

Introduction:

I Cor. 14: 24-25 But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.

Today I would like to speak to you on this topic:

How to know when you are hearing a message from God.

Last week as we concluded our sermon series on the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, I received questions from the audience and did my best to answer them as it related to the topic at hand.

There were a couple of questions that started out with...*How do you know when (I)...* and I quickly answered the questions as best I could, given the time we had.

BUT there is something at the heart of these questions that really deserves a longer answer, because what people are really concerned about is that they would not be able to somehow distinguish between what is REALLY a message from God and what it FAKE.

I touched on one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit called Discernment. It is a gift that helps us to distinguish between real and fake...right and wrong...good and bad.

NONE OF US wants to be tricked or duped into believing that something we participate in or something that we are listening to is somehow NOT OF GOD.

(We are almost at the end of chapter 2 today)...The wonderful part about where we are in Scripture as we continue on in Acts 2 is that Peter takes us to school and shows us HOW TO KNOW when we are hearing a real message from God.

REREAD I Cor. 14: 24-25

STORY: Recently my wife and I have been concerned about our son Jonny and his hearing. Many times he will ask us to repeat ourselves, and it happened enough that it began to concern us that maybe something was wrong with his hearing. While at the Doctor the other day I requested that his ears be checked. They checked out perfect!!! Then the doctor looked at him and said, "Now we know that your ears are fine, but your listening is not."

Today we are going to learn how to open our ears to the voice of God by following along in Peter's sermon in Acts 2.

Peter's Sermon Outline

Point #1: What you are seeing is the result of the Holy Spirit and the fulfillment of prophecy.

Acts 2:14-21; Joel 2:28-32

- For more on this I will refer you to last week's message...
- But for today it is important to point out again that Peter immediately takes the hearers of his message to GOD'S WORD. And we will see momentarily that this is his pattern throughout the message.

Point #2: Jesus is the fulfillment of God's signs, wonders, and miracles on Earth.

Acts 2:22-23; Luke 24:26-27; Acts 18:27-28

Acts 2:22-23 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know—this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men.

- He talks about SIGNS, WONDERS, and MIRACLES
- Then he connects all of that to Jesus!
- Some of you are familiar with the term apologetics (the defense of the faith)

I have always been amazed at some of the people in the Bible who appear to be great apologists

- Jesus: Luke 24:27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.
- Paul: Acts 17:3 explaining and proving that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah,"
- Apollos: Acts 18:28 For he vigorously refuted his Jewish opponents in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah.

Peter is giving us an amazing example because HE LEARNED FROM THE BEST!

Point #3: God affirms his Son's position and fulfills OT prophesy by raising him from the dead.
Acts 2:24-28; Psalm 16:8-11

Acts 2:24 God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it. 27. For you will not abandon my soul to Hades, or let your Holy One see corruption.

- When it comes to knowing whether or not someone is speaking on behalf of God or if you want to know if someone is real or fake or if you can trust what they are saying to you... WE MUST START WITH JESUS.
- **1 Cor. 12:3** *So I want you to know that no one speaking by the Spirit of God will curse Jesus, and no one can say Jesus is Lord, except by the Holy Spirit.*
- You want to know if someone is a real preacher/Christian? Ask them about Jesus!
- He isn't just a good teacher. He is not just a prophet. He is BOTH LORD AND CHRIST.
- WE MUST DEAL WITH THE RESURRECTION. If he did not die/rise then our faith is null and void.

Point #4: We are witnesses of this fact.

Acts 2:32; Acts 10; 2 Cor. 13:1(120 eye witnesses is more than enough to establish a fact)

- The Jewish culture demanded the testimony of 2 or 3 witnesses to establish a fact.
- It wasn't just that though...their testimony needed to be in agreement (see the trial of Jesus)
- Peter shows them...if you don't believe me...there is another 119 people standing here who will back me up!
- Peter did not ever stand alone in his ministry.
- They traveled in teams! **(SHARE THE STORY about your first mission trip and the guy who said he wanted to be on his own and not work in teams)**
- Beware of pastors or ministries who do not have a covering, or accountability, and it always appears to center around them.

Point #5: Jesus is the Messiah and he is God!

Acts 2:34-36; Psalm 110:1

- The conclusion of the matter was clear...
- The Bible, Miracles, Signs, Wonders, and God himself has exalted Jesus to the highest position and given him all authority, honor, and power. He has been given the name of that is above all Names...
 - 1) AT THAT NAME EVERY KNEE WILL BOW AND EVERY TONGUE WILL CONFESS THAT JESUS IS LORD
 - 2) There is no other name under heaven whereby we can be saved.
 - 3) ANYONE WHO CALLS ON THAT NAME WILL BE SAVED!

Illustration: Perhaps some of you have participated in an online FB test...it is amazing what you can find out about yourself by these tests. Really important things like...

- Which Disney Princes are you.
- Who is your top friend?
- What words do you use the most?
- Which Power Ranger are you?
- Which member of the Back Street Boys are you?

How you know you heard a good and trustworthy message from God?

A good message is anointed of the Holy Spirit.

(delivered in his power)

A good message is full of the Word of God.

(full of God's truth/**not man's opinion/not for man's glorification**)

A good message establishes Jesus Christ as the answer.

(glorifies Jesus/proves that Jesus is who he says he is)

You see the fruit of the Holy Spirit/Righteousness.

Remember what we read at the beginning of the message today from I Cor. 14: 24-25

But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.

Acts 2:37-41

Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.

Conclusion: How can we know that we are hearing a message from God?

GOD'S HEARING TEST

Use Peter's sermon as a test...(use the Hearing Test example again by raising your hand)

- 1) Is what you are hearing glorifying to Jesus Christ? Who is getting the glory?
- 2) Is the Word of God being presented or just pithy and motivational speeches?
- 3) Is it full of the peace of God and Love? How do you feel on the inside?
- 4) Is it full of the fruits of righteousness? Are people coming to Jesus?
- 5) Is it lifting up one person or is there a covering and accountability?

Ephesians 4:11-14 Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. *Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth.*

Many times we Christians can be like my 5-year-old...we have great ears...but we are just not using them.

He who has ears to hear...let them hear!