

# God Speaks From Within Us Today

by Zac Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the shift in how God communicates with His people, moving from external guidance in the Old Testament to internal guidance through the Holy Spirit in the New Testament. It highlights the importance of seeking the Holy Spirit's filling to hear God's voice from within, focusing on forgiveness, faithfulness in handling money, and the pursuit of true riches like Christlikeness, anointing, and revelation in God's Word.*

**Scripture:** John 14:16, Isaiah 55:8, Luke 16:13, Ephesians 5:10, Romans 12:2

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit Guidance", "Pursuit of True Riches"

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## Description

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## Transcript

You know, in the Old Covenant, they could not hear God speaking to them directly. God spoke to them from the outside, because mostly things like, go here, go there, Abraham, leave your job, leave your house, go to Canaan, and okay, you children of Israel, now put some blood outside the door, and you've got to leave for Egypt. Almost all the guidance that you read off in the Old Covenant, to all the people, even the prophets, who were told to go here or go there, Elijah, Elisha, go to the wilderness or one river, go to the river when there's a famine in the land, I have sent crows to feed you, because all external.

It's very, very important to recognize that God was outside of man throughout the Old Testament, and that's why he spoke from the outside to Samuel, Samuel, Samuel, or Abraham, Abraham. Sometimes we would wish, oh, I wish God would speak to me like that, but if God were to speak to you like that, you'd have to go back to the Old Covenant. God does occasionally speak like that even today, but the primary way in which God speaks to us today is from within, and we may think that is an inferior way, it is not, because think of the time when Jesus was with the disciples.

They felt so comforted when Jesus was there physically outside them. If there was a storm in the lake, Jesus was there, he'd still it, or if they didn't know what to do, Jesus would tell them, they could ask, Lord, what shall I do next? But then he was going away, and naturally, they were concerned, what's going to

happen to me? What's going to happen to all of us now that we're going? And that's when the Lord said to them for the first time about the Holy Spirit. See, in John chapter 14, it's very important that all of you, even children and young people, learn this.

Don't long for God to speak to you with an audible voice, or, I mean, he does that, but I believe it's the second best way, because if that were the best way, he'd still be doing it even today. But it says here in John 14, I'm going to ask the Father, verse 16, and he will give you a helper, and he's called the Spirit of Truth, and he will be in you, the last part of verse 17. Then he goes on in chapter 16 to say, verse 13, when the Spirit of Truth has come, that's on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit will come inside his children.

He will guide you into all the truth, from where? Not from outside, but from within. So it's very, very important for us to always seek to pray, Lord, I want to be filled with the Holy Spirit. It's no use saying, Lord, show me what is sin, show me what is not sin, what should I do here, what should I do there, if I'm not praying that I should be filled with the Holy Spirit, then I should never grieve the Holy Spirit once he's come inside.

And it says here, the Holy Spirit, verse 14, will glorify me, he will take of mine and show it to you. This is one of the verses that has blessed me for many, many years, that the Holy Spirit will take something of Jesus and show it to me. That's how he guides us.

He shows us, this is how Jesus lived, this is how he would do in this situation, from within. So how do we ensure that we can listen to the Holy Spirit? It is God's will to speak to us, because the very first chapter in the Bible teaches us one thing. On the first day, God said, second day, God said, the third day, God said, the fourth day, God said, for six days, God kept on speaking.

That's in the first chapter of the Bible, teaching us what? That every day God wants to say something to us. That's written in the first chapter of the Bible. And on the seventh day, Adam and Eve sat with God and listened to him the whole day.

He spoke to them the whole day. So the first chapter of the Bible speaks about God speaking, God speaking. And then when Jesus came into his ministry, began his ministry, the first word that he spoke to the devil was, man shall not live by bread alone, by food alone.

You know, people work so hard and make money to produce food and to get food and housing and so many things. God says, Jesus said, man shall not live by all this. Primarily it's needed, but by every word that proceeds from God's mouth.

And the reason why we need to hear this is one of the things that I've learned through all these years is the truth that is written in Isaiah 55. God says, my way of thinking is very different from yours. That's one great truth I have discovered in 62 years of being a believer.

There are many things I've known of God's ways, but I still say today, I do not understand God's way in many, many, many areas. I come back to this verse in Isaiah 55 and verse 8. My thoughts are not your thoughts, says the Lord. My ways are not your ways.

That's the first thing I need to recognize. God's way of thinking is very different from mine. And then I ask, how much different, Lord? Is it just slightly 10 degrees off? No.

Verse 9, as the heaven is higher than the earth, that's the difference between my way of thinking and yours. Now, if that is true, then what a lot we need to learn of God's ways. My way of thinking from the time I'm born is the way of Adam.

It's a sinful way. It's a way centered in myself. What is good for me? What will help me? God wants to help me, but it's not the way I think I can help myself.

Because there are so many things that God says, which is so different from what comes naturally to us. For example, I wonder how many Christians there are in the whole world who can honestly say, I have forgiven every human being who has ever hurt me in my whole life, or hurt my family or anybody. There's no one in my entire life, past, present, or anything, whom I have not forgiven.

From my heart, I can say that. But I was not taught in the early days of my Christianity that that was very important. It has become very, very important for me too.

Because I will not be able to hear God speak to me if there's somebody I've not forgiven. I want to say to all of you, when you're not able to hear God's voice, ask yourself why. And one of the reasons could be that you have not forgiven somebody.

God wants to speak to you. He wants to make you hate sin like we heard. He wants to speak to you and saying, this is the way, walk in when you go this way or that way, particularly in relation to sin.

And you will not be able to hear that voice if you have not forgiven someone. So make it a decision right now that as soon as people hurt you, you're going to forgive them. Now, I've been speaking about this repeatedly for the last six months, and I think I'll have to keep speaking about it until Jesus comes.

In Matthew chapter 12, you see how Jesus forgave people in relation to the future. Have you heard of future forgiveness? Forgiving somebody who's going to hurt you next week. Or forgiving someone who's going to hurt you next month, who hasn't hurt you yet.

See how Jesus forgave in Matthew chapter 12. We read about a demon possessed person who was healed, and the Pharisees immediately said about Jesus, this man is the devil, verse 24. And that's a very serious sin for somebody calling you the devil.

Can you imagine somebody calling Jesus the devil? And you know what Jesus said in verse 32? Forgiven. Jesus never hesitated to forgive. As soon as somebody called him the devil, he said in verse 32, you're forgiven.

You spoke a word against the Son of Man, he's forgiven. You remember when they nailed him to the cross, which is the worst sin anybody can commit, immediately he said, Father, forgive them. Now here it's not only you're forgiven, he said in verse 32, whoever speaks a word, not whoever has spoken in the past, this is future.

Whoever for the next 2000 years speaks a word against me, you're forgiven right now. That's the way it came to me. I say, Lord, I want to have that attitude.

From now, I don't know how long I'm going to live, but from now till the end of my life, whoever speaks or does anything against me, I've forgiven him right now. That's it. So it's become very easy since I've taken that position.

Whenever I hear that somebody said or wrote something against me that happens often, and here and there they said something, I say, I don't even know about it. I don't want to know what they said, what they did. I have no interest in it because I've forgiven the guy already.

It will not disturb me one bit. And I want to ask you, this is a very simple truth, but I want to ask you, my dear brothers and sisters, is that true in your life? That as soon as you know that someone has done or heard, said something against you, your immediate attitude is forgiven. I don't even have to think about it.

It's gone. That's one thing. Another reason why we don't hear God speak to us is the opposite of that, which is where we have to ask forgiveness from somebody else.

This is another thing I keep stressing, and I don't mind if you've heard it 25 times, you're going to hear it 26 times today. Matthew chapter 5, when you come to God, you're presenting your prayer, verse 23, and there you remember. You know, very often we remember something when we come to God in prayer.

You remember, hey, I spoke a rude word to that person. You didn't speak gently to your wife or your husband. And the Lord says, stop praying.

As I've often said, imagine Jesus saying, stop praying. It's a waste of time. The Lord's not picking up the phone.

First, go and ask forgiveness. That's the second thing I would tell you. First of all, forgive others, and secondly, make sure you ask forgiveness immediately.

I've been recently attending some weddings online, and I send a message to these married couples, and I say, listen, here's my message to you married couples that you can use for the next 50 years if you live that long. Be quick to ask forgiveness immediately. As soon as you sense you did or said something, one word that hurt or was wrong or an action, ask immediately forgiveness.

And I'll say that to all of you married people sitting here. And forgive immediately also. When someone asks for forgiveness, forgive immediately.

And then never think about it again. It's stored in your memory, but you're not going to actively be affected by it. You cannot remove things from your memory.

You'll remember that somebody did this or that against you. But a clear attitude of having nothing against them, everything's settled. This is the main reason why people don't hear what God is saying.

God is speaking, but they don't hear it. I'm going to show you two contrasting verses. It says in the book of Hebrews, first of all, it says in Hebrews and chapter one, the very first one and the second one.

It's what I've been saying just now. God in the olden days spoke to our fathers through the prophets and in many other ways, you know, like a voice from heaven. But in these last days, that is since the day of Pentecost, that's when the last days began.

You read Acts chapter two. Peter speaks about the last day when he poured out his spirit. The last days began on the day of Pentecost.

And in these last days, he has spoken to us through his son, Jesus Christ. Not through prophets and all. It is Jesus through whom he speaks to us.

He may speak to a man. He may speak directly to us. He may speak through a circumstance.

He may speak to you through something you see on the road or anything. But it is Jesus Christ who speaks to us and it's from within that he speaks. And even as you're listening to me, if you only hear me, you have not heard the Lord.

You have to hear the Lord speaking inside your heart, confirming what I'm saying. Otherwise, you only hear what Brother Zach says. There are lots of people who listen to what Brother Zach says and keep on listening to someone whose lives are not changed.

Let me tell you that. Because beyond my voice, they don't listen to what the Lord is saying to them in their heart. I want to say to you as you listen, don't just listen to me.

Try and hear what the Lord is saying to you in your heart. He wants to say something to you. When you read the Bible, don't just... It's good to memorize verses.

Very good. But try and hear what the Lord is saying to you through that verse. Very important.

The Holy Spirit wants to speak to us all the time. Not just once a day, but all the time. Because he wants to lead us.

We have to take decisions. But we have to have... When the Holy Spirit tells us to do something, we must be willing to listen. For example, Bobby was just saying how people whose minds are set on the money are so disturbed nowadays because the stock market is crashing and so many people are losing their money.

Well, do you know what the Bible says about that? Even in the Old Testament, it says in Proverbs chapter 23, Proverbs 23 and verse 4 and 5. Proverbs 23, verse 4 and 5 says, don't weary yourself to gain wealth. We must earn money to live. Definitely.

Jesus earned money as a carpenter. And he even saved money. He had a savings account.

That was Judas. It wasn't a bank. It was Judas's bag was his savings account.

When people gave him money, he didn't spend it all the same day. He kept some of it for use next week or to go and buy something. And so there's nothing wrong in having a savings account.

Jesus himself had one. The only thing he had a crooked banker. Judas is scary.

He's got to be wise. Of course, Judas is being tested. That's another thing.

But the point is this. Jesus did not weary himself to gain wealth. He knew that I must work hard.

I must earn my living. And if the cost of living is going to go up in the coming days, then I must prepare for that and save for the future. Definitely.

That's all wisdom. In fact, Jesus, the word of God says in Proverbs 6, think of the ant who has very little brains. You know, when you see the size of an ant, some of the ants we have in India are so small.

And I thought of them when I think of this verse, which says that an ant, Proverbs 6, verse 8, Proverbs 6, it gathers food in the summer because it knows that there will not be food in the winter. During the harvest

time, this ant gathers food without being taught anybody. It doesn't have a leader, doesn't have a preacher to tell it to be prepared for the future.

And here it says, go and learn from the ant, you lazy man. So preparing and saving for the future is something we've got to learn. It's wise.

But it's very easy to be so taken up with this that you weary yourself, Proverbs 23, 4, to gain wealth. And then he says, what will happen? I'll tell you. And this is what's happened to those whose eyes are set on the stock market.

Proverbs 23, 5, when you set your eyes on it, it's gone. Like an eagle, verse 5, that flies towards the heaven. Where's that eagle that was sitting here right now? Gone.

So don't set your eyes on it. Be thankful when God gives you and be thankful when God takes it away. That's the lesson we learned from the book of Job.

Wonderful words. The Lord gave, praise the Lord. The Lord has taken away, praise the Lord.

And you are a true disciple of Jesus. If when the Lord gives you something, you give him the glory. And when the Lord takes it away, you still say praise the Lord.

But if you can say praise the Lord only when God gives you something and not when he takes it away, you're not a disciple. It could be even considering marriage. You wanted to marry someone and you thought you would get her and the Lord took her away.

Praise the Lord. I'll tell you one thing, which I've discovered through all these years, that if you put God first, you will never miss the best in marriage or in anything in your life. Put him first and say, Lord, I'm determined that money will not be first in my life.

No human being will be first in my life, not my parents, not my wife or husband, anybody. You will be first in my life. You'll be Lord of my life.

That's the meaning of making Jesus Christ Lord. I'll tell you something. He will always give you the best.

You'll never get second best if you put the Lord first. You will never miss the best in marriage. You single people who are considering marriage, you will never miss the best in your marriage if you say, Lord, I want your perfect will in my life and nothing will come between me and you.

I even said, Lord, if you want me to be single all my life, I'll be single. But I want you. I want you to be first in my life.

I hope all of you, dear brothers and sisters, will say that. Then you will hear the Lord clearly. Because it says in Luke 16 further about masters, Luke 16, to hear God speak to us.

Here it says in Luke 16, there are two masters, Luke 16, 13. Now the world thinks of the entire world, if you go to any religious person in the world, anyone, even most Christians, and ask them, who are the two masters in the world? Everyone will say God and Satan. Even many Christians will say that.

But see what Jesus said in Luke 16, 13. How many of you know the right answer to the who are the two masters in the world? Jesus said God and money. Have you ever heard anybody give you that answer?

I've never heard anyone give me that answer.

I found it in scripture. There are two masters who want to run your life. If it were God and the devil, it's very easy to distinguish.

That's the devil's voice. That's God's voice. Very clear.

But when it's God and money, money calling, God calling, I'll tell you something. It's not easy to distinguish God's voice. Unless you're radical and wholehearted and say, Lord, your ways are not my ways.

I really want to follow you all the days of my life. I want you to be first in my life at any cost. And it says here, you've got to be devoted to one.

That's the word I like. Luke 16, 13. Devoted to one.

Then you will hear the voice of God. So ask yourself in the different situations of life, if you want to hear God's voice. When you hear two voices, you know clearly, or you're not clear.

You say, Lord, I want to make sure you're my master. Then I will know clearly that that is your voice. And if you do that, it says here in relation to money, in verse 11, if you're not faithful in the use of unrighteous wealth, who will entrust the true riches to you? There are many, many verses in the gospels where Jesus spoke about money.

It's a very important area where we must have a clear understanding. Many people who call themselves believers, even in CFC churches, they do not have a clear attitude towards money. And I believe that's why they don't make much progress in their life.

They could have made a lot more, but something wrong. I'm not here to judge anybody. I don't know.

And I don't believe even your wife can judge you. I'm absolutely convinced that even a wife cannot know whether her husband loves money, because it's an inward thing. It's in the mind.

It's in the mind. Like a wife cannot know whether her husband is lusting after women. Externally, it may be purity.

And externally, they may do so many things. But what is in the mind? Only God and you know. But make sure you're faithful there.

And if you're faithful in your mind, in your attitude towards money, say, Lord, I will never worship money in my life. I will never live for money in my life. I want to live for you 100%.

I will use money. However much you give, I'll use. I'll be wise in the using of it.

I'll be wise in saving it for the future and providing for my children. All that is fine. But I will not serve it.

I will not worship it. And I will not be disappointed if I lose it. It's fine.

Maybe God is doing something to teach me something. If you take that attitude, it says in verse 11, a promise. God will give you true riches.

That's a verse for years and years. I've said, Lord, I want the true riches. And the Lord says, well, you've got to be faithful with this money that's in the world and take a right attitude towards that if you want the true riches.

What are the true riches? I see it as number one, likeness to Jesus Christ. Number two, being always anointed and filled with the Holy Spirit. And number three, revelation on the word of God.

Not understanding. Understanding, you need a clever mind. Revelation is something on an altogether different level.

Pray for these three things in your life. Likeness to Christ. More and more every day.

Anointing and being filled with the Holy Spirit every day. A greater fullness, you know, like the capacity in our heart grows. So being filled with the Spirit years ago is not the same as being filled with the Spirit today, because our capacity grows and we have more area of our life occupied by the Holy Spirit.

So the fullness of the Spirit is a growing thing. You know, in the Gospel of John, you see three steps. John chapter three, born of water, which is like a cup of water.

I lift up my cup of salvation to the Lord. The Lord fills it. And then you go to chapter four.

There's a well of water springing up. The cup has become a well. And then you go to chapter seven, where it has become rivers of living water.

It's the same water, but it started off as a cup in John three, a well in John four, and rivers in John seven. How did that happen? Because the man was faithful in knowing. The man was faithful to listen to his conscience.

Every time the Lord told him to forgive somebody or to ask forgiveness, he immediately obeyed. The Lord told him to set something right. He immediately set it right.

Little by little by little, the cup became a well and the well became a river. That is God's will for every one of you. Please believe me.

God wants rivers of living water to flow from you brothers and from your sisters. You may not preach from the pulpit, but God wants you to be a blessing to many people through rivers of living water can flow out from you to the half the world's population is women. You can minister to them.

It's a wonderful ministry. God will give you the true riches. Likeness to Christ, the anointing of the Holy Spirit, and revelation on God's word that when you read God's word, it's not just a storybook.

It's a revelation. I'll conclude. I've been recently seeking the Lord about the Lord.

I wish I could hear you speak every step, you know, just like we heard in Isaiah 30. Go here, go there, and I've discovered that the Lord doesn't need like that. And I got this verse as an answer.

It was like a revelation. Ephesians 5, amazing word. It's the same chapter where he talks about being filled with the spirit in verse 18.

But it says one thing in Ephesians 5 and verse 10. Have you ever thought of this verse, verse 10? I'm sure you read it. Sometimes you skip through it.

Trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. You go to school and there's a difficult subject called chemistry, trying to learn chemistry, trying to learn mathematics, trying to learn biology, trying hard to learn. And it says here, this is how we are to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

It's not that simple where you hear a voice from heaven saying, okay, Zach, do this, or Abraham, do this, Samuel, do this. No, trying to learn, trying. Lord, I want to learn.

Like it says in Romans 12, verse 2, being conformed to the likeness of Christ in our mind, be transformed by the renewing of our mind. That means in our mind, as we allow the word of God to come in and we obey and obey and obey, little by little by little, our mind gets in line with the thoughts of the Holy Spirit. And that's why it's very, very important to keep a good conscience.

And I believe if you listen to these few words that I've spoken today, you'll have great joy in the day that Christ comes back. For you would have accomplished God's will for you and finished your course on this earth. God bless you.

Amen.

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