

Going In God's Direction

Habakkuk 2:1-2

There are literally hundreds of stories in the Bible about God speaking directly to people. When I read those stories I wonder why we don't hear more about how God is speaking to people today. Does God have a cold or laryngitis? What's the problem? **The fact is God does speak to people today.** We've been looking in this series about "Hearing From God," and today I want us to look at the topic of "How to Receive Directions from God." In the last few weeks we have seen that God speaks primarily in three ways: *He speaks through the Bible, He speaks through gifted preachers and teachers, and He speaks through impressions of the Holy Spirit.* **Today we are going to look at impressions of the Holy Spirit.** *Impressions of the Holy Spirit* has caused a lot of *confusion* and *misunderstanding* with people. Therefore, we need to know what the Bible teaches about this matter.

We are going to look at five ways to tune into God - to hear God speak to you when you need His directions for your life. You're saying, "Lord, should I marry this person?" "Should I change jobs?" "How do I deal with my children in this circumstance?" "Should I make this investment or not?" God wants to deal with you on those issues. **But you've got to be tuned into Him.** We're going to look at Habakkuk and the five things he did to tune into God.

So how do I go about seeking God's directions for my life? I want to share three things we need to realize when seeking God's directions:

First, I must realize that God cares about the details of my life. Jesus says this in Matthew 6:31-32, "So don't worry about these things, saying, 'What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?'"

These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs.” That's an amazing verse to me because it says *God's concerned about every little detail in my life.* Until you understand that you won't come asking Him questions about the details of your life because you'll say, "I don't want to bother God." **God is interested because He's your heavenly Father and He made you.** He's far more interested in it than you think He is.

Second, I need to ask specific questions. The more specifically you ask, the more God is able to answer it. Instead of saying, "God, do You want to say anything to me today?" say "God, what do You think about...this or that?" Over twenty times in the New Testament, God says "Ask." He says, "Ask... Seek... Knock" The Scripture says, "If you want to know what God wants you to do ask Him and He'll gladly tell you." James 4:2 says, "You do not have because you do not ask." **God wants you to ask for His advise.** He's waiting and willing. He wants you to ask for advise about your relationships, about your career, about your health, about your finances.

Third, I must believe He wants to answer. James 1:5-6 says, "God is always ready to give a bountiful supply of wisdom to all who ask Him. He won't resent it. But when you ask Him, be sure you really expect Him to tell you." Jesus said this in Mark 11:23, "Whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says." I am convinced God is more willing to talk to you than you are willing to talk to Him.

When you come to God, you make a specific request in faith, and you ask Him about how He wants to handle the situation, you can expect an answer. In the book of Habakkuk, chapter 1, he asks God six specific questions. Then in chapter 2, he waits and listens to God answer and he writes down what he hears. "I will climb my watchtower and wait to see what the Lord will tell me. The Lord gave me this answer. Right it down what I reveal to you."

Out of this book we see five steps to receiving an impression from the Holy Spirit.

First, we need to withdraw. That means get alone in a quiet place. Habakkuk says, "I will climb my watchtower." That's a Hebrew expression that means, "I'm going to get alone, get off by myself, eliminate external distractions so I can hear God speak."

One of the reasons why we don't hear God speak to us more is because we are surrounded by noise. Our cell phones are plugged in to our ears; the TV is always on; we are constantly receiving text messages; and the list goes on and on! So we can't hear the still small voice of God.

Jesus led a very active life, yet in spite of that, Luke 5:16 tells us, "Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed." **He made it a habit.** If He needed to do it, certainly we do too.

If that were all that was needed for you to hear God it would be real easy. But - watch this – now you need to wait!

Waiting means to calm your thoughts and emotions. You need to *quiet yourself* down. The second thing Habakkuk says is "I will wait to see what the Lord says." **What does it mean to "wait" on God?** It means you calm your *thoughts* and *emotions!*

How do you calm your thoughts and emotions? Let me give you a Biblical technique for tuning into God. This isn't something I got out of a *meditation* or *self-help* book. **This is right out of the book of Psalms.** Let's take a look:

First, I need to relax my body. Psalm 46:10 God says, "Be still and know that I am God." The first thing you've got to do if you're going to *relax your mind* is you've got to *relax your body.* Your body affects your attitudes. **If you don't feel good physically it affects your emotions and your moods.** They're tied together. As your body

relaxes so does your mind.

Second, I need to wait in silence. Psalm 62:5 says, "For God alone my soul waits in silence." Waiting means it takes time. **Forcing yourself to calm down quickly does not work.** Sometimes that takes a while for your body and your mind to get the RPM's down. You must withdraw and then you wait in silence, which calms your thoughts and your emotions.

2 Kings 3:15 says that Elijah asked for soft music to be played while he tuned into God to find the answer to a question he had. He said, "bring in the harpist" and he had a harpist play while he tuned into God. Once your body is still and once your mind is quiet then you become sensitive to hearing God speak.

Third, I need to watch. The third thing Habakkuk says is "I will look to see what He says to me." He says, "I will look at what God says." In other words, let God give you a mental picture.

An important key to hearing God is to understand that God's voice is often visual. God often wants to speak through a mental picture. God will often give you a mental picture, or image, or vision inside your head. I think that's the reason why Jesus says several times, "Watch and pray." There is a visual element to prayer.

Paul put it this way in Ephesians 1:18 says, "The eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you may know the hope to which He has called you." The Greek reads like this, "I pray that the eyes of your heart will be opened." **He's not talking about physical eyes.** He's talking about spiritual eyes. Spiritual senses. **When you were born physically you got a set of physical senses.** Hear, taste, touch, smell, and feel. When you were born spiritually you got reborn and got a set of spiritual senses: spiritual eyes, spiritual ears.

Therefore, when you quiet yourself down and get calm and all the distractions are out of the way, then you can simply say, "Jesus, is there

anything You want to show me? Do You want to give me an idea, an impression?"

Forth, I need to write. Notice what Habakkuk said - "The Lord gave me this answer, 'Write down clearly what I reveal to you.'" Record the ideas that you receive. Notice what Habakkuk says, "The Lord gave me this answer, 'Write down clearly what I reveal to you.'" **Get the progression: chapter 1, Habakkuk gives six questions to God.** Chapter 2, he waits, he quiets himself, and he watches and the Lord says, "Here's what I want you to do. Write down clearly what I reveal to you." In Chapter one he writes down his prayer to God, what his questions are to God. In Chapter two, *he writes down God's answers back to him.*

What does that have to do with me? Listen, if your prayer life has gotten in a rut, or if it has gotten boring, let me give you a suggestion - *start a prayer journal.*

Write out your prayers as you think them. Buy a spiral binder, a three-ring notebook, it doesn't matter what it is and as you are praying, *write out your prayer while you are praying it.* There are many benefits to doing this.

In the first place it keeps you focused. Your mind won't wander when you're writing down what you're trying to think about.

Another benefit is it allows you to remember what you have said to God and what God has said back to you. You don't have to learn a lesson over and over. Because you wrote it down and you go back and review it.

A third benefit is that you can see the hand of God at work in your prayer life. You will see those people that you have prayed for saved, or healed, or renewed. You will see God work in the lives of those that you have prayed for.

Fifth, I need to worship. You thank God for speaking to you. Habakkuk 3:2 says, "Oh, Lord, now I've heard your report and I worship you in awe." He says, "Now that You have spoken to me, I love You and I want to express my love to You." **When you have *received God's loving response, you've asked a question* and *you've heard an answer in your mind* and *you write it down, it's going to make you want to love the Lord more and draw you closer.*** This turns prayer from a monologue into a dialogue, a conversation.

If you will practice these steps and begin to develop them in your life, more times than not, God will talk to you. Why? Because He is interested in your life.

Child of God, if you will begin to practice these Biblical steps it will open up a whole new dimension of your Christian life. It will become a great adventure to you. A great joy.

If you are not saved, why not come to Christ today?

Everyone please stand, and make this your personal prayer.

Father,

Your Word is true. I need Your directions for my life. May I live in a peaceful dwelling place, in a secure home, in an undisturbed place of rest. Father, I confess that Your victory is my victory through Jesus Christ. In the Name of Jesus I confess it is done! Amen.