

Hearing the Voice of God

by David Wilkerson

Hearing God's voice is a promise from God that he will make his voice known clearly one last time in these last days, and it's a blessing that true believers can experience today.

Duration: 1:10:51

Scripture: Jeremiah 23:29-36, Matthew 6:33, Mark 4:18

Topics: "Voice Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of not letting busyness, lust, covetousness, and the cares of life drown out the voice of God. He warns of a dreadful consequence for those who do not heed this warning, referencing Mark 4:18. The preacher describes the Holy Word of God as a searching and scorching word that will expose and convict those who are not rooted in Him. He urges the listeners to be in tune with God, to let His Word take root in them, and to seek His voice amidst the clamor of other voices in the world.

Transcript

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I'll tell you what, if you open your Bible to Mark 4 and leave it there, we'll be going back and forth to a lot of scriptures tonight. If you're going to make Times Square Church your home, you'd better get married to your Bible. And you better not let it be divorced for a moment.

I mean, you bring it to the house of God every time, or you'll get lost here. Praise the Lord. You that are visiting, we want you to know we don't have a membership here.

The only thing that binds people together is the Holy Spirit and the Word of God. We're all here because God brought us together. We're not trying to empty any other churches unless they're not preaching Jesus.

And if they're not preaching Jesus, we want to empty them. I said if they're not preaching Jesus, they ought to be empty. Amen.

I want to see if you're awake before I start preaching here tonight. Thank you, musicians, all of you. Thank God.

It's very refreshing tonight. Heavenly Father, we need to hear and know your voice as never before. In these troubled times, oh God, we have to know that still small voice.

You must speak to us, oh Lord, and we must distinguish that voice above every other voice that clamors for attention. And I pray, Lord, that supernaturally you bring forth a word that will touch our lives and change us. We thank you for the word that's changing us.

Every message we've heard, if we've received it, is from the Lord. And taking it into our hearts, we have been changed by it. We've been healed by it.

Spirit of the living God, I pray tonight that you give me a touch from heaven. Lord, we have taken authority, spiritual authority, over every demonic spirit, every lying spirit, every wild spirit. And we will not permit them to overrun this service.

And we drive them out in the name of Jesus, casting everything out that is unlike Christ, our Lord. So that the word can go forth with unction and power and anointing. We thank you for what you're building here in New York City.

Lord, we thank you for other churches that are rising. In faith, oh God, preaching your holiness. Separation from the world.

Now teach us your mind. In Christ's name I pray. Lord, I need you.

Holy Ghost, I acknowledge I need you tonight. Fill me with your power. Amen.

Hearing the voice of God. And by the way, we have a full staff nursery. If your baby cries, you go out to the hall on the second floor there and the ushers will show you where to go.

One of the greatest, listen to me clear. One of the greatest blessings a true believer has is to hear and know the voice of God. That's one of the greatest blessings God has given to us.

I say it's possible to hear God's voice today, just as clear and certain as Abraham heard it, or Moses heard it, as clear as Samuel heard it, or David heard it, as clear as Paul heard it in the New Testament, or Peter, or the apostles, or John on the Isle of Patmos. It's just as clear today. His voice rings just as clear as he did in the Old and the New Testament from the very beginning.

God has promised to make his voice known clearly one last time in these last days. In fact, God has given us a prophecy. A prophecy.

There's a powerful prophecy in the Bible that God in the last day is going to gather a holy remnant people together. He calls it a holy Zion, a new Zion, a Jerusalem, New Jerusalem from above. That's a holy separated people unto God.

And he's going to make his voice known to them in a particular and clear manner. And I'll read it to you. Don't turn there, but it's Hebrews 12, 22.

But ye are come unto Mount Zion. Now, listen closely, beloved. God has called you out of a dead church for a reason.

He called us together for a reason. He's going to speak to us. He calls the people out of their deadness.

He calls them out of their sin to Mount Zion and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels. Now, why is God calling people out? Why is he separating them? Why is God calling for holiness and righteousness in a number of people? He's calling the whole church. But why are there a certain few responding to that call? Because God has a message, and this is the message, that the voice of God that once shook the earth before from the very beginning of time, shook it in the New Testament under the apostles, is going to shake the earth one last time before Jesus comes.

And I read it to you from Hebrews 12, 26, whose voice then shook the earth. But now he's promising, yet once more, I'm going to shake not the earth only, but also the heaven. He said, See then that ye refuse not him that speaketh.

For if they escape not who refuse him who speak on earth, much more shall not we escape if we turn away from him that is speaking from heaven. I'm telling you now, I believe God is speaking a clear, fresh word to his people. There is a word coming out with all the false doctrines, with all of the whims and ways of doctrines of demons.

God is raising up a people who have an ear for his word and his voice, and they're going to hear it. Now, why is God giving his people out? He says, Come out of Babylon, my people, and partake not of our sins. Because I believe God has the Visayan people in these last days who are not going to be tossed by whims and ways of doctrine.

They're not going to be listened to any other voice than the masters. There are going to be many voices coming from all sides. But God has to have a people who know where they're going, who know the mind of God, who are not walking in confusion.

They're walking in his righteousness. They're directed by his voice. They're comforted by his voice.

They're guided by his voice. And I believe that's the characteristic of any holy people. Anyone who walks in righteousness is attuned to the voice of God.

Do you believe that? God is promised. In fact, God is always. You go all through the Old Testament.

You go through the New Testament. God has always had a people who understood and knew his voice. Adam and Eve understood it.

They heard the voice of the Lord God in the garden, the scripture says. And it was sin, sin alone, that shut that voice out. I heard God's voice and I was afraid.

I heard your voice. They became afraid of God's voice because of sin. And it's still the same way today.

If you have sin in your heart, you're afraid to hear the voice of God. Abraham became the father of many nations because he heard and understood the voice of God. And in God speaking about Abraham and to him.

And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed my voice. Because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments and my statutes and my laws. You say God just sovereignly moved on Abraham.

God saw something in Abraham. He saw that he'd obey when the voice came. And he said, because you heard my voice and you obeyed it, I've made you the father of many nations.

Moses, he did nothing without hearing the voice of God. The scripture said when the trumpet sounded long and waxed louder, Moses spake and God answered him by a voice. I'll tell you what.

When you read the life story of Moses, it's God speaking to Moses, Moses speaking to God. It's like a conversation going all through the book of Exodus and Deuteronomy. God speaking to him.

He's speaking to God. Let me give you an example. Exodus 19:21.

And the Lord spake unto Moses. Exodus 19:21. And Moses spake back unto the Lord.

19:24. And the Lord spake again unto him. And God spake to him.

And he spake to God. And all through Exodus. You'll find it everywhere.

He spoke to Moses. Moses spoke to God. He's a talking God, folks.

I said he's a talking God. He talks to his people. God has always sought for a people who would hear and know his voice.

God said, in fact, that's what he wanted from the children of Israel. He said, gather me the people together. And I will make them hear my words and my voice.

They will learn to fear me all the days that they shall live in the earth. And that they may teach them to teach it to their children. And the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the fire.

You heard the voice of his words. But you saw no form. Only you heard his words.

You didn't see an image. You don't image him. But you heard a voice from heaven.

The scripture said, did ever a people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire as thou hast heard and lived? Has there ever been a time that people heard like you heard it so clearly out of heaven? He made thee to hear his voice that he might instruct you. You heard his words. I'm asking you, have you ever heard his words? You ever heard the voice of God speaking to you? And you said, we have heard his voice.

We have seen this day that God does talk with man and he still lives. We're going to read it again. That's Deuteronomy 5:24. And he said, we have heard his voice.

We have seen this day that God does talk with man and man still lives. Didn't kill him. I want you to turn to Deuteronomy 5. Deuteronomy, put a marker on Mark 5 and go to Deuteronomy 5. And believe it or not,

before this service is over, you're going to see it's evangelistic.

When I get to talking about hard hearts. Deuteronomy 5, verse 25, beginning to read. Deuteronomy 5, verse 25.

Now, therefore, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us. If we hear the voice of the Lord our God anymore, then we shall die. Now, they've already said, we've learned that you can talk to God and you're not going to die.

They've already learned that. They've already, in fact, they've acknowledged that. But listen to this.

They're so afraid. They're such a sinful, stiff-necked people. If we hear the voice, verse 25, if we hear the voice of the Lord our God anymore, then we shall die.

For who is there of any flesh that have heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire as we haven't lived? Now, they're speaking to Moses. The children of Israel said, now you go thou near. You hear all that the Lord our God shall say.

And speak thou unto us all that the Lord our God shall speak unto you. And we will hear it and we will do it. Now, look at me, friends.

You saw right now people who didn't want to take the responsibility for themselves of hearing the word of God, the voice of God. God had ordained that every single Israelite would know and hear the voice of God. It was to be their joy and their strength.

But they said, no, we don't want to hear the voice of God. We want you to go. Even though they knew he was a talking God, even though they knew he could survive.

We have seen this day that God does talk to man and he lives. They knew that. But you see, God's people haven't changed much since that time.

We have millions and millions of Christians doing the same thing today. They don't want the responsibility going into the secret closet and seeking the face of God. They don't want to really lay down their sins.

We have people today that want to go to a prophet. They want a teacher that they believe is a holy, righteous person. And they will go to them and say, now you seek the Lord.

They don't say it so many words, but that's how they come to hear them. You get something from God and we will hear it. And I'm telling you, there are charismatic believers in the world today who look to their teachers as gods.

They are God to them. They don't question anything. They're so convinced either by signs or miracles.

And Bob covered that this morning. But they don't go to God. They've not heard the voice of the Lord themselves, so they really can't discern His voice.

They can't discern what is the voice of God and what is the voice of the flesh or what is deception. And they come, and that is why we have multitudes being led astray today, because they don't know the voice of the Lord themselves. Even Moses.

I'm telling you, if you go to church and you tell me, look, my pastor's such a holy man. My pastor's meek. I can trust him.

I'm not saying you don't trust your teacher. I'm not saying you don't trust the pastors. I'm saying that you come to the house of God, having heard the voice of the Lord, and you're so in touch with him that what we say is being judged by the Holy Ghost inside of you.

That's your safeguard against any error that you're hearing from the Lord yourself. All right, you tell me your pastor's a holy man. Well, so is Moses.

Yet Moses spoke unadvisedly with his lips, didn't he? In fact, he couldn't have gone to promise them because this holy meek man, the meekest man on the face of the earth outside of Jesus Christ, this man misrepresented the holiness of God. Now, if Moses can do that, and they're saying to Moses, you go to God, a man who's fallible, a man who can make a mistake, a man who speaks unadvisedly with his lips, a man who misrepresents the holiness of God, they're trusting their whole life into his hands. You go, you hear, and then we'll accept it.

Most dangerous thing you can ever do, saints of God. We don't want people like that, just yes people, who pat us on the back and say, anything you say is all right with me. It shouldn't be anything we say is all right with you.

You should have the word of God hidden in your heart. You should be hearing from God, and when we speak it, either is yes or no, and you'll know it. Hallelujah.

But oh, how many are thrilling to new Gospels. They're thrilling to it, not even knowing that they're sitting under deception, clapping their hands, praising the Lord, and being blinded by false doctrines. As the nations which the Lord destroyed before your face, so shall you perish, because you would not be obedient unto the voice of the Lord your God.

You didn't know the voice. Oh, Samuel knew that voice. Hallelujah.

In fact, it came to him time and time again, for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Silo by the word of the Lord, and the word of Samuel came to all Israel. He knew that voice so much that everything he said was life-giving, and the Bible said, not word and word, he spoke fell to the ground. He didn't speak anything unless he knew it was from God.

He didn't say anything about it being from God unless he knew it. David was the same pattern. David heard God talk.

David talked to God. God's voice was his joy in life. David said, he has spoken to me in his holiness, so I will rejoice.

David said, the Spirit of the Lord spoke to me. His word was in my tongue. The rock of Israel speaks to me.

You can get that in 2 Samuel 23, 2 and 3. The rock of Israel speaks to me. Hallelujah. Oh, isn't it amazing that God would speak to his children? Shouldn't that be the greatest joy that we have, that we know that God talks to us, that we can hear his voice? Now, there are many today who don't believe that God talks to his children, except through the written word of God, that that's it, the canon of Scripture is closed, and

God does not speak anymore.

And the Scripture is quoted, God hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son. Well, I believe that with all my heart. I don't believe God will add anything to this or take anything away from it, but I believe with all my heart that Jesus Christ does speak to us this day, just as the Hebrew writer says.

In these last days, he's spoken to us by his Son. You shut yourself in with the Son, the Lamb of God, and I promise you, he'll speak to you. He'll speak to you.

He does speak in these last days through his Son. His Son's still talking to his children. Hallelujah.

Say, well, you're talking about the Old Testament. Show me in the New Testament where God literally talks to his children. Well, remember Saul on the road to Damascus that said, suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven, and he fell to the earth and he heard a voice? I know people say, that's crazy.

We have enough people in New York hearing voices. He heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I'll tell you what, that soul stuck in him. It so changed him all through his life to his dying day.

He could say, God spoke to me. I heard him. In fact, when he's before King Agrippa, remember his testimony? And he said, he's talking to King Agrippa.

He said, King Agrippa, I heard God, and he said, rise. I have appeared unto thee for a purpose. I heard a voice speaking unto me, he told King Agrippa.

In fact, he spoke to me in the Hebrew tongue. He spoke to me in my own language, a language I understood. I've often wondered when people get up, sometimes they prophesy, and it sounds like God is unintelligent because he uses poor English and so forth.

Well, you see, God has to use the tongue that he has. He uses the talent he has. He moves on the voice.

He moves on you. That's the state you're at. He moves on you.

You may not be able to interpret it as intelligently, but he moves through this treasure of earthen vessels, and he speaks through the vessels he has. And I'll tell you what, that's why sometimes street preachers are not theologians because the theologians are too proud to go down there, so God has to find some uneducated people and send them out in the street to give the gospel out. He uses what he's offered.

I'm not saying all street preachers are not theologically correct. I'm not saying that at all. Peter, boy, he heard the voice of the Lord.

He said, remember he's up there praying on the rooftop. He said, I heard a voice say to me. I heard a voice say to me.

Almost, it's natural, I heard a voice. It came to me. In fact, he said it came to me three times.

It said, Peter, slay, rise up, slay and eat. But I said, not so, Lord, no. But the voice answered me again from heaven.

This came to me three times. That's Acts 11, 7. It came to me three times. You know what it says of Jesus? Let me just read to you what it says of Jesus, what Jesus' own testimony was.

Jesus said, I do nothing of my own initiative, but I speak those things as the Father teaches me. Jesus said, the things which I heard from him, those I speak to the world. Jesus said, the Father himself sent me and he's given me commandments, what to say and what to speak.

Therefore, the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has spoken to me. And he said, as he is in the world, so are we. He said, I don't talk just out of my head.

I get along with my Father. Jesus went up the mountain to pray and he heard from his Father. And he spoke what the Father told him.

Now, this matter of hearing the voice of God is so serious. I'd like to bring to your attention some things the Scripture gives us in the way of safeguards. First of all, not everyone who says, God told me, has heard the true voice of God.

Can I say that again? Not everyone who says, God told me, has heard the true voice of God. There's a tragic misunderstanding in the church of Jesus Christ nowadays. In fact, the most common phrase heard in religious circles today is, Thus saith the Lord.

Thus saith the Lord. As if that demands your attention. Now, you can get your strongest importance and look up, Thus saith the Lord.

You'll find page after page, column after column, all through the Bible. Thus saith the Lord. Thus saith the Lord.

Yes, God talks, but there are many voices in the world, the Scripture says, and none of them without significance. In fact, let me read it. There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, but none of them are without meaning or significance.

There are voices inside of us that clamor for attention. There is the voice of the flesh. There's the voice of our stubborn will.

There's the voice of the enemy. There's the voice of the world. And all of them are sweet.

All of them are gentle. And all of them coming to you say, This is God. You're hearing from God.

Your flesh will cry, This is Jesus talking to you. So sweet. And it will come back so often, so frequent, and so loud.

And it will cry in your subconscious mind, You have heard from heaven. The flesh especially loves that phrase. The devil borrows that phrase.

You think the devil can't do it, but I would say he's going to come as an angel of light to deceive, if it were possible, even the elect, the chosen of God. It's not possible if you're walking in the Spirit and taking the time with God to discern what is right and wrong. He said, if it were possible.

Now may I tell you that not everything you hear from God is God? Every voice you hear? Not every voice you hear is God's. If you're going to operate your voice, your whole life, on little voices, you better listen

closely tonight at the parameters and at the safeguards the Holy Spirit has given us. Now, there are many so-called prophets in the church today that are crying out, Thus saith the Lord.

Most of them have strong spirits. And if your spirit's not strong, they'll walk all over you. They'll trample on you, and you'll mistake a strong spirit for the voice of God.

I've had them in here. They've threatened. We've had them in here just a few weeks ago.

One of them threatened my very life. He said, You're a dead man. Words I have said.

You're a dead man. I wouldn't accept what he's saying. And because I wouldn't accept it, well, bless God, I heard from God.

You better hear it. Well, that's not even the Spirit of Christ. You walk away from that.

And by the way, any prophet that curses you, you can smile at him and say, Brother, I will pray for you, because the Bible makes it clear if you curse a man, those curses come back on you. You're not to curse a man. Any prophet that tries to curse you is not of God.

You don't have to be afraid of any of that. Go to Ezekiel 13. I'm going to give you a word of God tonight, because we heard a very clear word this morning that will produce correction and healing in our doctrines.

And we hope tonight that we'll see something a little clearer tonight. Ezekiel 13. Let me show you something about all the would-be prophets.

Now, I believe there are prophets today. But I'll tell you what, if there's a prophet, he's not going to tell you he is. The Holy Ghost will tell you that.

But if he says, I'm a prophet, I'd just walk away. You tell me you're a prophet, then you're going to have a humble spirit like Jesus Christ, and you will not want to be verified at any time. You'll leave the results to God.

You'll speak His word and then leave it. You'll speak it in love. You speak it in anger and shake your finger, I wonder about it.

Ezekiel 13, verse 1. And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel that prophesy, and say unto them that prophesy out of what? They prophesy out of their own hearts, Hear ye the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God. Woe unto the foolish prophets that follow their own spirit.

They haven't heard from God. They've seen nothing. O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the desert.

They've not gone up into the gaps, neither made up their heads for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the Lord. They've seen vanity and lying divination, saying, The Lord saith, and the Lord hath not sent them, and they have made others to hope that they would confirm the word. Have you not seen a vain vision? Have you not spoken a lying divination? Whereas you say, The Lord saith it, albeit I have not spoken.

Listen to me clearly. Ezekiel 13, verse 7. You have been misled. Verse 7. You've seen a vain vision, and you've spoken a lying divination, whereas you say, The Lord saith it, albeit I have not spoken.

Now look this way, please. God does not speak to any person who's hiding sin. Other than repentance and warnings and righteous judgments, you cannot get guidance.

You cannot hear His voice. You cannot hear it clearly. You cannot understand His voice if you have an idol or sin harbored in your heart.

I'm not talking about something you know nothing about. I'm not talking about coming to the Holy Ghost and saying, Lord, if there's something, dare show me. Because He's faithful, He'll show you.

I'm talking about that which God has shown you. You know it's there. It's a stumbling block right in front of your eyes.

It's an idol that God has dealt with, and you will not lay it down. All right? Let me read to you. Go to Ezekiel 14.

Just turn over. Fourteen, I think, I'm sorry, it must be, I think it's in Jeremiah. Just let me read it to you.

I think it's Jeremiah 14, 14. The prophets prophesy lies in my name. I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither did I speak to them.

They prophesy to you a false vision and a revelation and a thing of no value and the deceit of their own heart. Listen to Jeremiah 23. In fact, just go to Jeremiah.

Go left. Jeremiah. And I want you to go to Jeremiah 23.

And I tell you, I wish you'd go home tonight and start studying some of these verses. I'm not trying to be a teacher tonight. It's just burning in my heart.

I'm an evangelist, and we'll see where the Lord's leading us in just a moment. Jeremiah 23. Start verse 21.

Are you still here? Verse 21. I've not sent these prophets. Is it possible for prophets to go out among us and not be sent by God? I've not sent these prophets, yet they ran.

I've not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. But if they had stood in my counsel and they had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way and from the evil their doings. And that's the test of a true prophet, that he turns people away from their iniquities.

He doesn't make you safe. He doesn't make you secure in your sin. When you hear a true man of God, your heart will burn in you, and you'll want to fall on your face.

You'll want to repent and get right with God. All the way down, verse 25. I've heard what the prophets say.

They prophesy lies in my name, saying, I've dreamed, I've dreamed. How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? Yea, they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart. Look at verse 28.

The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream. And he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What's the chapter of the week? Verse 29.

Is not my word like a fire, said the Lord, like a hammer that breaketh a rock in pieces? And you know, verse 20, 32, it speaks. They tell the people go into error by their lies and by their likeness, by their likeness. And the rest of the chapter said they perverted the words of the living God.

I will cast them out of my presence. Now, go back to Ezekiel to the right again. Ezekiel 14.

It's where we were just a little while ago. Ezekiel 14. I'm going to reiterate it.

I want you to understand it. As soon as you get there, could you look this way just a moment? I don't know about you, but the great cry of my heart in the last few months has been, Oh, Lord, there's so much confusion in the world. So many voices clamoring for attention.

Did you ever in your lifetime heard so many voices? I mean, they come at you from every side claiming to be right and saying everybody else is wrong. You hear it from teachers and evangelists. You hear it everywhere.

It's on radio. It's on television. Voices, voices clamoring for attention.

The cry of my heart is, Oh, God, give us a people who know how to hear and understand and know the clear voice of almighty God. That's the cry of my heart tonight before this message is over. Let's let's Ezekiel 14 verse 3. Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart and put stumbling block to their nickety before their face.

Should I be inquired of at all by them? God says, you mean they're going to come to me and ask me to speak to them? Am I going to speak to a person who has idols and stumbling blocks right before their eyes? And look at verse 4. Therefore, speak unto them and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God, every man of the house of Israel that set up his idols in his heart and put up the stumbling block with nickety before his face and cometh to the prophets, I, the Lord will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols that I may make the house of Israel that I may take the house of Israel in their heart because they are estranged from me through their idols. Skip down to verse 7. For every one of the house of Israel or the stranger that sojourned in Israel would separate himself from me and set up his idols in his heart and put up the stumbling block with nickety before his face. And he comes to a prophet to inquire of him concerning me.

I, the Lord, will answer him by myself. I will set my face against that man and will make him a sign in a proverb and I will cut him off from the midst of my people. You shall know that I am the Lord.

And if the prophet be deceived when he has 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. And they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity. The punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of him that seeks unto him.

You see, it's dangerous to seek after a false prophet because you are under the same judgment he's under. It's so very, very clear. It's been preached from this pulpit before.

But God said if there's deception there, I have allowed that deception because I'm answering them according to the idols of their heart. Now, I've said this. Churches deserve their pastors.

Churches deserve them. If you go to a church and there's idolatry in the church, people don't want to separate themselves and walk in holiness and righteousness, God's going to give them shepherds after their own heart. He's going to set a man in the pulpit that's half consecrated.

He'll set a man up there who has idols in his heart and he's got that idol and he'll relate to the idol in you and he'll be excusing his idol and your idol at the same time and you will not be convicted of it because he's not convicted of it. He can't bring you any further. And there's a total deception there because they set up idols in their heart and God answers us according to our idols.

Fourteen, verse four, there it is. He said, and I, the Lord, will answer him according to the multitude of his idols. We've had people storm out of this church.

Literally storm out. They couldn't stand what they considered a hard word. I believe a few this morning.

I sensed a few that walked out. Two in particular this morning walked out when Bob was coming down with such a strong word from the Holy Ghost. And we grieve that that's happening, but I'm wondering if we haven't uncovered or exposed an idol.

I wonder if there isn't a stumbling block there. And they don't want to because, I'll tell you, you can find a church in New York that will, if you keep looking long enough, you can find a church that will appease every idol you have, that will overlook every sin in your life. Now don't come to me and ask where they're at.

I'm not interested in telling you. He said, in 14, verse 5, You are separated from me through your idols. Now listen closely.

God's voice is heard only by those who are shut in with him in the secret closet of prayer, those who are open before the Holy Ghost. They've laid down their idols and their iniquities. God is very careful to whom he speaks.

God doesn't waste his voice. It's only to those who value it so much that they'll give him quality time. God's voice came to Moses when he was shut in in the wilderness all alone.

The Word of the Lord came to John the Baptist, shut in all alone in the wilderness. The voice of God came to Jacob, shut alone in the desert of Haran. God spoke to Joshua when he left the camp, and he was all alone on the mountain overlooking Jericho.

The voice of God came to Paul when he was shut in the desert, and the Bible, Paul said, he revealed himself in me, and that was in the desert of Arabia. Some believe he was there two or three years. The voice of the Father came to Jesus on the mountain alone in prayer.

And what he's saying to us today, if you want to know my voice, shut yourself in with me in the secret closet of prayer. Pray to me in secret, and I'll reward you openly. But you see, it's our busyness.

It's our lust, our covetousness, the cares of life. That choke out the voice of God. And there's a dreadful warning, and I want you to go to Mark 4. That's where I told you to go in the first place, and I want you to go to Mark 4. And I'll show you this dreadful warning from the Lord.

And I saw this the other day when the Lord was pouring this message in my heart, and I just broke down and wept before the Lord. It's a very familiar passage. Fourth, look at verse 18.

He's speaking about how the seed falls on various types of ground. Verse 4, chapter 4, verse 18. And these are they which are sown among thorns, such as hear the word, and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lust of other things entering in, choke the word.

And by the word, what is the word except the voice of God? It chokes out the voice of God and becometh unfruitful. Now, would you look this way for just a moment? That word choke means to crowd out or drown out. Crowd it out.

And how is it? You see, there are people acknowledged here in verse 15, wayside hearers. They hear the word, and Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts. But you see, this thorny believer has spiritual authority.

The devil didn't come and take away the word. You see, this person that Jesus is talking to has known the voice of God. There has been fruit.

There's been a springing up. They heard the word of God. It took root.

It was sown among thorns. They hear the word of God. They've heard the voice of God.

But you see, something's happened to them. They've gotten so busy now. The cares of their riches, the cares of life.

Let me read it clearly. The deceitfulness of riches, the lust of other things entering in, choke the word. And now they're crowded out, drowned out, and it becometh unfruitful.

And God's saying, I can't speak to this one because it's wasted time. They're too busy to understand it. They're too busy to receive it.

The cares of life. I can't get through to them anymore. They had spiritual authority.

The devil didn't take it away. They choked it themselves. They can't blame it on the devil.

Can't blame it on the enemy. Listen, when I talk about riches, and I say it over and over again, by the third world standards, we're all rich. Even if you collect unemployment, you're rich according to the standards in Poland, in Haiti, and over half the world.

And you don't have to have an awful lot to get busy. But I believe that this is the one reason, the one big reason why we're not having people who are hearing clearly the voice of God. They did it one time.

It was so clear. It was so precious to them. And now they run, they run, they run.

And there's a conspiracy of the devil to run them to death so they'll not stop to hear the mind and the voice of God. I've had the devil try to do that to my ministry. Get me so busy.

And that's what he does to preachers. He gets them building churches. He gets them interested in other things.

And they're running constantly from morning to night. Coming to the pulpit bare and empty with not a word from God. I'm going to have to quiet down a little bit.

You know, there was a little boy in this church. His momma was praying. She said, don't you want to be like David? She met David and he said, you mean that loud one? I got a kick out of that.

You can become so busy, so bogged down with the problems in your life and your cares. It would do him no good to talk to you at all. Because you would choke it out and it would become unfruitful.

The scriptures, there it is in black and white or in red and white. So they choke it out. It's in this hustle and this bustle that God's voice is no longer heard.

And then that's when the flesh begins to speak. The flesh takes on a pretension of being the voice of God. Human desires begin to surface.

And then what we desire is considered the voice of God. And that's when discernment becomes presumption. And that's when, I'll tell you, that's when you can get so busy.

That's when the devil knows that he's got you on the run. And he knows if you stop long enough, you'll go back to hearing God speak. And I'll tell you, I call it conspiracy, a demonic conspiracy, a busyness.

If the devil can't get you to run off with a woman, if he can't get you into pornography, he'll just run you to death. And I love you too much to tell you any different than that. And I'll tell you right now, what you hear is not of God.

It's not of the Holy Ghost. It's not discernment unless it's born in the secret closet, born out of deep communion, born out of a broken spirit, born out of much time spent along with Him. Now, I'm convinced that any one of God's children here tonight, any one of us, if we will take quality time, if we'll get along with Him, and we know this, deep in our heart, we know this.

I've had people come to me right in this church and going through deep problems, going through terrible problems. And it makes me weep, it makes me cry, and all of us, it breaks our heart. And they'll say something like this.

Now, I know if I really had, if I took the time to pray, God would answer. I know if I got along with God in my Bible, I'd hear from God. But they don't do it.

You know that preachers don't pray? The majority of preachers, if you want to get preachers on their knees, just preach against their lack of prayer. And they'll run to the altar. They're always convicted by it, because preachers don't pray.

The majority of preachers don't pray. That's a known fact among preachers. And if preachers are not praying, where are the saints? I ask you, how much time did you spend this last week? How many hours did you spend chatting with God? Can you tell me? You have hours to sit and watch television.

You have hours for recreation or sports. You have hours for that. You don't have two hours a day to get along with God and hear His voice.

And then you want to run to a counselor somewhere and hear from God? God's plan is that we all hear His voice. God's not hiding. He wants to speak to you.

He's desiring to speak to you and show you the way. What would you do if there were no teachers or preachers left? So they're all thrown in jail, like they did in China. Where would you go? Oh, my.

I'll tell you what. Here we go again. God is speaking a fresh word every day to anyone who wants to hear.

I say there's a fresh today word for anyone who wants to take the time to hear Him. In Hebrews, it says today, if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts while it is called today. Today, if you will hear His voice over and over again, three times in Hebrews today.

You know what that says? God is speaking every day a fresh word to those who are walking with Him today. If you want to hear His voice, don't harden your hearts. Now, Jesus.

Go back to Mark four. And let's let's look at the stony hearted believer. Verse 16.

And these are they likewise, which are sown on stony ground, who, when they've heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness and have all. These are the people. So, oh, man, I love that preaching down at Times Square Church.

They'll come up to you and say that was powerful and they'll hug you and say, wonderful. Now, if you do that and you're receiving it, thank God for that. I'm not putting that down.

But this is this is a certain kind of shallow Christian. They've got two inches of earth and stone is underneath it. And of course, they have no root in themselves.

Verse 17. And so they endure. But for a time and afterward, when affliction or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

End of side one. You may now. Who are these stony hearted people in prison? Are they in gay bars? Are they out there on the street? No, they're right in the church.

They're right in the house of God. Let me tell you how Christians develop hard hearts. They refuse to allow God's voice to smash their stubborn idols, their stubborn will.

They hear God's voice in preaching. They hear it and they receive it with gladness for a while. But let me tell you something even worse.

And here's where the hardness came. And I never saw this before in my all my experience with the Lord. And believe me, I knew it was the Lord speaking to me.

And if he speaks to you through it, good. But if you don't hear, I've heard it. And it's done something in my heart.

Because the Lord convicted me of the possibility of my heart getting hard, even though I'm in the ministry. Of everyone around me to get hard. And you know what that hardness is? It's not.

There is a deceitfulness of sin that causes a hardness. But this is something worse. And this just burst in my spiritual mind.

Let me tell you what it is. And I hope I can get it out to you. Every day the scripture says today, if you were here every day today, he's calling his people every day.

God's determined to speak to his people. And he said, I'm going to speak and I'm calling you. I'm calling you to the secret closet.

I'm calling you away from all your business. I'm calling away from everything you do from your family and everything. Get a low because I'm going to speak.

And every time you turn down that invitation, you get harder. You get harder because he's inviting you there. He said, come in.

And what you're exposing is a stony undercurrent in you, your heart. I'm reading to you. Jeremiah 713.

I spoke to you rising up early and speaking, but you did not hear or listen. God said, I got up early in the morning. I got up determined to speak.

Now, God doesn't sleep, but he was talking about us. I was up with you. I came to you early, trying to get through to you and speak to you.

But you didn't give me an ear. I invited you. You were not there.

And every time you walk away, every time you turn down that season of prayer, every time you neglect. And I'll tell you what, your heart can get hard by simply not going where God speaks. Did you hear it? You can get a hard heart by not going to the place where God speaks.

And he speaks according to the song of Solomon in the secret place, in the cleft of the rock. And God made it clear to me. No, David, not just meditation.

Not just counting the time I read my Bible. But he said, when you pray, you went into the secret closet and you shut the door. And you pray to the Father in secret.

And you talk to him. And then you stop and wait till he talks to you. And I'm inviting you.

And when you allow the cares of this life, and your riches, or your business, or your home, or your family, or anything else to rob you of that. Your heart's getting harder. And little by little by little, it'll get easier and easier to avoid that.

Until finally you slip away, hearing all kinds of voices, but not any of it is God. And everything you call discernment is presumption. Because it's not born out of prayer and fasting before the face of God.

Every time you listen to another voice, rather than his. If you're going to go and listen to a man's voice, rather than say, I want to hear God. Every time you hear another man's voice, and you're not taking the time to hear his voice, your heart grows harder.

And by refusing the discipline to be alone with God, we become strangers to his voice. We don't even recognize it anymore. You see, things will start going bad in your life, things start getting hard.

And Jesus loves us, and he cares for us. So, what he does, he turns the searchlight on to the Holy Ghost. You know how he does it? Through the preaching of his word.

You know what that scripture says? It's in the fourth chapter. It says, when the sun was up, it was scorched. Because it had no root, it withered away.

You know what that is? The sun's coming up right now in this house. That's the holy word of God, a searching, scorching word from heaven. And he'll shine it on you.

And if you're not in tune with him, if you're not willing to let the word of God take root in you, if you will not take time to be shunned with him, to receive this word in the inner man, hear me, there'll come a message one of these days, scorching, and you'll dry up and wither, and run out of here and say, that's too personal, I can't accept that. And you will wither, and you will die. The scripture says, there it is, the sun came up, it was scorched because it had no root in itself.

They endure for a while, but afterward, when a friction or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they're offended. They get offended. Listen, if you're shut in with God, and you're hearing his voice, there's no way you could ever get offended at any preaching that comes from the Holy Ghost.

You could not get offended because what you're hearing is what's been affirmed in the pulpit. Because there's only one voice that comes from heaven. If I'm preaching in the Holy Ghost, or our brothers here are preaching in the Holy Ghost, and you're hearing from the same God, it's going to confirm everything you've heard.

And God will have already reprov'd you before you came to the house of God. You can sit there and say, oh, Brother Dave, Brother Bob, Don, Gary, that's just what God's been saying to me. God's been saying the same thing to me.

I get that by the thousands of letters. Christians will write and say, Brother Dave, that's the same thing I'm hearing from God. Oh, that's confirmation.

Hallelujah. I don't know why I'm running around here. I want to get back to... Let me come to this.

God's desire for the Holy Remnant is that their source of rejoicing is the sound of his voice. Let me read you a scripture. John, remember the scripture said the word came to John.

He that hath a bridegroom, he that hath a bride is the bridegroom. But the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, that what? Standeth and heareth him. That's speaking of prayer shot in with God.

You remember Elijah came before Abraham and said, the Lord before whom I stand has sent me. He said, I've been sent with God and I heard from God. What he said, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice.

This my joy therefore is fulfilled. John said, my pleasure, all the joy of my life is that I stood there and I heard his voice. His voice satisfied something in me.

I'm going to read to you Song of Solomon 2.14. Oh my dove, this is the bride speaking. We're the bride, aren't we? Oh my dove, thou art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret place, the secret place of the stairs. Let me see thy countenance and let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice.

Song of Solomon 5.2. It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, open to me, my love, my dove. And that's what God's doing right now. He's knocking.

Hey, listen, brother. I'm going to close in just a minute. Brother Bob, one night, remember the prayer meeting? I think it was came up his burden for a brother up here.

And I thank God something's happening. I'll show you. I believe I can show you what's happening.

It didn't encourage you. And he had just broken heart because he discerned a brother's heart in the church that he loved and counseled, getting hard. And the other night we asked how many had hard hearts.

We must have had 30 hands raised. Tragically, many are growing hard and don't know it because they're neglecting the secret closet. They're not seeking God.

They're not accepting his invitation to come into his presence. I want to show you, though, that a hard heart is not terminal. If you want deliverance, it doesn't have to be.

Do you believe God can take your hard heart out and give you a heart of flesh? All right. Go to Ezekiel, please. Go to Ezekiel.

I'm going to make you feel good now. No faith, good or whatever. Ezekiel 11.

I'm almost finished. Ezekiel 11. Verse 18.

Verse 18 tells you what you've got to do. And then if you'll do that, you're going to get a new heart. And they shall come thither and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof and all the abomination thereof from this.

In other words, all the sin and all the self and flesh goes. And I will give them one heart. I'll put a new spirit within you.

And I'll take the stony heart out of your flesh and will give you a heart of flesh that they may walk in my statutes, keep my words and do them. And they shall be my people and I'll be their God. Isn't that precious? Hallelujah.

Go, keep going to the right. Ezekiel 36. One more scripture I want to show you there.

Ezekiel 36, verse 25. And here's what he's going to do tonight to all of us, for all of us, if we want it. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you.

You shall be what? Oh, hallelujah. From all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you and a new spirit will I put within you.

And I'll take away the stony heart. Who's going to take it away? God said, I'll take it out of your heart. And I'll give you a heart of flesh.

I'll give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes. You shall keep my judgments and do them and dwell in the land that I gave your father.

Hallelujah. Isn't that great? Now, I'm going to close by like I had so much more, but I can't cover it tonight. But let me let me just tell you this.

Put put everything down, close up your book and give me your good eye and your good ear. And I mean, I only got one good ear, so I keep it, too. I want to give you four safeguards.

Four safeguards about the voice. All right. First of all, God's voice always brings you to Jesus and exposes the sin in you.

His voice always what you hear has to lead you to Jesus. If in any way it's going to detract you from Jesus by making you too busy or doing any of these things, they're going to take you away from him. It drives you or leads you to the cross and to Christ.

Secondly, his presence or his countenance always accompanies his voice. You can't have his voice without his presence. And you'll recognize his voice when the presence of the Lord floods your body and the room and the house and everything around you.

Glory to God. Oh, when I hear him, I can hardly contain myself because it's so glorious. You know, this is God because the presence of the Lord has come.

His countenance accompanies his voice. Third safeguard. His voice will give you the scriptural assurance.

He doesn't just say, go and test it. He will, with the voice, give you the leading to find it. Oh, he's always done that.

I've said, Lord, if this is according to your will and I want to test it, he'll bring to my memory, because that's the work of the Holy Spirit, everything Jesus said. And he'll start bringing, he'll flood you with scripture after scripture after scripture until you're absolutely convinced. Hallelujah.

And if it's not at God, the flag will go up and there'll be a scripture. Stand there loud and clear. If you wait long enough, it'll come.

The word will drive it down. Hallelujah. Last and most important.

Whatever you hear, if it's the voice of God, it's going to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. It has to endure the judgment seat. And that means it has to be selfless.

He'll not speak to you about anything that caters to your selfishness. You'll be able to say, well, Lord, when I heard if I were to go tonight and stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Hallelujah.

I know what I heard. Can we stand the judgment? Well, there's more. But that's that's all I have tonight to share.

Maybe some other time we'll go into it a little deeper. I want to hear it. Don't you? Hallelujah.

Tell you what, if God would give us a people to shut in with the Lord praying. You know, we have people saying for the day pastors. We'd like to see the worship go deeper.

We have people say we'd like to see the glory come down. I'll tell you what, that's not going to come by singing different courses or finding unique songs. It's not going to come by more practice.

These people up here could pray. We could pray and pray and pray. But if we're not all on the face before God, if we all come from the secret closet, I'll tell you the glory will come down on all of us in the whole house because we've heard from heaven.

Glory to God. When that happens, not one of the pastors will be able to stand here and get through a message. So these orders are still we won't be able to finish the word.

We'll get the message out. It'll be heard. But the glory of the Lord will come down on this house because the saints are praying and seeking the Lord and they come with an assurance.

I've heard from God. Hallelujah. They're not walking in confusion.

They're not walking in doubt and fear. The Lord has quickened them by his Holy Spirit and by his word. Hallelujah.

Stand while I pray. Do you believe we did that in 55 minutes? How many believe the Lord's here tonight? Oh, yes, he is. He's been here all day.

It's been a good day. The Lord's been here in a precious way. Are you are you excited about getting along with God now and hearing from him? How many are you excited about getting alone here? Don't you think you feel like going home now and talking to him? Let him talk to you.

Is there something in your life that you need an answer to? Is there some confusion there? Is the enemy hassling you? Oh, will you sleep tonight once you hear from heaven when God says yes? I'll tell you, he'll call you by your name. He'll call you. He may call you son.

He may call you daughter. He'll speak in your language. If you speak Mexican, he speaks Mexican.

If you speak Chinese, he speaks Chinese. Of course, you wouldn't understand if you didn't speak English. So he'd probably speak English to you.

I don't know. He may speak three languages. You know, three languages.

But one way or another, he's going to make you know that he's there. He's spoken to you. And that gives you the glory and the joy of the Lord.

Hallelujah. I thank him tonight for speaking this word to me. I thank him because I know the Holy Ghost is going to back it up because I know in the secret closet he spoke the word, David, your message is in Mark 4. And he said, I'm going to show you.

And I'm going to back it up, and I'm going to confirm it. So I know where I stand tonight. If you're here tonight, up in the balcony here on the main floor, we never try to bloat these numbers.

We don't even count. I say that if you've been coming more and more, you know, if you keep coming all the time, there needs to come a time that you don't have to come up here anymore because you're hearing from God. I would rather not flood the alders because that sometimes blocks out those who can't get up here.

But if you're here tonight, and you're going through a battle in your life, you're in a real struggle or battle in your life, maybe you're fighting a lust or sin or confusion in your home. Now, believe I'm talking in the Holy Spirit right now. There's confusion in your life or your home.

You don't know which way to turn. Now, I'm speaking mostly of confusion tonight. There's a confusion.

The Lord doesn't want you to walk in that confusion anymore. He wants to give you assurance to walk with your head high, with assurance in your heart. I know that God can meet you tonight.

If you're living in sin and want to be delivered, if you're struggling with something and you want to be free, I want you to get out of your seat right now. Up in the balcony, go to the midsection there, right down the stairs on either side, here on the main floor. I want you to just come out and stand right here at the front.

Stand right here and say, Go deep. I need God tonight to speak to me. I need God to speak to me tonight.

I want every idol out of my heart. I want sin out of my life. I want the confusion to go.

If there's confusion, get out of your seat. That's it. Up in the balcony.

Just go to the middle and come down either aisle, either side, and join these that are here now. I told you you can't hear God's voice, and I believe that. Whatever you've been hearing is saying, lay it down.

You just don't want to know his voice. If you're here tonight, I presume that you want to lay down every idol, every sin, every habit that would hinder the voice of God. Isn't that correct? Put your hand and say, I'm ready to lay everything down that he asked.

I pray that God, by his spirit, will confirm what he's doing here tonight. It'll not just be a simple prayer. I'm asking it to come from the heart, and I'm asking the Holy Spirit to confirm this tonight, to really dig down deep and transform lives.

You that are standing here right now, in your own words, tell Jesus you're sorry for every sin, every idol, every stumbling block. Tell him right now, say, Lord, take it out. Come on, just talk to him right now.

Lord, I'm talking to you. I'm telling you, I lay it down. Say it right now, right out loud.

Lord, I give you all my sin. I give you everything that stands in the way. I want to hear you.

I want to hear your voice. And I want nothing blocking it. I want nothing hindering.

Speak it right out, right now, in Jesus' name. Lord, I give you my sin. I give you my failure.

I lay everything down at this altar tonight. Lord, I've failed you. I've sinned against you.

I've done things that are evil. But, Lord, I repent tonight. Say it right now.

Lord, I repent. Let me hear it. I repent.

I repent tonight. All right. Now, just keep your hand raised and pray this prayer with me right now from your heart.

Now, out of the abundance of the heart, your mouth speaks. And if you'll speak this from your heart and mean it with all your heart, I beg God to take the stoniness out, the hardness out, and he can give you a heart that reaches out to him, that hungers for the word, a heart that'll take root. The word of God'll take root in that tenderness heart.

God can give you a tender heart tonight. Yes, he can. Keep your hand raised and pray this prayer with me loud and clear.

Oh, my Jesus. I do need you now. Take away this stony heart.

I heard your call. And I came. I responded.

And here I am. You see me. I give it to you.

I give my sins. And I give you my heart. Give me a heart of flesh.

A tender heart. A heart that wants you, Jesus. A heart that will hate sin and to hear you.

Now, just thank him right now. Hallelujah, Lord. You're faithful.

You'll not let us... The conclusion of the tape.

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