properly hear Him. Some of you may not understand how I am making this leap of logic. Hold it up to the Lord and see what He confirms for you.

So, to finish point 1 - we must now analyze the Armor of God. We have often talked about it, but have we ever thought through what it means? How, exactly do I put on the armor of God? I'll do a quick analysis as it pertains to hearing God.

ARMOR OF GOD (SCALES)

Reminder: I am sharing based on my current understanding, but my walk with the Lord is one of constantly holding things up to Him. I don't pepper my posts with "in my opinion" very much because that just adds words to the page. But please know that I am still growing in my understanding and can learn from others as well.

We often talk about putting on the armor of God, but we rarely talk about how to do this. What does it mean to put on the helmet of salvation? Telling me "Put on the armor" does not tell me how. In order to take this from a cute metaphor to a spiritual reality I will give you my quick take on the armor of God - particularly in connection with hearing God.

Loins

The loins represent our energy and what we produce - Truth should be the primary focus of our efforts. We cannot stand on lies or deception. **We gird our loins with truth by walking in integrity to the word.** We are who we are. If we pretend we are something else, or that Error is Truth, we are not putting ourselves in a position to hear truth (word of God) when he speaks.

Breastplate

The breastplate protects our heart and lungs - The heart representing our desires, the lungs representing our voice. **We put on the breastplate by desiring righteousness above sin, by holding all things before the Lord, by speaking rightly and withholding judgment until the Father reveals righteous judgement to us.** This is where we become one with the Father as our desires and words, become His desires and words. When we hold our own desires higher than His or when we judge situations and people before we have heard from the Father, we close out the voice of God.

Foot armor

The feet represent our message -

[Rom 10:15 How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!](#)

This will be difficult for many of you, but the Gospel as taught by the dominate portion of Christianity is not the Gospel of Peace. I have started a different thread on the [Restoration of All Things](#) where I intend to share my concept of the gospel of peace. The Gospel of Peace teaches:

- Love your enemy - instead of - Kill or torture your enemy
- God's word will not return void - instead of - Man's or Satan's will is greater than God's
- God Wins All - instead of - God loses much

Without understanding the Gospel of Peace, one is in a position that makes it difficult to hear God. For they are primarily listening to a different spirit. **We shod our feet with preparation for the Gospel of Peace, by learning and delivering the message of the Gospel of Peace.** We must receive this message first - and then deliver it to others. Once our message is true - the one who gave us the message (God), is better able to be heard. This is mainly true due to the fact that until we come into agreement with the Gospel of Peace, we do not know God for who He is and this hinders our ability to hear his Word.

Shield and Sword

The shield is primarily defensive as the Sword is primarily offensive. However, both can be used in either context. Our faith is our defense. But not so much how that just sounded. It is not OUR faith that we trust in, but HIS faithfulness. **We wear our shield by resting in him**, which is our act of faith, and this provides us the confidence, yes even the authority, to extinguish any attack. The sword is the word of God. The only actionable weapons we have are our message (feet) and the word of God. **We wield our sword when we act on what we hear in faith.** And what we hear is what we preach. If we could perfectly hear, and if we could perfectly act, we would only do as the Father tells us and everything He tells us, we would do.

Helmet

The helmet protects our head, which represents our understanding and our knowledge. This is part of our soul and is easily corrupted. **We put on the helmet when we have confidence in our salvation.** But we are not satisfied in our salvation. This is much broader than just us. We are not in this battle for our own personal victory. We are fighting for all. Anything less, is second best. To truly wear the helmet of salvation, one must be ready to give their life for another. For we are looking toward the glorious salvation of the Lord. This is about Him, not about us as individuals. When we see Him as Salvation - as The resurrection and the Life - as The Jubilee - As the Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world - then we are wearing the helmet and able to hear him more clearly.

There are no absolutes in this armor. One does not need to wear all parts 100% effectively to hear God. However, the closer we grow to knowing God - the more we say Amen to his word - the better we are able to hear him and to have confidence in what we are hearing. As this happens, the armor will fit better and better, further enabling our hearing of the word.

IDENTIFICATION(FINS)

Once a word has been presented to us, we move on to step 2: Identification. Who spoke this word? Was it God? Was it Me? Was it some other spirit? It is important to keep in mind; this framework is a fluid guide. I am not conscious of this framework every time I hear. I am not checking off the points one step at a time. It all flows together. But for the purpose of instruction and understanding, I have broken it out into these seven steps.

When we eat food from the water - it should have fins. The fins represent purpose, intent, guidance. Is our walk one of purpose? Are we on the path of righteousness? Are we being guided by the Holy Spirit?

Many of us are quite distracted by the world around us. We move from one activity to the other. One day flows into the next into the next. If we stop to consider God and pray we tend to treat it like an event. We *GO* to church. We *SAY* our prayers. We *READ* the word. The fin life is not like that. The fin life keeps us upright, moving forward, and guided. We don't Go to church, because we *ARE* the church. We don't Say our prayers because we pray *without ceasing*. We don't Read the word, because we are *communing with The Word* moment by moment.

When we walk (swim) this way - identifying if the speaker is God is relatively simple - because we are communing with Him as part of our normal motion. On the other hand, if we only take moments here and there to walk in faith, if we schedule our times with the Father, we are easily confused by the various food that comes our way and the author of those words is not nearly as clear.

Mat 14:14 And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.

Mat 14:15 And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals.

Mat 14:16 But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat.

Mat 14:17 And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes.

Mat 14:18 He said, Bring them hither to me.

Mat 14:19 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

Mat 14:20 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.

Mat 14:21 And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.

Mat 14:22 And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

Mat 14:23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

Mat 14:24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

Mat 14:25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

Mat 14:26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

Mat 14:27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

Mat 14:28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

Mat 14:29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

Mat 14:30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

Mat 14:31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

Mat 14:32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

Mat 14:33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

These verses are typically broken into two stories. I will be combining them into one lesson. There is also content pertaining to this lesson earlier in this chapter and later in the chapter, but I will confine myself to the passage given above.

Jesus has gone into a remote location and the people followed him. He spent the day walking among them and healing their sick. Please try to picture this, there are about 5000 people in this area. People were talking, shouting to one another. Children were playing and running around. As people would receive healing, I'm sure there was weeping, and praising. Other's would ask, "What happened?" and the stories would spread across the group. The disciples were moving among the people as well, likely arranging for Jesus to come to some group or another that had a need.

We think of Jesus as God - but remember, in his state - he was human. The whole day, as this was going on, Jesus was "swimming" in the crowd. He was living a full life. He was communing with the Father, hearing His voice, acting on His instructions with faith and authority. Perhaps something like this....

There is a child, Father, bless her, what is your will for her.

She should be healed, my son.

Child - your faith has made you whole. Father, the day is growing long, I am weary.

My strength is sufficient for you.

Yes Father, sustain me. Father, my people do not know you, bring them to me so that I may show them you.

I will, my son. I will.

Father, this old man is on his deathbed.

Let him go my son. Soon he will be with me. I'll take care of this one.

Father, my disciples are confused.

I have something in store for them. We'll be teaching them later.

Father, my feet are hurting.

Stinks to be you, doesn't it!

Thanks, Father, very funny.

You can get away later and rest, the time is so short.

I know. I hear you.

He was intent on his mission, focused on his purpose, praying without ceasing, one with the Father.

Meanwhile, his disciples were distracted by the crowd. Sure, they saw the healing. They blessed the people with what they could. They comforted with their words and with their message. They provided logistic support to get Jesus to the right place at the right time. But even while doing the work of the kingdom, they also saw the sky beginning to draw on toward evening. They saw the challenge of being in such a remote location. And they were beginning to be more concerned about the physical situation than the spiritual.

So finally, they come to Jesus and say, "Hey, teacher, we need to send these people away so they can eat and we're kind of tired and hungry, too."

Father, they have a point, the people need to be fed.

My son, we have been feeding them all day. But to prove this to the people and to your disciples. Let's really give them some food!

Jesus tells his disciples - so feed them. Give them food. They respond, "Ah, Jesus, we have little food to give."

Sometimes, we feel that the food we have to offer is not sufficient. So we give none. Or, we do not trust the source of our food and so we don't want to offer it. But if we walk the fin life, we begin to trust the source of our food and, by the authority of our faith, share that food with others.

I'm going to skip over the fact that this food was barley and fish. That is a lesson for another day. I am also skipping over the fact that there were 5000 people. This has restoration implications. But is not part of this topic.

Son, take the bread and break it - because the few must be broken in order for the many to be fed.
Yes Father.

Jesus then, in acknowledgment to the Father and in the presence of all, breaks the bread and then gives it *back to the disciples to feed the multitude*. The disciples heard the word and passed it out to the multitude.

But the disciples still needed a lesson on hearing the word so Jesus sent them into the sea. Where fish swim.

A storm arose and the disciples, still having not learned to pray without ceasing and to rest in the Father, are dealing with their situation at hand when suddenly they see Jesus walking toward them on the water. But, the wind is loud, life is distracting them, the waves are tossing, and there are so many things going on - they don't recognize who he is. Even when Jesus is right with us, we don't tend to recognize him due to the things in life that steal our focus and take us off the intentional course.

Is this my voice? Is this God's? Or is this the voice of some spirit? They became afraid. So Jesus calls out to them. It is I. But they are still not sure - now they have heard his voice - but still don't recognize it. So Peter says, Lord, make a clear command of me. Then I'll know it is you. If we don't recognize his voice, we ask for clearer instructions. We ask for signs. We ask for confirmation. This way we don't require as much faith. But even though we ask for these things out of our weakness, many times, God is willing to comply, so Jesus says, Come.

And Peter, now certain - Steps onto the water. He grows fins. He is walking in faith. He is in direct contact with God. He has his eyes on Him and Peter's ears are open. He is living his life moment by moment.

But then the wind grows too "boisterous". The distractions of life creep in again. The moment was over and He could no longer hear the voice of His Lord. Without hearing, he lost his faith. Without faith, he lost his authority - he can't act. He begins to perish. To sink. Jesus touches him, chides him for his lack of faith, and rescues him.

This is the state of our life. We are in a boat and the storm rages around us. Even at times when we feel in control - we aren't. And lately, the storm has become more and more boisterous. We must have fins and be constantly and intentionally in communion with the Father. Then, when we hear His voice. It will be easy to identify. Others may not agree with us - but hey, we're walking on water while they are sitting in the boat!

TRANSLATION OF THE WORD

We will step away from the food laws for a moment, because this next stage (translation) is done by the Holy Spirit - not us. Ok, we have heard the word, we have determined the word is from God, but at some point, the heavenly language must be translated into something that we can understand. This also has implications for speaking in tongues, but I am not covering tongues as part of this thread.

Rom 8:26-27 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

1 Cor 13:1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

1 Cor 14:2 For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.

My point in raising these verses is to show that there is evidence of the existence of a language of God that cannot be comprehended by humans. And we also see that the Holy Spirit can make intercession in this language on our behalf. The same happens in reverse.

Although this is not a work that we actively participate in, I believe we can impact the process. We find the phrase, "in the spirit" often in scripture, and many of those times it is referring to hearing God. But how does one become "in the spirit"? Is it something we can choose? Does it just happen?

Gal 2:19-3:3 For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or **by the hearing of faith?** Are ye so foolish? having begun **in the Spirit**, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

We begin to get a hint here - we are in the spirit, when we are not trusting the flesh. We know to apply this to our salvation. But it should also be applied to our day to day walk. We are constantly finding ourselves being presented with opportunities to accomplish spiritual tasks with our flesh. When we do so, we are not in the spirit.

Included in the passage on the armor of god is a precious tidbit, and just as in our steps, the armor comes first and "in the spirit" comes later - in Eph 6 we see the armor of God presented first and then immediately followed by:

Eph 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication **in the Spirit**, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

We are starting to discover a pattern here - to accomplish spiritual things, we do so in the spirit. Notice verse 2 from Gal 3 above, "or by the hearing of faith?". We accomplish spiritual matters, not by moving flesh, but by moving the spirit in God and then acting upon what we hear by the authority of our faith.

Here are some other examples of the counter nature of the flesh and the spirit:

Rom 2:29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, **in the spirit**, and **not in the letter**; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

Rom 8:9 But ye are **not in the flesh**, but **in the Spirit**, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Gal 5:16 This I say then, Walk **in the Spirit**, and ye shall **not fulfil the lust of the flesh**.

Php 3:3 For we are the circumcision, which worship God **in the spirit**, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and **have no confidence in the flesh**.

Col 2:5 For though I be **absent in the flesh**, yet am I with you **in the spirit**, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ.

The point is this - when we put our confidence in the flesh, we grieve the spirit. When we focus on our flesh, we are not in tune with the spirit and our hearing is garbled. The translation is not being done.

Now, there could be a whole thread on walking in the spirit and not in the flesh. But that begins to fall outside the scope of this thread, other than to say - To enhance and increase the translations from the Holy Spirit, we must put off the old man and put on the new. We must walk in the spirit. I suppose if requested, I could start a thread on Walking in the spirit, but I think we may need to finish the major threads I currently have going first.

INTERPRETATION OF THE WORD (CUD) (MEDITATION)

When we eat food that walks upon the land we are to eat the food that chews the cud and has a split hoof. These two "laws" really work together, but I'll cover the cud in this post and the split hoof in the next.

We hear the word, determine it is of God, the word is translated, and then we ingest it. So it has just moved from the spirit into the soul. We swallowed the word of God. But our soul is not trustworthy, as we have already discussed at the beginning of this thread. The soul is where our idols are. And so, God tells us that we need to perform a process by which our soul and spirit work together to prepare the word for digestion.

This process is chewing the cud, and we call it meditation. This is not some new age concept of meditation, but rather, a time period during which we swallow the word, let it sit, bring it back up to our spirit for more hearing, swallow it, let it sit, bring it back for more hearing....

You get the point. By subjecting the word to our soul, which applies knowledge, desires, hopes, dreams while at the same time submitting it back to the Lord in the spirit, it turns our soulish knowledge and understanding into wisdom. This allows for the appropriate interpretation of what God is telling us.

If we simply swallowed the word and moved on, most of what we heard would be corrupted by our own knowledge and desires. Some of these soulish impulses are pure in intent, but that does not make them correct.

Eze 14:1 Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me.

Eze 14:2 And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

Eze 14:3 Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: should I be enquired of at all by them?

Eze 14:4 Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols;

Eze 14:5 That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols.

Here we see that the idols of our heart can change what we hear from the Lord. The word from God will come to us according to the idols of our heart. The elders of Israel knew what they wanted to hear from the Lord - so the Lord told them what they wanted to hear. Lest you say, but that would make God a liar, and that can't be true:

Eze 14:9 And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the LORD have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel.

Don't blame me.

Let us be clear, the souls of the elders are what deceived them. God gave them a word that they could not interpret correctly because of their idols and God allowed their understanding to stand. If they had meditated on the word, if they had submitted it back to the Lord (along with everything else we have been talking about), they would have seen that their idols were corrupting their understanding and turn from their idols and correctly interpret the word from God.

Eze 14:6 Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations.

Eze 14:11 That the house of Israel may go no more astray from me, neither be polluted any more with all their transgressions; but that they may be my people, and I may be their God, saith the Lord GOD.

Even the purpose of deceiving the men was meant to restore the people to their God.

When we are more concerned about proper interpretation than we are in our own doctrines, beliefs, desires, etc. Then our delight is truly in His word and His truth. Then we are like this:

Psa 1:2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

Psa 1:3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The law is the character of the Word - the Word is Jesus.

I'm going to throw something from James in here. We will be moving into more of James' words as we finish off this thread and so this would be a good time to begin that introduction.

Jas 1:19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:

James was applying to this one thing - but that is the beauty of God, he speaks so much with so little. This policy also applies to what we hear - hear quickly - but then meditate on it. Don't immediately speak it back out. Chew the cud awhile. Hold it back up to the Lord. How might you be corrupting His word?

VERIFICATION OF THE WORD (SPLIT HOOF) (WITNESS)

As we mentioned in the last section, the food we take from the land must chew the cud and divide the hoof (split hoof). The split hoof tells us that we need a witness to what we hear. We should not consider our interpretation of what God has told as “truth” until it has been established through a second witness.

Deu 19:15 One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.

2Co 13:1 This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

This does not mean we ignore words that have not been seconded. We still need to take it seriously, but before we act upon it, we seek a second or third witness.

Now, for those of you concerned at the beginning of this thread that I was dismissing scripture as a proper way to verify a word from the Lord, you may finally breathe a sigh of relief. Many times, our verification will come from scripture as our second witness. And what we hear should certainly not contradict scripture. What we must constantly keep in mind is that our process to hear God through the bible is exactly the same as what I have defined in this thread. The bible is not magical in its ability to cause us to hear God. It is just one more way that God speaks to us and this word must go through the same framework as other words of God.

God will confirm his word through another word. It could be through properly interpreted scripture, songs, another person, circumstances, miracles, signs, etc.

But we must be very careful, because once we hear the word, identify it as God, have it translated, and now interpreted - we are at our weakest place - I mean, the Creator of the universe just spoke to us and we understood! How awesome is that! Almost anything that happens next, can be made to seem like a double witness. You see, we just grew a new idol in our heart and that idol came directly from God. To us - it does not seem like an idol at all - but an alter to the Almighty which we are ready to throw our lives upon.

I've used this before so I will just touch on the surface. Abraham heard from God that he would have a son via Sarah. He then had a son. From this son would come a great and innumerable nation. This was word from God. It became an idol in Abraham's heart. Then Abraham was told to sacrifice this son.

Now wait - this would be a word from God that is the opposite of the first word from God. So, Abraham, expecting a second witness, now seems to be hearing that the first word may not have actually been from God.

Do you see this? He could have said, based on the first word and idol in his heart - No. this word to sacrifice my son is not from God for several reasons. I will not obey. He did not do this. Instead he meditated on the word, held it up to the father and walked in the faith of both words at the same time. While still believing the first word, he set out to accomplish the second word.

Now - everything we have learned in this thread (and some still to come) is taught in this story. The unbelievable faith that Abraham walked in should stun us. Only because his life manifested what we have been teaching in this thread was this possible. And he had to learn this through is life. Even after the

promise of a son, Abraham walked in the flesh to accomplish God's spiritual purpose - this needed to be done to teach us how to cast off our own Hagar - but it also was done to perfect Abraham's faith.

God did end up confirming, through the witness of his angel and the ram, that His first word was indeed true. And in this story, we learn that we too have a one who was sacrificed for us. But we also have learned that even a word from God should not stand as an idol in our heart.

PURIFICATION OF THE WORD (BLOOD) (DO NOT EAT THE BLOOD)

There are two more primary food laws that deal with which meat from the air we can eat, and which insects we can eat.

I am still holding these laws up to the Lord for understanding, but the birds law seems to be dealing with a distinction between animals that eat dead bodies and ones that don't. We combine this with another law that states we should not eat the blood of an animal "for the life is in the blood."

I believe this is the final process before we act upon what we have heard. We have now heard the word, identified it as from God, translated into our tongue, interpreted the word, and verified our correct understanding with additional witnesses. Before we act on this word, we cause it to pass one more test - or, a filtration process. The test is this - does it bring life, or death. Is it from a bloodthirsty mindset?

Many times, we know the truth, but we reveal it from a mindset that destroys instead of builds up. For instance, we may know that the true gospel is a gospel of grace, not of works, but if we deliver this message from a standpoint of "told you so" or "you got it wrong" or "you're not really saved because you are trusting your own works", etc. You get the idea. If we deliver the message with a serpent's tongue - and demonstrate much less grace than the message we are bringing - then we have not yet filtered (purified) the message.

We must speak the truth - But, we must speak it in love. This can be a challenge at times, depending on the truth. But even very painful truth can be delivered with love.

All too often, we know the right answer. We know what needs to be corrected in someone or some situation. But we deliver the message in such a way that we destroy the actual message. The recipient can't hear the message over the voice and demeanor of the messenger.

The life is in the blood - we do not eat the life - we add to it. Whatever message you have heard from God filter it to remove the bloodthirsty-ness first. Sometimes this will take time as you ask the Father to give you the proper spirit with which to deliver the message. I see this step ignored very often and it is so painful to watch. So often our "rightness" gets in the way of our loveliness.

A brother or sister, armed with the truth and the authority of the Word of God, chastises another or delivers a message in harshness and wounds the spirit of another.

Love is patient, love is kind. Read the rest of 1 Cor 13 to see the characteristics of love (beyond the scope of this thread) and pass your message and manner through those tests first - then move on the final stage - Application.

APPLICATION OF THE WORD (DOERS VS HEARERS) (FAITH)

This will be my final post in this thread other than to answer questions or concerns that others may have.

So here we are:

1. Presentation of the word (Scales) (Armor of God)
2. Identification of the source of the word (Fins) (Path of Righteousness)
3. Translation of the word (In the Spirit) (Grieve not the Spirit) (Faith not Sight)
4. Interpretation of the word (Cud) (Meditation)
5. Verification of the word (Split hoof) (Witness)
6. Purification of the word (Blood) (Do not eat the blood)
7. Application of the word (doers vs hearers) (Faith)

We have had a Word presented to us and because we were wearing the Armor of God we were protected from many other words that could have made it our way, but walking the path of righteousness and being guided by the Holy Spirit we are more easily able to recognize the voice of our Lord. As the Lord translates the word into something we can understand we begin the process of meditating on the word received and holding it lightly back out to the Lord for confirmation. This second witness comes and confirms the first and we ensure our message / action will be delivered in a way that does not “shed blood”, but rather, brings light.

So now we must apply the word. And I use the “must” intentionally. This is our act of faith. Are we doers of the word or hearers only?

[Jas 1:22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.](#)

Good old James, who generates so much conflict in his telling us to do works to prove our faith. But James is not talking about works *outside of faith*. He is talking about *works of faith*.

[Rom 14:23... for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.](#)

Yes, I totally just pulled that out of context. It's ok.

[Jas 1:6 But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.](#)

[Jas 1:7 For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.](#)

[Jas 1:8 A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.](#)

[Jas 1:19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:](#)

[Jas 1:21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.](#)

[Jas 1:22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.](#)

Jas 1:23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:
Jas 1:24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.
Jas 1:25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.
Jas 2:14 What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?
Jas 2:15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food,
Jas 2:16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?
Jas 2:17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.
Jas 2:18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.
Jas 2:19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.
Jas 2:20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?
Jas 2:21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?
Jas 2:22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?
Jas 2:23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.
Jas 2:24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.
Jas 2:25 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?
Jas 2:26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.
Jas 5:15 And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

James is not referring to the works of so many believers today, who see a need and rush to solve it. Or who desire to be seen and do something that displays themselves. These are not acts of faith. These are acts of sin and death. Remember,

Rom 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

If we are not doing works according to what we hear - we are not walking in faith. But the opposite is true as well. If we hear, and do not walk in the authority of the faith that we just received through the word - we are also not walking in faith.

We must respond by stepping out onto the water. We do not demonstrate our faith in the boat. If we receive a word and do not act, according to James, we do not have faith. These are the works that James is speaking of. The works that result from a spirit led life of faith. The works that result as the last stage of spiritual discernment when we apply what we have been told.

The reason I include this as the last stage of discernment is two-fold: 1. We may never be sure until we step out in faith. 2. As we quench the spirit, our ability to apply the rest of the stages of discernment are hindered. It is a cycle that strengthens or weakens.

Therefore - our faith - without our works is dead. Why does James say, "Can faith save him?" Aren't we taught that it is our faith that saves us? Aren't we taught we are not saved by works? No, our faith does not save us. No, our works do not save us. Jesus saves us. (Please see the [Restoration of All Things thread](#)) Our faith in the fact that Jesus saves provides the fuel to obey His Word.

This idea of walking in the spirit is a deeper topic and though it is deeply connected to the topic of hearing God, it would probably be best to make it a separate thread. It connects to knowing God's will for our lives, making decisions in life, handling sin and temptation, healing and other mighty works, prophecy, teaching, discipleship, and more.

The key starts with how we react when we hear God. Do we obey? Do we make excuses? Or do we shy away because, it might not have really been God? Are we double-minded? Do we step out in faith and then grow afraid? Do we avoid stepping out at all? If we want to hear God - we must then apply what He tells us. It may be a sacrifice he wishes us to make. It may be a healing. It may be an exhortation to a brother or sister. It may be a request to use His resources that you are a tenant of, for a purpose at an appointed time. It may be a message to you personally or the Body at large. Whatever it is, walk in the authority that your faith provides when you hear God.

My dear brothers and sisters, they don't call it faith for nothing! If Jesus was standing right next to us and telling us in straight English, what to do. We wouldn't need any faith to obey.

Now - go forth and hear the Lord!