

# Maintain the Connection - Part 4

by Hans Peter Royer

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*The sermon emphasizes the various ways God communicates with us and the importance of recognizing His voice in our lives.*

**Duration:** 46:11

**Scripture:** 1 Samuel 3:1-10, Matthew 6:33, Hebrews 8:8, James 3:17

**Topics:** "Hearing God", "Holy Spirit"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses how to determine if a message is from God. They emphasize that the content of a word from God will always align with the general revelation found in the Scriptures. The speaker shares an example of a girl who became pregnant after sleeping with a non-Christian man, highlighting the importance of aligning our actions with biblical teachings. They also discuss how the Holy Spirit often speaks to us while we pray, emphasizing the significance of prayer in hearing God's voice. Additionally, the speaker mentions that God can speak to us through circumstances, both big and small, and encourages listeners to seek God's guidance when something doesn't feel right.

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## Transcript

This evening, I want to focus on the theme called, Hearing God. How do we hear God's voice? And I, I want to start with one verse out of Hebrews chapter 1 and verse 1. To use this as a springboard for this evening message. Hebrews chapter 1 and verse 1, we read this.

It says, In the past, God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways. But in these last days, He has spoken to us by His Son. Now, our God, in contrast to the dead idols, has always spoken to people.

We read here, In the past, God spoke through the prophets, but in the present time, He speaks to us through His Son. Now, the question is this, that I understand this, but how does the Son speak? How do I hear Jesus Christ speaking to me in reality? How do I hear His voice? A few months ago, I got a phone call at 6 o'clock in the morning. It was my day off.

I really appreciate that. But it was a guy called Christian. He's from Tasmania.

That's, you know, an island down south in Australia. He lives there. He's actually in Austin, but he lives there since 40 years.

And he called me. I crawled out of bed because my wife didn't want to get up, so I had to do it. And I lifted up the phone, tired, and he said, Hans Peter, this is Christian.

I said, Great. And he said, God just told me He released me to come to you this winter as a ski instructor. I said, Great.

And if He tells you again, tell Him a little later. Didn't talk long. You know, you can't concentrate well.

But two hours later, we sat at breakfast with our kids. And they know Christian. He's a great guy.

He has wild stories so that the kids love him. And I told them that Christian called and God told him that he should come to Austria to work as a ski instructor for me this winter. And then our little Lisa, she was 10.

She's 10. She said, Well, how does Christian know that God spoke to him and not himself? That is a very good question. I said, Ask him.

I have no clue. What he meant is, how does he know it's God's voice rather than his subconscious? You see, the thing is this. Let me ask you a question.

I hope you don't mind. But if you raise your hand. How many of you have heard God speak audibly? I mean with a real, audible voice.

How many in this congregation have heard God speak with a real voice? Can I see a show of hands? 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Out of probably 1,000 or 1,500 people. That's great. And I think it's a real privilege if that is so.

But what I want to show you with this, this is why I do that. It's a minority. It doesn't matter in which denomination I am, where I am.

The Christians who hear God audibly are very few. I must honestly confess, I had times when I longed to hear God audibly. I said, God, if you ever want to speak to me, now is the time.

But nothing came. At least nothing audible. The way I expected it.

It used to frustrate me when preachers, teachers, mentioned that God told them something. They always stand up there and God always tells them something. You know, God told me to speak from Colossians chapter 3. Well, how did He tell you? God told me to visit such and such and so I did and it was wonderful.

God told me to raise money so that we can extend the church or whatever. And I thought, why God do you never tell me anything? Not only that, I then met Christians who professed loud and clear that God told them one thing and a week later God told them something totally different, the opposite. It was funny, a couple of years ago.

You know we have Upward Bound. It's an Upward Bound program that's in the mountains. It's a Bible school but we're always in the mountains.

It's quite rough sometimes. That's good. And a girl, I think she was, I can't remember, probably from the States or wherever she was from, but she came the first day and she said, God told me to come to Austria and to join this six weeks program and I'm so excited what God will do because He sent me here.

I said, that's wonderful, great to have you. Now a week later we went up onto a mountain hut and the weather was miserable. It was cold, it was rainy.

It's a small hut. We were 50 students, one toilet. You sit on each other.

You don't shower for a week, you know. And the second week this girl came to me again, same girl. She said, Hans-Peter, God told me I should leave today again.

And so things like this made me think, I wonder how much God has to do with all this God is telling me. I want to say a warning here for all of us. Be very careful when you use the phrase God told me because I'm very afraid that most of the time it has absolutely nothing to do with God.

You know why people come, I say students, come to me and say God told me to do such and such because when they come and say God told me, you know what they're saying, you don't have to tell me anything. I mean if God told her to leave, who am I to say anything else? And very often the phrase God told me is nothing else but a cover-up for my insecurities and the evidence that I'm unteachable. So please be careful, only use the phrase when you really know that it was God who told you.

Now how do we hear generally the voice of God? And again I gave about, this time it was 12 minutes before we started to type in on the thing, thanks so much, I really appreciate that, that you did this. But he throws it on the beamer. How do we hear the voice of God? Now first of all, I just tell you how I hear the voice of God and how I see it from Scripture.

We hear God's voice in and through creation. You know, I don't need to read one single book on creation or evolution in order to make up my mind about the origin of who made the universe. I don't need a single book.

All I need to do is, just like I did the day before I came here, I hiked in the moonlight with my wife, it was about 10 at night, full moon. We hiked with the skis up a mountain. It's like during the day, it's fantastic.

And then we skied down around midnight. And you stand there in the full moon seeing hundreds of mountain peaks. Friends, I don't need anybody to tell me that a wise being must have created that.

That is not just falling together accidentally. I believe any person which does not have a preconceived mindset, if he does that, if he walks through a flower field or sits at a lake like here, must come to the conclusion there is a wise being behind that. And God speaks to me.

If I would ask now how many of you have experienced God speaking in and through creation, it would be the majority. I don't do it because I know so. However, there is one limitation in nature.

When we are in nature, we become aware of the existence of God, but we do not get to know his character. Why? You see, you can stand in BC, I just read a newspaper yesterday, an avalanche thing happened there and seven people were killed in it. But you can stand on a mountain and it's snowing and millions, billions of snowflakes are falling down and none, not one is similar.

They're all different. And you look at a snowflake, you say, Wow, this is a wonderful, this is a good God. A couple of hours later, many of those snowflakes come down and kill people that you love.

And then you wonder, is this really a good God? This is a bad God. You see, nature gives you an awareness of God's existence, but does not teach you the character of God. This is why, if you want to know the character of God, we need to look at his son.

Because in the last days, God spoke through his son in whom he revealed his character. Secondly, how does God speak to us? Through circumstances. Now this can be big circumstances or small everyday things.

Again, I just felt something a couple of months ago, a mountain guide colleague of mine, he has a hut, he runs a hut up on the mountain, Simony Hut up on the Dachstein Glacier. And I always go with my groups there. And he's a very, he's a well-known mountain guide, he was leading the Austrian Mountain Guide Association, I was working for him.

But whenever I come with my group, you know, we pray, I do Bible studies in the evening, we do devotions, we sing, just like here, in his hut. And he's not a Christian, and he's very cynical about it. You know, whenever we sing, he says, oh, oh, oh, they sing again.

You know, very negative about it. But we pray for him, we love him, we continue to go there. But last winter he had an accident.

He has his own climbing garden, but he slipped and he fell down about 50 or 60 feet, and he smashed on rocks. He barely survived, but he did survive. He was in coma for a few weeks, a helicopter flew him to Salzburg.

And the first day when he woke up, I visited him, when he came out of coma. And I went in, I was very much afraid, because I thought what I'm going to hear now is, where is your God? You know, you know, things like this. And I was afraid approaching him, but somehow I felt I need to see him.

So I went in, and there he was. He didn't look very good, he broke almost every bone he had. And he looked at me with bright eyes and said, Hans-Peter, I need to tell you something.

In my few weeks of coma, it was the most terrible time in my whole life. He's about 60 years old now. He said he would not believe what I had seen.

I have seen so ugly creatures, and I would be insane by now, but I was thinking of one song that I learned as a child in the Catholic Church. It's a similar song to How Great Thou Art. That's the only song he remembered since he was a child.

And he said, I sang this song every day in my coma until I woke up. And that was the only thing that rescued me. And then he said, Hans-Peter, keep on telling people about a higher being.

You know, he doesn't know what it is. But keep on telling people about it because they need it. Now, it's a circumstance that God uses to speak to people.

Thirdly, God speaks through other people. God probably spoke to some of you even this evening here. When a sermon is spoken, God speaks to us when we have personal talks with somebody.

And we must never underestimate God speaking through some people. It says in 1 Thessalonians 5.20, Do not treat prophecy with contempt. So when people come up to me and give me a word, I take it very serious because we should not treat it with contempt.

Fourthly, God, of course, speaks in and through His Word, the Bible, to us because this is the written revelation of God and His character. And therefore, of course, He speaks to us and we hear His voice in the Bible. If I would ask now, how many of you have experienced God speaking in the Bible, probably

most hands would go up.

But fifthly, and this is what we want to talk about tonight, God speaks through His intimate personal voice. And the questions I want to go through this evening are, when God speaks, does it have to be spectacular or is it something quiet? Does every Christian hear the personal voice of God or just some chosen ones? Is there a prerequisite to hear His voice? From where do I expect to hear the voice? Inside or outside? And how do I recognize it? These are the questions I want to go through with you this evening because it was a real burden for me, God, how do I hear you? Well, I do it according to a Jewish custom. Jewish teachers often make a statement first and then they try to explain it.

I do the same thing. The answer is this. Yes, God does speak personally because this is what He created us for, for a personal love relationship.

That's why He speaks to every Christian. Secondly, God not only speaks through His word, people and nature, yes, He speaks personally to each one of us. And thirdly, it is not reserved for special Christians but for all who have the Spirit of God dwelling within them, they can expect to hear the voice of God.

Now, point number one is this. Usually when God speaks, it is not a spectacular voice. Again, 1995, I was in Australia, but I was down south in New South Wales and I spoke in a church.

After the meeting, an old man came up to me and he invited me out on his farm. They have huge farms. Some of their farms are as big as Austria.

You wouldn't believe it. I worked on one for a few months. It was great fun.

But this man invited me to his farm for coffee. I had the afternoon off, so I said, of course, I'd love to come with you. So I did.

And he then told me a story over the coffee. He said, I was never a churchgoer. I never went to church.

I lived out on my farm. That's all I knew. One night, I went to bed.

The window was open and Jesus Christ came through the window. He stood next to my bed. He touched me.

He spoke to me. And this is the story he told me. I heard about three or four of those stories.

Now, this is spectacular, I would say. Now, it's not my job to decide whether it was real or whether it was a hallucination or whatever, in this case. But one thing I do know.

From that night on, the life of the man was changed. He really had a deep appreciation and love for the Lord Jesus. We have appearances of angels in the Bible.

Abraham, Jacob, Mary, Peter, Paul. They all met angels. This is not an exception, so to speak, for some people.

But it is not the norm. To have an experience like this was never the norm in the Bible. It was always the exception.

And it is not the norm today. It is always the exception. And in the church worldwide, I see that again and again.

And it also seems that sometimes God gives us a spectacular sign, but the direction usually comes through His inner voice. You see, a sign... You see, when there is a sign, Toronto. Now, that's only a sign.

When I'm at the sign, I'm not in Toronto. But sometimes God gives a sign, like to this mountain guide colleague, to Tony. He gives him a straight sign that does not mean that he will arrive.

Because the direction to the arrival is usually a very quiet, personal guidance of the Holy Spirit. And we can refuse it or take it. Secondly, we become sensitive to the voice of God by experience and by becoming familiar to His voice.

It says in John chapter 10 and 27, Jesus says, My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me. Now, I know a little bit about sheep and cows because for three years I was a cowboy. I wasn't a shepherd boy because we had lots of cows and goats in the Alps in Austria.

My parents were rather poor, so what they did with us, with the two boys, from the first day of our holiday in summer, it was ten weeks. From the first to the last day they sent us up on the Alps, so they didn't have to feed us through. And I was on the Alps for three years.

You know, it was like Peter and Heidi. Do you know that movie? Except that Heidi was 60 and I was 11. There was a problem.

But I remember so clearly, Pauline, that's the name of this lady, she's still alive, she's very old now. Pauline, when the cows were close enough to the hut, she would scream out a certain word. I don't tell you what it is.

She would scream out that word and the cows would slowly move their head and then they would slowly come down to the hut. Now, I thought, that's easy, I can do that. Usually they were much further up on the Alps, so I had to run up, but when I was close enough I screamed the same words as Pauline.

I screamed my little guts out, but they didn't come. They never came. And I got so angry because I thought Pauline says the same thing, I say the same thing, but they don't come.

So I beat them always down and that didn't help our sympathy. In retrospect, I now know why they came when Pauline screamed out and why they never came when I screamed out. Because they knew her voice.

And they didn't know mine. Because she lived with those cows all year long, since 30 years. The Word of God uses a similar analogy, by the way.

In Isaiah chapter 1 verse 3 it says, The ox knows his master, the donkey his owner's manger, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand. One phrase that the Lord Jesus repeats six times in the Gospels is this, He who has ears to hear, let him hear. You know what's interesting? We have five senses, seeing, smelling, touching, tasting and hearing.

When I ask people, I do that sometimes with teenagers, I ask, what do you think is the most important sense out of those five? If you're like me, you say the eye. You probably say something else, but that's what I would have said, but it's not correct. The most important sense that God gave us on this earth is the ear.

Because Jesus said always, if you have ears to hear, hear. He never said if you have eyes to see. See, actually the eye is the one sense that leads people into sin.

Because the eye is kept for heaven. This is when we see Jesus as He is. Now we walk by faith.

And how does faith come? Faith comes by hearing the Gospel, Romans 10, 17. This is why the ear is so important. This is why we cannot substitute hearing with anything else.

Now, if I don't hear the voice of God, if you don't hear the voice of God, we must not blame it on the sender, but check out the receiver. We must be aware. And now please, this is important, especially for young Christians.

We must be aware that hearing the voice of God takes time. And we will increasingly become familiar with the voice of God by experience and becoming familiar with it. The misunderstanding that sometimes is around is to believe that I must hear the voice of God always and automatically.

This misunderstanding is not only a source of frustration, it is very dangerous, because we interpret the wildest things for the Word of God. And it has nothing to do with God. Therefore, it's our privilege and mandate to teach young Christians how to hear the voice of God and to teach ourselves.

One story that shows it so beautifully, please turn there if you have a Bible, go to Samuel chapter, I think it's 1 Samuel chapter 3, yes it is, 1 Samuel chapter 3 and verses 1 to 10. Beautiful, beautiful picture of exactly that. It's a story about Samuel and Eli.

Samuel, a young boy, but very devoted to the Lord. And we read there, the boy Samuel ministered before the Lord under Eli. In those days the word of the Lord was rare.

There were not many visions. One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place. The Lamb of God had not yet gone out and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord where the Ark of God was.

Then the Lord called Samuel, little boy. Samuel answered, Here I am. And he ran to Eli, this is the high priest, or the priest then, and said, Here I am, you called me.

But Eli said, I didn't call. Go back and lie down. So he went and lay down.

Again the Lord called Samuel. And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, Here I am, you called me. My son Eli said, I did not call.

Go back and lie down. Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord. The word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him.

The Lord called Samuel a third time and Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, Here I am, you called me. Then Eli realized that the Lord was calling the boy. So Eli told Samuel, Go and lie down and if he calls you, say, Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.

So Samuel went and lied down in his place. The Lord came and stood there and called, as in the other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel said, Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.

I love this story. It just shows how an old man of God teaches a young man of God how to hear his voice. Next point.

When God speaks, He always speaks from within because that's where He resides. Hebrews chapter 8, verse 8 says this, The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel. I will put my law in their minds and write them on their hearts.

I will be their God and they will be my people. No longer is the mind of God on tablets of stone, but it's in the hearts of the believer. This is why when we listen to the voice of God, from where do we expect to hear the voice? Of course, from within because that's where He resides.

It is a very sad fact that many Christians and from many denominations seek guidance again from the outside. They chase from one external world from God to the other. They run from one pastor to the other.

They run from one movement to the other in order to get direction. But the thing is this, if we do that, we make ourselves a slave again to people and opinions. And we are not much better than people who seek guidance in horoscope, in a crystal ball, voodoo or somewhere else.

God has freed us from that. We are in a new covenant and yet we return in a very subtle form within Christianity to exactly that. God is living within and this is where He guides and directs us.

And it's His gentle voice from within how He leads us. Just last week at the Bible school I spoke in Germany. A student came up to me and said very directly, said, Hans-Peter, I think you know God better than me.

What does God want with my life? That's exactly how I worded it. I never had that before. Now, I was glad to point him to Christ, of course.

We had an hour or two together over a coffee. But I told him, you know what, I'm not the mediator. You need to get to know God because God wants to speak to you.

We don't live in the old covenant like when Moses, the people came to Moses and said, Moses, we don't want to hear the voice of God. You hear the voice of God and then you tell us. That's old covenant, not new.

In a new one, Jesus speaks to everyone by the Holy Spirit within us. The fourth point, God speaks while people pray. Now, this I learned from Charles Price, by the way, a few years ago.

The remarkable thing in the Bible is this, when you study prayer, you learn God speaks to people while they pray. Go with me to Acts chapter 10, please. I'll just show you one or two representative verses so that you know what I mean by that.

Acts chapter 10 and verse 9. This is where Peter and Cornelius come together and they both receive a vision. God is speaking to them. So in Acts chapter 10, verse 9, it says this.

This is Peter now. About noon the following day, as they were on the journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. By the way, I always thought, why does this guy go on the roof to pray? Because we have these steep roofs at home.

I was never in Israel. I thought he needs a rope or something, but they have those flat things, you know. And verse 10, he became hungry.

By the way, if you ever get hungry while you pray, don't worry. So did Peter. He became hungry and wanted something to eat.

And while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. He saw heaven open and so on. In other words, he had this vision with these animals.

But the point here is this. While Peter was in prayer, God spoke to him. On the other side, we have Cornelius.

A few verses later. Go with me to verse 30. It's good enough.

Peter comes to Cornelius, goes into the house of a heathen, which was a great thing. And Cornelius answered, Four days ago, I was in my house praying at this hour at three in the afternoon. Suddenly, a man in shining clothes stood before me and said, Cornelius... The point now is this again.

While Cornelius was praying, the Holy Spirit spoke to him and he had a voice from God. To me, this has become very precious because this is how I hear the voice of God the most often. It's while I pray.

Now, we come to the third section and probably the most practical one. How do we now differentiate God's voice from any other voice? Besides the fact that it takes experience to hear His voice, there are objective ways to differentiate where a voice comes from. And by the way, hearing the word of God is usually not something that just comes out of the blue.

Usually, the voice of God is heard when we, in a responsible study and meditation of the Bible, and when we learn to involve God in our thinking, when we do, when we live in a relationship, then usually God speaks. It doesn't come out of the blue very often. Yeah, it's the same with people, isn't it? The more we are involved with a person, the quicker you recognize his or her voice.

It's totally natural. Now, how do we differentiate a human voice? Let's assume your mother or your father or your child, whatever, would walk through the corridor outside here. We don't see him, but he would talk or she would talk very loud.

How would you recognize that this is your child or your mother? I often ask that. It's interesting the answers I get. I don't ask now.

I give you the answer right away. How we differentiate a human voice by three factors. First of all, it's the quality of sound.

You see, some people, they speak very slow. They are never under stress. You know, this is how they talk.

I like that. Other people talk very fast. You can follow them.

You know, it's kind of this, it's a quality of sound. Some speak very high, some very low and so on. This is how you recognize a voice.

So it's the quality of sound. Secondly, there is always a spirit attached to a voice. For example, some people, when they speak, they always speak passionately.

You know, some preachers, they're always kind of, you know, it's always like this. Some people have that. Other people, some people whine.

You know, everything is so hard. You know, I can't get through this day. This is how they talk.

It's a whining. It's a spirit in the voice. This is how we differentiate a voice.

Some voices are very demanding. They're always demanding. Some are very confident.

Others are very timid. You know, it's a spirit attached to the voice. And the third factor, the conclusive one, of course, is the content that is said from that person.

Those are the three objective ways how you differentiate the voice of your mother, child or whoever. Well, we recognize the voice of God with the same three factors. First of all, by the quality, by the weight of its authority.

The thing is this. The voice of God usually does not come with a sound, but it comes into our mind, because this is where he lives, in a form of a certain thought or a perception. And by the weight and the impact of this voice, you can tell whether it's from God or not.

Last year, it was January 2002. Here it is. I got frustrated because I didn't know is it my subconscious speaking to me or is it really God? And I said, God, how do I know if it's you? And actually he answered.

He said, Hans-Peter, when I speak, you always know it. Do you know how? Because, Hans-Peter, when I speak, there is no possibility to debate or to argue or to discuss it. When I speak, it's the final word and you only have two choices.

You are either obedient or disobedient and you know it. And this is so true. You see, when I think with my subconscious, when it's my own perceptions, I can evaluate what I think.

I can change it, even improve it. When God speaks, I never can. By the way, this was the distinguishing mark of Jesus Christ as opposed to all the other teachers.

It says in Matthew 7, 29, for Jesus taught them as one with authority and not like the scribes. I was so glad because after that prayer I had, I read a book, I don't know what it was, but there was a quote from Stanley Jones that confirmed totally my experience. He wrote this, he said, perhaps the rough distinction is this.

The voice of the subconscious argues with you. It tries to convince you. But the inner voice of God does not argue.

It does not try to convince you. It just speaks and is self-authenticating. It has the feel of the voice of God within it.

Now, how does this work practically? Sometimes when I walk, I pray and God says, you know, or a mind comes and says, Hans-Peter, you should go and apologize to that person. Now, the first reaction is, God, it was his problem. He started it, I didn't.

When it's from God, it just says, Hans-Peter, I want you to go and apologize. I say, but God, that's so hard, that's not fair. He says, that's okay, and I need to go.

I give you one example. It's a bit of an embarrassing one, but if it helps you, it's worth it. It was two years ago now.

I prayed for my former boss. I was working nine years in a ski school in Austria. I was the head instructor of the school and I was also responsible for his board shop there.

And as I prayed for him, all of a sudden, that came in my mind, that I, this is now 17 years ago, believe it or not, I had wet socks, and in his board shop we had new socks, so I just changed them, and I put on new socks, and I never paid them. Because, you know, he didn't pay me enough anyways, that's what I thought. And I prayed, his name is Heinz, even if he hears it, that's fine, because I've been with him anyways.

And I prayed for Heinz, and he said, Hans-Peter, you stole socks 17 years ago, I'd like you to go to Heinz and pay him the socks with interest. I said, God, this is ridiculous. Heinz, first of all, Heinz never knew about, secondly, I've done things far worse than stealing socks.

I said, no, this can't be. So I fought against it. I fought against it for a whole year.

Whenever I even mentioned the name of Heinz, it was one and the same word. And it's stupid, actually it's not stupid, but it took me a whole year, and I came to the point, either I commit suicide, or I pay the socks. And so one day, I went by his office there, and I saw his car, so I went in, and he said, well, I haven't seen you for a long time.

I said, well, that's true. But I want to tell you, I've stolen socks 17 years ago, and here's the money. Actually, he took it quite well.

He even gave me the money back. But you know what? I went out, and I was a free man. I couldn't enjoy life again.

But you see, I knew it was from God. There was no way to argue. Now, the first thing, as I said is, the first mark is, it's the quality, it's the authority.

Secondly, it is the spirit of God's voice. How do I know that it's God's voice? It's his spirit. When God speaks, there's always a certain characteristic in his spirit.

And it's always a spirit of peacefulness, of confidence, and of goodwill. In other words, it's the spirit of Jesus. And because his voice bears authority within itself, it never needs to be loud or hysterical.

Please turn with me to James chapter 3. This is such a key verse to differentiate the voice of God from any other voices that come into our mind. James chapter 3, and verse 17. James 3, 17, says this, But the wisdom that comes from heaven, that comes from God, is first of all pure, and then peace-loving, it is considerate, it is submissive, it is full of mercy, and good fruit, impartial, and sincere.

I'm sure you've probably experienced that, but I have read some books, I have listened to some teachings, to some sermons, and in those books I read, every statement the writer made, he underlined with five Bible verses. But you know what? At the end of the book, something within me cringed. Something wasn't right, and I didn't know what it is.

What I usually do then, I put this book aside, or the tape, or the sermon I hear, I don't try to make any judgment, and I say, God, please show me, what is it? And so far, God has always been faithful, because you see, we can underline our statements with 30 Bible verses. It may still not be right. And you know how you differentiate? When you hear something that makes you cringe, that gives you a feeling of condemnation, you may know, that's certainly not from God.

Because the wisdom from above is always peaceable, it's always gentle, it's full of mercy, it's the Spirit of Christ. And the third and the last is, of course, the content. Of course, we can determine whether something is the voice of God or not by the information that is conveyed.

And the content of a word that comes from God will always be consistent with the general revelation that we have in the Scriptures about Himself. It will always be in line with the Bible. An example again, that you know what I mean, a girl in our area, she's a Christian, and she met a guy who's not a Christian, they went to bed together, she became pregnant, and then he ran away, it's a story you often hear, this is why the counseling rooms are full.

But I went to her and I asked her later, I said, why did you go to bed with him? And she said, I knew it was right because I had such peace from God to do it. And I said, well, you may have had peace, but it did not come from God. Because when God gives us a vision, it will never contradict the general revelation that is already lined out in Scripture.

And if God speaks to you, the voice of God will never override the principles that are lined out in Scripture. Now let me say one word here. I know this is a little dangerous, but I believe it's important.

By testing whether something is the voice of God or not, it's the principles of the Bible that are important, not the incidentals. Incidentals, what I mean by that, it's a one-time mention often taken out of the context. Let me tell you, let me give you an example.

First Corinthians 11 says that women should have long hair and men should have short hair. You can never make a principle out of that statement. You're not on biblical ground.

You know why? Because in the Old Testament we have the Nazarenes, and they had to have long hairs if they wanted to be holy. This is a one-time mention. It's an incidental, and you cannot make a principle of the Bible out of that.

Unfortunately, and this is why I say that, if Christians are very sensitive, they can become very tense, locked in by those rules, and it's not right. Another incident, for example, is Mark 10. It's the story of the rich young ruler.

Remember, he ran to Jesus, fell on his knees, and said, what must I do to inherit eternal life? Jesus gave him the Ten Commandments, and then he said to this rich young ruler, if you want to follow me, you need to sell everything you have, give everything to the poor, and then follow me. Now, that's not valid for every single believer, or would you say so? It's not. Not every Christian needs to sell everything he has, give it to the poor, and follow.

You see, this is an incident, you cannot make a principle out of that, because that only condemns people, it only locks people into a legalistic frame. When I say that the voice of God never overrides scriptures, I'm talking about principles of the Bible, not incidentals. And a principle, for example, is 1 John 1, God is light, in Him there is no darkness.

That is always true. That is never changed, because from the first page to the last, you have that. A principle in the Bible is to love the neighbor as yourself.

That's a principle. You find that on every other page. I just say this, because some Christians who are very sensitive can be destroyed when we make principles out of incidentals.

Now, a last thing, and then I really close, I'm sorry about that, didn't think it'd take so long, but it's some traps that we fall into as far as hearing the God's voice is concerned. The first trap we sometimes fall into is infallibility. The infallibility of the speaker of God does not guarantee the infallibility of the hearer.

You may hear the Word of God, you may objectively go through what it was really Him, and you come to the conclusion, yes, it was truly God, and you step out and you do what He told you to do, but then you find yourself in a mess. Again, just last week, there were two girls from America and a guy, lovely people, lovely Christians, and I have a vision to start a young people's work in Austria, and I admire them for doing that. They came two months ago to Austria, they came and visited me because I know one of them, and they told me all the ways how God showed them that at this particular place near Salzburg in Braunau, where Adolf Hitler is born, by the way, this is where they are, there's a little place, and they say, we know that God wants...

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