

He Desires Relationship

Welcome to Harvest Community Church

Series: Knowing God's Voice

Text: John 15:15

True friends spend time together. You can never really say you are a true friend of God if you are never with Him. Good friends are comfortable and familiar in each other's presence. They are comfortable whether they are talking and communicating or just sitting in silence together. They can be in the most difficult or awkward of circumstances, but they still trust each other and are comfortable with them being there.

Some relationships are shallow and superficial, some are strained or distant. God's desire is that we have a friendship that is rich and deep. He desires a friendship where we are close to Him and He is close to us. He is not looking for us to come to Him only when we have needs. He desires what every father desires of grown and mature children - relationship.

Too many times we come to God to get something from Him – blessing, instruction, direction or provision. For many Christians, the only motivation they have for coming to God is for what He can do and not for who He is. We must know HE IS... the I AM, He is Alpha and Omega, He is God Almighty, Prince of Peace.

In Knowing God's Voice, we must answer the question – Who is I AM to me?

In all the answers we give, is friend of God anywhere in there and then how close to the top of the list?

? – What is your motivation for desiring to hear and know God's voice?

Why do you even care?

The friendship that God calls us to is never a friendship where it is just casual or irreverent. God is still God. He is always God, and, in our hearts, He must always be seen as the King over everything. God's loftiness is known as the doctrine of transcendence. It means that God is higher and Lord over everything. He is superior, immense and unequalled. We need to keep this in mind whenever we approach Him. **Psalm 97:9**

Another doctrine we need to know is the doctrine of immanence. This means that God is near to us and close to us. He is relational. One of His names is 'God with us'. **Matthew 1:23** Think of it, God is both transcendent and immanent at the same time. He is both the Great King over all the earth and God with us. We must never forget His greatness and we know that we can continually draw near to Him because of the blood of Jesus. It is from these two characteristics that God invites into a true friendship with Him. **John 15:15**

Friends tell friends what is going on – they confide in one another. The door is open for a deep personal relationship with the Father and part of that is communication.

Three truths that help us understand what friendship with God is like

- 1) God does not speak to **robots**. He did not create us to mindlessly obey His commands. He created us as **persons** in His image.

We have a soul, mind, will, heart and emotions and He wants to communicate with us personally because He gave us personalities. When you communicate with a machine, you give it **orders** and it does what you say. Even when our GPS speaks back to us it is only telling us what we want to hear and that is the directions we asked it to give.

God created us as **children** - true fathers desire to dialogue with their kids. When God spoke to Abraham, he listened and believed what God was saying to him. **James 2:23** When you read of how Abraham and God talked, you see that Abraham asked God questions and even negotiated with Him. In their conversations, Abraham always spoke with both boldness and **respect**. **Genesis 18:22-33** God made Abraham aware of what He was about to do, and He allowed Abraham to sort things out with Him in conversation. God allowed Abraham into the **process** of what He was doing. God didn't change His mind, but He did work with Abraham on the extent of what He would do.

- 2) God speaks to **people**. He spoke to people in the Bible and He still speaks to people today. This seems like an elementary truth but there are those that believe that God no longer speaks. If that were true, then we could never hear from Him. Today God speaks to us through His written Word but also through the Holy Spirit. **John 16:12-13**

God spoke to the writers of the scripture they wrote as they were **quickened** or inspired of the Holy Spirit. **2 Peter 1:20-21** He spoke to Elijah in a still small voice. When God spoke to Gideon, he put out a fleece to make sure he heard correctly. So, it is probably true that God did not speak to Gideon in a booming voice from heaven. Once they heard from God they then had to respond with an **act** of faith.

- 3) God speaks with **friends**. He speaks to us a man would speak to their friend. **Exodus 33:11a, James 2:23** Have you come to the place when you pray that you are talking to God like He is your friend. Just like Moses and Abraham were friends of God, that is what He desires with us. He sees us this way. Do YOU see Him this way? If you do not, then you will not speak with Him **regularly**. You will only speak with Him or really to Him when you are in trouble or need something.

Friendship is not only a privilege it is a responsibility. We are not to treat Him lightly but make the effort to communicate **daily**. **John 15:13-15** Jesus showed us how deep His commitment to friendship is by laying down His life for us. If we are disciples of Christ, then we are His friends. Friendship is at the core of the Gospel.

Romans 5:10 (NLT), 2 Corinthians 5:18 (GNT)

In the Hymn "What a friend we have in Jesus" we are told that He came to bear all our sins and grief. It's true, He is there in our trials and temptations giving us peace instead of fear, but we must remember that He also wants to share the good times.

Hearing from God, talking with God, friendship with God is all based on relationship. Relationship is about who He is not just what He can do. It is a matter of us cherishing His presence over His presents. **Romans 8:16-17**

One of the reasons that we feel far from God and therefore unable to hear from God is because we believe that the Gospel is just about forgiveness. When a child is out of step with a parent they feel far away because they know the relationship is strained. Salvation does not only offer forgiveness but reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:18-19, Romans 5:10, Ephesians 2:13

Jesus didn't just come to save us from our sins but to draw us near to God. One of the greatest illustrations of what this looks like is the prodigal son. **Luke 15:20-24**
God doesn't just make us clean He welcomes us home. **Ephesians 3:14-21** When we are rooted deeply and secure in Him, we will hear His voice better.

Three truths about having a personal hearing relationship with God.

1) Our relationship with God must be our highest priority. **Luke 10:27**

Adam and Eve walked and talked with God every day. It wasn't until they sinned that they became afraid of God and hid from Him. Anytime something takes a higher priority than God in our life the less likely we are to feel comfortable coming to Him. The truth is if other things have got our attention it means that we have turned our attention from God and have already missed many things He is trying to say. This would happen in any relationship.

2) Our relationship with God must be our highest pursuit. **Jeremiah 29:13, Proverbs 8:17**
Priority refers to what we have decided has the most importance. Pursuit means what we follow closely. If we pursue something we are running after it and striving for it with all of our might. The world today gives us advice like go with your gut or follow your heart. God calls us to live by His voice.

If Abraham had gone with his gut, he would have never listened to God and offered Isaac as a sacrifice. Many times, God will ask us to do things that don't necessarily feel right. The question is do we trust Him? How many times have we been judgmental of someone that was just new to God and we thought we should correct a behavior and God has told us to just hold still and watch Him work in their lives?

- 3) Our walk with God must be our highest passion. Passion is what stirs our greatest feelings of love and devotion. For many people serving God is their greatest passion but our relationship with God must be our greatest passion. A great example of this is Mary and Martha. **Luke 10:38-42** The keep phrase is “One thing is Needed”. What keeps you from sitting at the feet of Jesus? Do you long to be there?

What is so vital about sitting at the feet of Jesus is that you get to understand His verbal and non-verbal communication. I know when something is wrong just by the look on my children’s faces. I can tell when I enter my home how my wife is feeling with just a look or the atmosphere. The truth is we say so much without saying a word. So does God.

You can feel His presences and His pleasure. You can feel when He is grieved or sense when He is moving. If you don’t know Him, you may not understand His non-verbal ways because you have not spent time with Him. To know His voice, we must know HIM.