

HOW TO RECOGNIZE GOD'S VOICE

1 John 4:1

April 20, 2008 Sunday a.m.

INTRODUCTION

- A. We continue our four part study of how to hear God's voice.
 - 1. Two weeks ago we discovered four things we must do if we are to hear God speaking to us.
 - a. Be open to his speaking.
 - b. Set aside time.
 - c. Cut out distractions.
 - d. Say yes first.
 - 2. Last week we learned how God primarily speaks to us today.
 - a. Bible
 - b. Others
 - c. Pain
 - d. Impressions
- B. If God does speak to us through our impressions, how can we know its really Him?
 - 1. How can we be sure we're not just talking to ourselves?
 - 2. How can we know its God's will we are hearing and not our own?
- C. The Bible warns us to test what we hear-1 John 4:1.
 - 1. Today, lets learn seven ways to test our impressions?
 - 2. These seven ways will enable us to know if our impressions really come from God.

I. FIRST, DOES IT AGREE WITH THE BIBLE?

- A. Let's remember that the Bible is the number one way God speaks.
- B. Let us also know that God never contradicts himself-Gal 1:8.
 - 1. He will not tell us one thing today and a completely different thing tomorrow.
 - 2. What He says today will be true tomorrow because He's consistent.

II. SECOND, DOES IT MAKE US MORE LIKE JESUS?

- A. This is God's purpose for all of us-Romans 8:29.
- B. Jesus is always the standard by which we measure everything-Phil 2:5. (WWJD?).

III. THIRD, DOES OUR CHURCH FAMILY CONFIRM IT?

- A. Like speaking through other people, God speaks through His church-Ephesians 3:10.
- B. Why is confirmation before making a major decision so important? To keep us from making major mistakes-Prov. 11:14.

IV. FOURTH, IS IT CONSISTENT WITH HOW GOD MADE US?

- A. Did you know that God made us the way we are? Ephesians 2:10.
 - 1. He made us on purpose.
 - 2. He didn't make a mistake with us.
- B. What does this mean?
 - 1. He gave us our emotional makeup.
 - 2. He gave us our personality.
 - 3. He gave us our bodies.
 - 4. He gave us our gifts, talents, and passions for doing certain things.
- C. We can determine a lot about God's will for us by just considering how He designed us. i. e. what we are good at, enjoy doing—Romans 12:6.

V. FIFTH, DOES IT CONCERN ME OR SOMEONE ELSE?

- A. We need to be very careful when we think God has given us a word for someone else-Romans 14:10 & 13.
- B. Biblical illustration: Peter asking about John (John 21).
- C. God does sometimes give us a word for someone else but understand two words of caution.
 - 1. God usually is just confirming through us what he has already told the other person. Rarely would God ever tell us first about what someone else should do.
 - 2. God usually uses us to speak to another person without our ever knowing it.

VI. SIXTH, IS IT CONVICTING OR CONDEMNING?

- A. Conviction comes from God, but condemnation from the devil.
 - 1. Conviction urges us to change something.
 - 2. Condemnation just makes us feel bad about ourselves.
 - 3. Conviction is always about something specific we've done, thought, or haven't done, that needs to change-1 John 1:9.
 - 4. Condemnation from the devil is very vague and is designed to make us think, "I'm a very bad person or Christian", "I'm no good," "I'm worthless", etc.
- B. Many Christians have made the mistake of thinking a low self worth or low self image comes from God. Its doesn't. God never beats us up.

VII. SEVENTH, DO WE HAVE PEACE ABOUT IT?

- A. God doesn't pressure us to make hasty decisions-Colossians 3:15.
- B. He would much rather we make the right decision than just a quick one-1 Corinthians 14:33.
- C. The only time we should ever feel pressured by God is if He tells us to do something and we don't do it.

CONCLUSION

- A. If you've never heard God speak to you, it might mean you don't really belong to Him-John 8:47.
- B. If we know God and haven't heard him speak lately, it might mean sin or disobedience is hindering our communication with God.