

Sermon Notes

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Talking and listening to God

Matthew: 11:25-27 (The Message) *but I'm not keeping it to myself; I'm ready to go over it line by line with anyone willing to listen.*

It is important to understand that there is a difference between prayer and what could be called meditation, talking and listening to God. We will look at prayer later, but today it is that place of intimacy with God that we will look at.

How do we Talk to God?

In the same way we talk to one another.

We Communicate.

What do we communicate?

General information, conversation, important info: requests, etc: personal, business etc.

We communicate with different people at different levels.

Spouse, Family

Friends, Church

Hobbies, recreation

Work, public arena

This is a reflection of how we can communicate with God.

Lets make the point that much of the above is used in prayer indeed this is prayer but we need to see what we so often miss is our personal communion with God. (Remember Suzette Hatting?)

In any healthy family there is: -

Open and honest conversation and sometimes not so honest!!!!

General chitchat, heart to heart, intimate and emotional communication.

Forms of talking to God

Every Godly form is open to us

- Audible voice
- Meditation (**Psalm 1:2**, Hebrew; *hagah* to murmur.)
- Thinking
- Deep emotions (**Romans;8:26** Greek; *stenagmos* a sigh)
- Writing
- Singing
- Music
- Actions
- Combination of the above

There is a difference between prayer and hearing and talking to God. But it is only a subtle one, there are times when we may not know the difference and there are many overlaps. In truth, it does not matter whether we call it prayer or talking and listening. What does matter is that we communicate with Him, as we see in our examples in Genesis with Adam and Eve and The life of Christ in the gospels.

Listening to God

The bible is our place of reference to hearing from God.

How does he speak to us? What forms does he use? There is no limit to what he will use to communicate with us.

- **The audible voice of God**
- **The inner voice**
- **The bible**
- **Circumstances**
- **Visions**
- **Dreams**
- **People**
- **Feelings**
- **Angels**
- **Animals**
- **Gifts of the Holy Spirit**
- **Church meetings**
- **The natural world around us**
- **Music / songs**
- **Journaling**

God is not limited He will use whatever He wants. He is not limited to our understanding of how we think He should speak.

How do I talk and listen?

Right Attitude.

Psalm 66:18

Sin in my heart... word sin in the Hebrew 'aven' means not only wickedness, but also to exert oneself for nothing. What's my motive? The purpose is to know Him.

See how this fits in with **Psalm 66:16-20, Psalm 19:14**

Desire to Talk to Him and Listen.

Jeremiah: 29:13 *you will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.*

We can make all the excuses we like, but if we want to find Him we will. Sometimes God uses our circumstances to bring us to the place where we seek Him.

Time

Jesus made time to be with His Father **Matthew: 17:1**

Luke 21:37. Jesus would take himself off regularly.

Psalm 77:6 *I remember my songs in the night. My heart mused and my spirit inquired.*

Time is our most important commodity - how much will you give to Him?

Open Heart.

Matthew 13:15, Mark 8:18, Acts 28:27

...Understand with their heart...

A closed and hard heart will stop us hearing from God. Unbelief, cynicism, unforgiveness, symptoms of a hard heart

Proverbs: 4:23 *Above all else guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life* open to God closed to evil.

Open eyes.

...*See with their eyes*...**Matthew: 13:15**

Open Ears.

...*Hear with their ears*...**Matthew: 13:15**

Golden rule apply it to my own life

In my own experience what I have heard from God, has been for me. Remember He can talk to others just the same as you.

There is no short cut to communion with God, like any relationship it needs time and wholehearted commitment. We can treat Him like a vending machine or a fire engine and He will answer prayer because that is His nature, He is a God of love. But His heart is to have communion with us it is there that we find rest for our inner man **Matthew 11:28** and resource for living by the power of the Holy Spirit **Acts 1:4-5**.