

8 Ways God Speaks To Us (Video)

by Shane Idleman

This sermon emphasizes the various ways in which God speaks to us, including through circumstances, His Word, His wrath, wisdom, serving, rejoicing, others, and His Spirit. It encourages seeking God's direction through prayer, Scripture, and obedience, highlighting the importance of being open to godly counsel and the leading of the Holy Spirit. The message underscores the need to find refuge in God and trust in His guidance.

Scripture: Psalm 2:1, Psalm 2:10, Psalm 2:11, Romans 8:26, Proverbs 3:5

Topics: "Hearing God's Voice", "Trusting Divine Guidance"

Description

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Transcript

Probably everyone in this room, is anyone ever confused about God speaking? Sometimes, is that me? Is that the devil? Is that God? What's going on? But God speaks just clearly in many portions of the Bible, of course, but in Psalm 2, what I'm gonna do is read it, talk about it, and then tell you from what I gleaned from it. Again, it's a journal. If you haven't got your journal, grab your journal, because what I'm sharing with you is what I wrote down in my journal, what God was showing me, and then, of course, I check it.

We have Psalm journals available. You can read a chapter, and then journal your prayers, your thoughts. I even put, Lord, what are you saying in this area? What are you wanting me to do here? And then maybe revisit it later, and this journal can be very helpful.

But in a nutshell, Psalm 2, he talks about the nations are raging, and then the Lord chastises, and then the Son decrees, and then there's obedience back to God. Psalm 1, we see the contrast between the wicked and the just. In Psalm 2, we're seeing the contrast between the disobedient nations and the obedient Son.

So here is the opening of Psalm 2. Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing? So the psalmist is asking this. Why do the nations rage? Why do they plot a vain thing? In other words, they plan something that is useless. Something that is vain is useless.

And as I was studying this, I came across a medal that Diocletian, I believe his pronunciation, he was an emperor. He had a medal made during the early church, and it said this. The name of Christians will soon be extinguished.

Almost 2,000 years ago, the name of Christ will soon be gone. Well, he plotted a vain thing, because we know the answer to that. Voltaire, this great philosopher a couple hundred years ago said the same thing.

I will get rid of Christianity, and now they're printing Bibles in his house. You cannot plot a vain thing against God. And then verse two.

The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, let us break their bonds and pieces and cast away their cords from us. So this is just a reminder that the kings of the earth are set against God. That is no secret, I'm assuming.

There is this world system that is set against God and against his anointed. And they say, let us break their bonds and pieces, cast away their cords from us. And Charles Spurgeon said this.

Oh, the men were half as careful in God's service to serve them wisely as his enemies are to attack his kingdom craftily. Sinners have their wits about them, and saints are dull, reminding us to be prepared and to also use wisdom in this day and age. And they're saying, in essence, let us rid ourself of all restraint.

So the nations are raging, the king is setting himself against God, and they wanna break the bonds off of them, meaning get rid of these restraints. Don't we see that today? Do you see some of the laws being passed in Sacramento this month? Mandatory this, mandatory that. Now you can't aid a policeman if he's in danger.

Well, I'm gonna kick that law to the curb. I don't know about you. Well, there's a lot of other laws I'm not gonna read, but that's what they're wanting to do, remove these restraints from us.

We don't like this bondage that God has brought on us. Just let us remove these restraints, and as we know, without restraints, the people go crazy. They parade around, and evil is praised throughout the land as they prance about and removing these restraints.

And really, once you remove the restraints of God, you become restrained yourself. You become a prisoner of sin. So you're restrained somehow or to someone.

And then verse four, he who sits in the heavens shall what? Laugh. The Lord shall hold them in confusion, depending on what your Bible translation and what you're using. It says confusion.

So the Lord laughs in heaven, and he holds them in confusion. Then he shall speak to them in his wrath. And we're gleaming some things here on the way God speaks to us.

So he speaks to them in his wrath and in distress, his deep displeasure. Yet I have set my king on my holy heel of Zion. So God was provoked here.

God's provoked by the nations raging against God. They're basically being disobedient against God, and he laughs here. He's provoked.

And as a result, what does he do? He speaks to them in his wrath, and he confuses the people. I'm wondering, is anyone confused here tonight or listening online? Because not in all cases, of course, but

many times, confusion is a byproduct of being out of God's will. Do you ever notice when you're out of God's will, you're confused? Now, confusion comes upon all of us, even when we're in God's will.

I'm not talking about that. Again, I'm not making a broad statement here that applies to everyone. But many times, if there's confusion, if there's uncertainty, I'm lacking peace, it could be that we're out of God's will and not seeking him for direction.

And then verse seven, I will declare the decree. Here's what he's declaring. The Lord has said to me, you are my son.

Today I have begotten you. Ask of me and I will give you the nations for your inheritance and the ends of the earth for your possessions. You shall break them with a rod of iron.

You shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel. See, here's where we go from seeing Jesus as a nice little lamb to the judge. And I was immediately reminded of what John saw in Revelation.

When he saw, he saw heaven open. And the armies of heaven were coming out of heaven. They were following Jesus Christ.

And the Bible says, on his head were many crowns. And out of his mouth goes a fire that he will rule the nations with a rod of iron. He will tread the fierceness and the wrath of Almighty God.

So we have this image many times of Jesus as this mild, meek, mannered, turn the other cheek, golly gee whiz, nice guy. Look, he wouldn't hurt a flea. But he's also a judge.

Did you know that Jesus is a warrior? You're warrior king, he fights battles. Out of his mouth goes a sword that he strikes the nation. And his word is so powerful that it accomplishes what it has set forth.

And he says, you shall dash them to pieces like a potter's vessel. And whenever that happens, have you ever had clay pottery just break? Any chance on repairing that? It just smashes these things that man has built. But we see here the favorite son.

God says, ask of me, ask of me what you will. And if you understand Old Testament imagery or Old Testament teaching, the firstborn, the favorite son was always given double portion, given more from the father. And he's saying here, ask of me whatever you want.

But it's interesting, we could spend a whole sermon on this, but I'm not going to. But we also see the trinity, we see the hierarchy of the trinity. And it's a very complex issue, trying to understand God.

Anyone got a headache over that before? We see that God is one, God is one. But he reveals himself, is that mine probably? Okay, that's my baby crying. I recognize, what was that cry? I can hear, you hear that one out of all the other ones.

So there's a hierarchy in the trinity. And I want to be careful, because I don't want to overstep what the scripture says and bring in opinions. But the Bible teaches that God is one.

But he reveals himself as the father, the son, and the Holy Spirit. Theologians say that he reveals himself as three persons of the trinity. But we get caught up on that word persons, because we don't see three people, three entities.

What's going on? All we know is God says, hear O Israel, I am one. But the father, the son, the Holy Spirit, revealing himself, I mean you could say manifesting himself, which means revealing himself as father and son and Holy Spirit. But what's interesting is you see a hierarchy.

You see the son submitting to the will of the father. There's submission, you see the Holy Spirit revealing the son. The Holy Spirit just sits back and reveals the son, elevates the son, leads people to the son.

The Holy Spirit isn't to be elevated, he elevates the son, Jesus Christ. And even Jesus said, I don't even know, I don't know what that plan is, only my father knows the plan, not even the angels. There's a hierarchy, isn't that interesting? Submitting to the will and the role of the father.

But then the son is bringing a judgment. There is the judgment of the son. And I wish we could preach that more in our pulpits of America.

Not all the time, not Bible-thumping, mean, angry people, but you need to tell people about the judgment that is to come. Jesus did. I mean, it's so often, I'll read through the New Testament, I'll go, there he goes again.

There he goes again, there he goes again. Don't be worried about those who can kill your body, but be worried, fear God who can kill body and throw your soul in hell. Hey, there's a judgment coming for this reason I have been sent to preach the gospel, for this reason I have been sent to die for the sins of the people, because there's a judgment coming.

And on Old Hymn Night, this hymn was written 300 years ago. The title is, And Will the Judge Descend? Has anyone ever remembered that one? I think his name was Doddridge. Written 300 years ago, And Will the Judge Descend? Boy, they could sure write back then, couldn't they? I mean, I'm not saying we can't now, but there was a depth to many of these hymns.

He said, And must the dead arise and not a single soul escape his all discerning eyes? Depart from me a curse to everlasting flame for rebel angels first prepared where mercy never came. Ye sinners, seek his grace whose wrath ye cannot bear. Fly to the shelter of the cross and find salvation there.

Can you imagine singing that song every Sunday? Unbelievers will either fall on their face and worship God, or they would run for cover. They would run because of fear, but that's the power in God's word. Ye sinners, seek his grace whose wrath you cannot bear.

Fly to the shelter of the cross and find salvation there. It's such a wonderful truth that Jesus will be our Savior, but he's also our judge. He's our King, but he's also our lawgiver.

And then verse 10, Now therefore, so what I see God doing here is the psalmist is telling us about the kings, the nations setting themselves up against God. They're gonna fight against God. Sound familiar? Just go on the news.

Look at our politicians, many of them. Look at everything. It's against God, and God just laughs.

It's like this little ant outside telling me he's gonna take my house down. And this little tiny ant is just, oh, that's what you're gonna do? Uh-huh. He just, he laughs.

He's provoked. He says, okay, but here's what I love about God. He said, Now therefore, be wise.

Be wise, O kings. You might wanna second guess yourself. You might wanna think again before you come against the Almighty.

O kings, and you have to love that about God. He calls it out. He convicts.

He lets his wrath fall. He tells you about the judgment, but then at the end of Revelation, he says, All who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Call on me, and you shall be saved.

I am not willing that any should perish, but that all come to repentance. It's that love of God, the grace of God calling us back to him. And we could tell this dying and dead world the same thing today.

World, America, society, Hollywood, Washington. Here, here, be wise. Be wise.

And it's very interesting, this word wise, because it only applies to biblical doctrine. You won't see the word wisdom having anything to do with man's philosophy. It always has to do with biblical doctrine, and I should clarify for you.

Knowledge is knowing the doctrine. Wisdom is applying it. Too many Christians have knowledge, but no wisdom.

Do you ever, do believers ever baffle you, and you go, but they're a Christian. I don't understand. They put the sign of the fish on their computer.

On Facebook, they do, but they have knowledge. But they don't have the wisdom. They don't apply it.

If you wanna grow in your faith, if you wanna become a mature Christian, we have to apply the knowledge that we possess. You don't know how many people I've talked to over the years, and we've counseled, and especially in marriage, I've just been ending a two-part series on marriage. But boy, the husband sure can quote scripture.

Boy, your mouth runs off. You're really good at that. Why doesn't your heart engage it? So you have knowledge, but no wisdom.

That's why your marriage is dying. That's why many Christian marriages end in divorce. They have the knowledge.

All I know what to do, I just don't do it. And that's the hard part, correct? Example, we all know how to eat healthy. Knowledge, you know it.

If I put up a Snickers bar or an apple, which one should you choose? Hmm, I'm not sure. Which one is the good one? I have no idea. We have tons of knowledge.

But very little wisdom. Wisdom is putting that knowledge into application, into practice, that's how you grow spiritually. So if you say, I haven't grown spiritually, I'm not growing spiritually, let me encourage you tonight, just apply the wisdom of God's word.

What does that look like? I have to love somebody I don't love, and once I begin to apply that, I begin to grow. I have to forgive someone I don't want to forgive. Once I forgive them and say, God, I forgive them, and I tell them that, I grow spiritually.

I know I should do this, and when I do it, I grow spiritually. That's why you can meet someone who's been a Christian, they say, 25 years, and they're very immature, spiritually speaking. Because they've got all this head knowledge, but haven't applied it.

That was a lot more than I wanted to say on wisdom, but you get the picture. So now therefore, verse 10, be wise, O kings, be careful, be instructed, you judges of the earth, with really, they judge underneath God. They're not judges of the earth.

They're judges in the setting that he has given, and you should know that, especially with America and all the other countries out there, that the rulers, the kings, all of them sit underneath God's sovereignty. God is the ultimate judge. God is the ultimate sovereign, and when he gave us Romans 13, he said that the government is to be a terror to those who do evil.

Therefore, if you bear the sword, you will be executed by the governing officials if you bear the sword of vain, if you do evil. So that's really what the institution of government was set up for, is to administer justice. And then he said, serve the Lord with what? Serve the Lord with fear.

Isn't that interesting? You think the opposite. But see, when I serve the Lord, when I fear the Lord, I rejoice. Because you have to fear God.

Fearing God is the beginning of wisdom. And rejoice with trembling. Kiss the son.

That was an affection that they did, especially here, this is written in the Old Testament. It's Hebrew, it's a sign of affection. Kiss the son, lest he be angry.

In other words, show him a compassion and show him that you have a relationship with him. And you perish in the way when his wrath is kindled, but a little. Blessed are those who put their trust in him.

Another translation says, those who find shelter in him. A refuge in him. Blessed are those who take refuge in him.

So, you're asking probably, well, what are these eight ways that God speaks to us? I'm gonna tell you right now, through this, what we just read, we can see eight wonderful ways that God speaks to us. Well, how do we know? Because he's speaking to them through these different ways. Now, of course, you could add to the list, but primarily, throughout Scripture, New Testament, Old Testament, this is how God speaks.

Number one, are you ready to learn and grow this evening? Through circumstances. God speaks to us through circumstances. He told the kings, verse 10, and now, therefore, O kings, make a choice.

There was something that's going to happen to them. The wrath of God was going to fall upon them. So, often, if I'm in a circumstance, sometimes, God is trying to get my attention.

Do you ever finally wake up when you lose that job? Do you ever wake up when the doctor says, we don't know what's wrong with your health? Or when the spouse leaves, there's separation, some type of circumstances, we get hit with something. Often, God is using that to speak to us. And most people, hopefully, will get into God's word, into worship, into prayer, and they'll use that circumstance to wake them up.

Or, if it's an unbeliever, it can lead to repentance. Or even a believer, I should say. Has God ever woken you up through a circumstance? Amen? Because, without that, sometimes, we don't wake up.

And that leads to repentance. And then, what does repentance lead to? It leads to our ears opening up. Now, I can hear clearly.

Well, did God really say that? He told the prophet in the Old Testament, is not my ear heavy that I cannot hear? Is not my hand short that I cannot save? But your sins have separated me from you so that I can't hear your prayer. So therefore, what? Turn back to me and repent so now my ears will be open and attentive to your call, to your cry. What was the solution? The prophet was calling God's people back, and God was bringing in challenging situations, difficult circumstances, to get them to see their need.

So God often will use circumstances to pull us in a certain direction. How many things can you think of that God has used a certain circumstance? I mean, in my own life, looking back, I wouldn't have made career decisions and change unless he applied the pressure. He tightened that vice.

He really just tightened that thing. And then, we make different decisions. But also, we find here, number two, God speaks to us.

Now, this is not going to be new, but it's a good reminder. God speaks to us, are you ready for this? Through his word. But I just went recently, I can't remember the statistics, but you'd be amazed at how few Christians actually read their Bibles.

I mean, I'm not talking about quick devotional that is texted to them, a little, oh, Proverbs 11 three says this, and they're done for the day. That's good, I think you should do that. God's word speaks to them.

But how many people actually sit and read God's word and let it speak to them? Here's what happens, when I begin to read God's word, I see the counsel of God, I see the wisdom of God, I see the heart of God, I see the nature of God, so now I can apply that in my own life. If not, we're being swayed by the pull of the world, swayed by the pull of the media, the good, old, honest media out there. I'm gonna leave that there.

So, through the word. So, are you in the word? Well, Shane, it's difficult, try just a chapter a day. Open up Proverbs and try to get through a chapter a day, and then maybe turn to the Gospels and read a chapter of the Gospels, what Jesus has to say, and say, Lord, speak to me, that's what I do, God, speak to me through your word.

And aren't we learning right now through the psalmist words here recorded for us? Basically, what happens with the word of God is this, you turn on the light so you can see the path. You turn on the light to see where you're going. So many people have read about not being equally yoked, and they've made different marriage decisions.

They've read about how to handle finances, and they changed course. God's word begins to speak to them. If it's not speaking to you, something else is speaking to you, and it's often the wrong voice.

And then number three, how does God speak to us? Through wrath. God speaks to us through wrath. Now, I don't know if what, nobody knows, so don't let them tell you they know.

Does God use natural disasters? Does he create them? Does he cause them? You know, that's a big debate out there. We know that God allows certain things. For example, after 9-11, how many churches were full the week after? It's, they set records.

See, so sometimes that disaster will, what? Get us back to God. So God can use disasters in the midst of, what about a funeral, or service, or something? Thanks, Randy. What about a funeral, a disaster? Something happens, it hits.

So even though God might not cause it, here's what I wanna get people to understand. Even though God might not cause it, if he allows it, hopefully that disaster, if there, it can point us, can get God to speak to us. How many people turn back to God after disaster? I did.

We're not a natural disaster. And it's human nature, when life is going good, when the cell is set and everything is going good, we tend to forget God. Not all the time, but he will speak to you through that warning.

Sometimes he gives a warning. Sometimes he lets a person get caught doing something. How many people has he, a disaster, and they got pulled over, driving under the influence of something? Pills or anything, that's what I'm worried about now with this new legalized marijuana.

You know, big billboards, call us and we'll deliver the marijuana free. Just don't get in a car. And you're gonna see increase in these areas, probably.

But God will sometimes use that to get your attention. He'll speak to you, hey, you've gotta change that. You've gotta stop that.

So we see through circumstances, through his word, through his wrath. Verse five, it says, he shall speak to them in his wrath. Here's what you need to remember, though.

God disciplines those he loves. Thank God for the spankings of God, amen. Get out that spanking paddle.

That's the first time I ever got spanked by someone else other than my mom was at a school in Lancaster, Bethel Baptist. How many went to that school? I don't know if they still do that. But you had to get on there kind of like this.

And they just took that paddle, it had holes in it, I guess so it'd fly quicker. And then pow, pow, pow, three times. You would change your actions quickly.

It's so interesting, this just amazes me. When I went to school, the top three problems were something like making noise and chewing gum. Now it's assault, battery, rape, weapons.

You kind of wonder if we haven't lost that discipline. That discipline is so important. So he loves, though, he disciplines those he loves.

But his wrath falls on those who reject him. And I know it's hard to tell people, but we don't have to apologize for it, that's God's truth. He loves you and disciplines you if you know him, but his wrath falls upon those who reject him.

That's why God is convicting people, he's drawing people, they have no excuse. Even their own conscience draws them, they hear sermons, they read articles. Especially in America, does anyone have an excuse? No one has an excuse.

So that wrath will fall upon those who reject him. It should cause you to weep. It should cause you to cry out for your unsaved loved ones and those you don't know, it should break your heart for the things that

break God's heart.

And then number four, how does God speak to us? Number four, he speaks to us through wisdom. Well Shane, you just said his word, well that's different. I just kind of explained wisdom earlier and I didn't mean to do that, I was gonna do it here.

But he speaks to you through application of his word. What's that called, one word? Obedience, obedience. So many people are saying, God, why don't you answer? Why don't you show me, why don't you speak to me? I don't know what to do in this situation.

No, you do know what to do, you're just not doing it. So disobedience causes frustration. When we're out of God's will, when we're out of God's will and we're not applying the wisdom of God's word, we won't make wise decisions.

We won't hear the right, God won't be able to speak to us in the same way if we're not applying that wisdom. For example, does anyone have financial questions? God, what are you doing in this area? Speak to me in this area. Well, are you a giver? Oh, here goes the church again, asking for money.

Well, you know, we don't do that. We have a little box out there somewhere and people give who wanna give. But I would be doing you a disservice if I didn't tell you that God honors a giving heart.

God honors those who give to others. God honors, the checkbook, your wallet is the best way to gauge where your heart really is, if it has a pull on you. And what we do, here's the American culture now.

We have all these bills and then if we can get God in, here's what he's left with. And said, okay, Lord, how can I bless others? And Paul even said, God doesn't want you to live in lack and others in abundance. You give from a cheerful heart.

You give according to what God has put on your heart. But there should be a giving sense, not a hoarding sense in us. So if you're having financial difficulties, are you giving? If you're having marriage difficulties, are you giving of yourself? Are you a loving wife, spouse, respecting? Are you truly, are you gonna hear from God if you're not applying his wisdom? This applies big time to Christian couples.

And I've said this before, but maybe it'll help someone tonight. Wondering, what do we do with this relationship, Shane? Should we get married? I was so confused. We don't know, God is not speaking to us.

Well, first stop sleeping together. Well, I don't know about that. We got to test out the car before we buy it.

Or I have to, you know, well, are we living together for financial convenience? And see, they don't want to take that step of applying God's word, and then he begins to speak. So for living in clear disobedience in one area, what about if you know you need to treat a person a certain way, say your spouse, and you're not doing that, and you wonder why God isn't speaking? Why isn't God answering? Why isn't he showing you? So he speaks to us through wisdom. That's why he said here, now, therefore, in verse 10, be wise.

Be wise. Now, I don't know if you got this, but it jumped out to me. He's telling these kings to be wise, meaning they have to be willing to be instructed.

We have a problem in the Christian community. We have a lot of teachers, but not very many teachable students. We all know what to do, but we're not very teachable when it comes to receiving instructions.

You have to be very teachable, very receptive, and be willing to learn from others. And so to sum that up, wisdom is obedience. That's exactly what wisdom is, obeying God's word.

So, so far, are there circumstances trying to wake you up? Are you in God's word getting direction? Is there maybe a disciplinary action God is doing in your life to wake you up? Are you applying wisdom to your life to hear God correctly? Or number five, we see here in verse 11, serve the Lord, serve the Lord with fear. So God speaks to us through serving. Rarely will he direct somebody who's sitting on their couch, watching Netflix all day.

But Lord, what do you want me to do? Here we go again, week in and week out. I have no direction. Serve the Lord with fear and trembling.

Once you begin to serve the Lord, now you've got feet to your actions. Now you're moving. God can direct.

Have you ever tried to move a car that's not on? The steering wheel is locked. You can't go anywhere. Same thing, God wants us to step out and serve.

I've told some of you before, but before I started even speaking, I was cleaning toilets in a janitor at a church in Lancaster. Walking the parking lot like an usher. Serve, you know, I didn't, don't look at me as a good example of this because I would probably rather sit on the couch too.

But there had to come a point where I got out and served. And here's what happens when you're serving, people begin to notice your giftings before you do. You're gifted for administration, or you're gifted for speaking, or you're gifted for teaching, or you're good with people, or you're hospitable.

And God begins to speak, and then the church begins to elevate you to certain, hey, would you want to take this on? Would you want to do, and you begin to, God begins to speak to you while you're serving him and others. Just sitting at home waiting for the doorbell to ring, or receiving directions from God in your mailbox does not work. It's being out and serving.

What about number six then? Through rejoicing. Wait a minute, Shane, how does God speak to us through rejoicing? Boy, does he ever. God speaks and directs a thankful heart.

Think about this for a minute. Is he gonna direct the heart that is angry, and upset, and critical? Usually that person doesn't have direction from God. That's why they're upset.

It's called a pity party. Oh, God never leads me. God isn't directing me.

I don't know what to do, and we're just upset, and we have developed this critical spirit. So we see here, and rejoice with trembling. A thankful heart is often led in the right direction.

God, thank you for my children, instead of complaining. God, thank you for my spouse, instead of complaining. God, thank you for this job, instead of.

Most of you are millionaires compared to third world countries. Did you know that? So when you go to that job, and go, only \$30 an hour. I don't know.

\$30 an hour? That's what we make all month. Many places. And it filters into other areas.

A thankful heart, a heart that's rejoicing over what God has done, will be directed by God. God, oh, that's right, Lord. Thank you for that, and thank you for that.

Give me more opportunities. And you have this rejoicing heart that also fears God. It's a wonderful combination.

And then we also see here, number seven. Another way that God speaks to us is through others. Through others.

We just learned about God through others. In the psalm. The psalmist who wrote this.

But I'm not really talking about this here. I'm speaking about godly counsel. Are you open to godly counsel? Just to kind of shoot you straight, most people aren't.

Most people aren't. They don't want to hear from others about certain areas of their life. They're not open for godly counsel.

And if you're not open for godly counsel, that means we're not teachable and humble. God often speaks to us through others. And he might speak to you through someone younger.

Did you catch that? Did you know you could learn from a teenager? Is there a chance God might be speaking to them too? Just, I don't know. Once you turn 20, then he speaks to you? Or does God speak to you through others? God speaks, God will speak to your children. That 14 year old praying in the word of God, he'll speak to that person just as much as you.

But I'm talking about godly counsel, maybe in your marriage or in finances. And God will allow others to speak into our life. Especially if you have someone who's not biased.

Meaning don't go to the person who's gonna tell you what they want to hear. Right, we all love our moms, but we know, probably don't ask them for certain, because they'll just love you regardless. They might not shoot you straight.

I will tell you a funny story. When I first started writing books, it was common knowledge. You know, I would read books on writing and publishing and all these different things.

And I had no desire to do it. God totally gave me this desire. It's all him, thank God.

But they would always say, and don't ask your mom to edit your book. Don't ask your mom for her thoughts. She'll say, oh, I love it, son, great.

And it's terrible. Well, they don't know my mom. She took that manuscript and she tore it apart.

I mean, I'm talking a whole page and X through it. And she said, people don't want to know all this, get to the point. Ooh, that was a tough first year.

Can you just, and just redline it, redline it, redline it. But that's why I believe many people benefit from them now. It's not me, they say, oh Shane, you're such a good writer.

No, I'm not. I was ran through the editing process like no other. Imagine someone who can't speak or write well, barely graduating high school, and now they're gonna write a book.

So I had editing 101. And still today, I've got a few people like Christine Ramsey, some of you know her here, other people that edit some of the things I write. And at first it was humbling and you get upset years ago, but now I could care less.

I'm like, find any single error you can find, clean it up as good as you can. But it's funny because if I just would rebel against that and said, no, I read now my first book, the very first draft, and it was absolutely terrible. It was terrible.

So thank God that God allowed her expertise in that area. And then my time and availability and discipline to write, and he combined those up. And that's how the books came out today.

So we have books for young adults, books for men, books for singles, books for marriage, on fasting, a diet book, of course, One Nation Above God, Desperate for More of God. We've made them as all as free downloads on the church website. And my mom played a major role in editing those and cleaning them all up.

So it was such a blessing. So God does use other people. Now, though, the question will come up, what about prophetically? Now, I don't have a lot of time to fully exhaust this, but God can use other people to speak to you prophetically.

As a church that believes still in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, a prophetic word is a word that God would give to someone spontaneously. It wasn't really thought of before. They didn't come up with it on their own.

God really put this on their heart to go and share with an individual. And I could give you example after example after example. However, we do need to be careful because some people like the attention.

You know, God told me to tell you this. And so maybe I'll get to that in 1 Corinthians when we get to this prophetic element, but suffice it to say, God can use people to speak to you prophetically, meaning God has put something on my heart. I want to share it with you.

I don't know what this means. And you share it with them, and the people start crying. Most of you remember this, but I think it's good to repeat because I verified this.

I actually talked to David, Leonard Ravenhill's son named David, David Ravenhill. He wrote a book, and he was at this dinner, and this missionary was filling something in his spirit to give this prophetic word to a girl that was there that was gonna go on the mission field. And he's like, Lord, I can't say this.

So he fought it the whole time, the whole time, because it didn't make sense. It didn't seem to be of God. So he finally said, okay, I'm just gonna say this.

I just have to be obedient in this area. And he told the girl, he says, he said, I don't know how to say it, but God is, I'm thinking this is God wanting me to tell you that he hates mommies and daddies too. Like, what, that doesn't make any sense.

But she broke down and started crying because she was abused by her uncle that would say, let's play mommies and daddies. And that brought complete deliverance to her. And I can give you other stories where people you just hit with a prophetic word.

They'll run to somebody and say, you know, I don't really know, but God's put this on my heart. If you're about ready to leave your wife, don't do it. It will cost you your soul.

And the person begins weeping because they're about ready to leave. See, God uses other people in that area to speak prophetically. But again, it can be dangerous because there are churches where people are coming every week to, do you have a word for me? And it's schizophrenic.

It's like, here, there's a word for you. Jesus has a word for you every day. Get into Jesus's word and God will give you a word in due season if it's needed.

There are only a few different times in my life, I might actually play it at some point. I'm letting you know a prophetic word I got in 2003 when I was digging ditches in construction and it hit home like a sledgehammer. I still remember it today.

When God called me to the ministry, he used someone to speak that into me because I was having doubts. And usually what I've seen, what you see throughout scripture, Abram went 10 years on one word. You don't need to be fed by prophetic words every single week and that becomes your fuel and then you're trusting on people because people can miss it.

Sometimes people are off. And so, but sometimes God does use prophetic words to speak to people more frequently. I don't know what that range is.

That's up to God. So on one hand, sure, we can be open. I mean, I've had people come up and tell me things and if it doesn't register with my spirit, if it doesn't confirm something, if it goes against scripture, I just put it in the back of the bus and maybe later.

If you'll read the story about the radio network, West Side Christian Fellowship Radio Network, WCF Radio Network, you can read the story online. I was at the city hall about two years ago when they were thinking about legalizing marijuana. A lot of the pastors spoke for three minutes to the mayor and the city council.

And I'm standing outside and this guy comes up to me and goes, I just want to pray for you. I go, has God just put this on my heart? I mean, God, I see thousands of cars with your ministry. You know where Leon Valley is? You know something? Okay, thank you.

And I forgot about it, just completely forgot about it until I was on that road out there and we were just getting in the process of buying the radio station. And I just found out that Caltrans estimates it can reach five million vehicles. And that came right back to me a year later.

Just like, ah, ah, more confirmation, more confirmation. And I still was uncertain. I went to meet and greet right next door.

And I said, God, we can't go through with, I need to know, is this you or is this us? I need to know, is this you? I need to meet someone who was changed by our radio program before it went off the air a year ago. Show me something. And no sooner did we go next door, I meet a guy named Walt and he comes up and I say, how'd you hear about us? You're new.

He goes, I used to listen to your radio program before it went off the air. Whatever happened to that? This is like 30 minutes later. See how God uses people often to speak to you.

And I used to say, God, I trust you. I don't trust me. I need confirmation.

Before I make a big decision, I need a confirmation. God, would you show me? And in fear and trembling and thankfulness, you move forward because you're trusting God to show you. So you don't live in fear, but you also don't go ahead like you don't care and you're just not gonna, you're gonna take no prisoners.

It's a balancing act of waiting on God and moving ahead and stepping out on faith and waiting on him for confirmation. It's a wonderful thing. So number eight then, of course, this is important.

God speaks to us through his spirit. The Bible says something interesting. The spirit intercedes.

The spirit leads you. The spirit directs you. The spirit closes doors on certain things.

The spirit, it's funny, Paul, Paul says we are going to Asia and the spirit forbade us. He stopped us. So God speaks to you through that relationship, I believe, with the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit teaches you. The Bible says all things. The Holy Spirit convicts you.

So as a believer, you have the Holy Spirit residing in you. If you submit to the work of the spirit, you're not watching a bunch of junk on TV, a bunch of junk on the media, and you're critical, you're unthankful, you'll be quenching and grieving the spirit of God, especially if there's besetting sin that's unrepentant, you've quenched and grieved the spirit. But if you let the spirit of God loosen your life, he'll begin to direct you, not weird stuff, but according to God's word.

There's a sensing, a direction. You know when this happens to you that God wants you to speak to someone. He wants you to make this decision.

Is there peace? That's another thing I want to talk to you about. Is there peace because you've waited on God? But how do I know if it's God, people say. How do I know? Well, if you're doing all these things, it's very hard to be misled, is it not? How are you going to be misled if you're in God's word, you're praying, I should have mentioned that with the word, prayer and worship and the word, to me, they all go together.

You're praying, you're listening to God, you're in the word, you're looking at your circumstances, you're using wisdom, you're serving others, you have a joyful heart, you're trusting in Christ. It's hard to lead that person astray. Usually, the person who is led astray is missing it in many of these areas.

They're not in God's word, so they're hearing the wrong voice and they get into trouble. So here's a little interesting tidbit on knowing if it's God. Is there peace because you've waited on God? Have you ever rushed into something and you lacked that peace? Is there assurance because you're trusting in God? Is there confidence because of his word? Is there faith that the Holy Spirit is leading you? Common sense.

For example, as we were praying about moving out to this location, I knew that wasn't the devil. Probably, right? So how do we know it's just not a good idea? Or it's a God idea? Well, there was peace about it. We waited on God, we prayed about it, got confirmation.

There was assurance because we're trusting in God to do a great work. We were confident because his word declared it. To go out and preach the gospel, to be a service to others, everything lined up.

So that's in a nutshell, eight ways that God speaks to us. Of course, there are other ways, but those are the primary ways, especially that we find in the second psalm here. And I'll be in psalm three and four, obviously in October, but I like this last verse.

Kiss the son, and then he says, take refuge in him. Take refuge in him, trust in him. That's where many people, what you need to do tonight or this week, as soon as possible, take refuge in him.

Run to the son, run to that presence, run to that shelter. Just this week, I was reading in the Old Testament, where you'll remember this, Moses went into the tabernacle where the presence of God was. Could you imagine that? Going into, you'd think you'd walk in a little bit, a little bit of fear and trepidation.

If you're walking into this sanctuary where the presence of God is, and you know who else was there with him? Joshua, the son of Nun. And it's interesting, it says right after that, exact words, he did not depart from the tabernacle. He wanted the presence of God.

He stayed in the presence of God. So that's the best advice I can give you tonight. Run to the son, run to that refuge.

What was a refuge? It was a place of shelter and protection and safety. It'd be like us running to, we don't have them anymore, but you'd be running to a fort. That's what early settlers used to do.

They would run to a fort. Or now in other countries, they run to an embassy. Did you know once you cross those American lines, once you run to the embassy, they can't touch you.

No matter what country you're in, unless they wanna do Benghazi, or whatever that was called, that terrible thing. What was it called? Ben, there you go, thank you. I needed water, I forgot water too.

But you run to that refuge. You run to that, and as soon as they step into American lines, same thing with Jesus. As soon as you step into his safety and protection, he will be your refuge.

And so if you're doubting tonight, if you're not sure what direction to take tonight, just cry out to God. He hears the cries of his children. He says, I will direct you, I will guide you.

If you turn over to me, let me have the steering wheel. But most of us, we've got a grip.

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