

The 6th Sunday of Easter ~ Sunday, May 6, 2018

“Hearing God ~ How God Speaks Part 3”

1 Kings 19:1-13

God speaks in a still, small voice to show Elijah that the work of God doesn't need to always be accompanied by dramatic _____ or manifestations. Divine silence doesn't necessarily mean divine _____. Because He's God, He's not _____ in how He speaks.

Maybe we have _____ ideas how God will speak or not speak to us—preconceived ideas that _____ our hearing Him when He does speak. We can't put God in a _____; nor should we be too selective about the _____. He uses to speak us. Instead, we should be open for God to speak in whatever way He desires.

2 WAYS GOD SPEAKS TO US

#1. God speaks to us through _____.

Conviction = “to declare someone to be _____ of a criminal offense by the verdict of a jury or the decision of a judge in a court of law; to _____ with a sense of guilt; to _____ of error or sinfulness.”

God speaks to us by giving us an ever-deepening conviction and awareness of His _____ in our daily lives. He not only wants us to listen so He can tell us what to do, but He also wants us to listen so we know what _____ to do.

“Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment...” (John 16:7-8)

God doesn't convict us of our sin and wrong doing to _____ us and make us feel bad, but rather to make us recognize our own _____ and make us more _____ for Him.

God's voice of conviction draws us _____ to Him and challenges us to _____ Him as our infinite, loving, and heavenly Father. The Holy Spirit's conviction is intended to convince us to _____, which means to turn and go in the right direction rather than the wrong one; and to _____ us to the path or righteousness.

If we're behaving in a way that isn't _____ to God, we must be willing to make an _____ in our lives. If we don't, our hearts become _____

_____. Hardened hearts are the result of _____ the Holy Spirit's conviction of right and wrong; and the more hard-hearted we become, the more difficult it is for us to _____ and obey the Lord.

Are there any areas in your life where you have a hardened heart—where you've been closed to the voice of God and the conviction of the Holy Spirit?

God loves to _____ people—He wants to _____ our hearts.

“A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.” (Ezekiel 36:26)

God wants to take out our _____ hardened hearts and give us a heart of flesh—a heart _____ to the touch of God and the voice of God. (P)

CONVICTION vs CONDEMNATION

God's voice will always bring _____ over sin and a way out. However, the enemy's voice only brings _____ and no way out.

God is a _____ parent; He only wants what's best for us; and He never _____ His children—He convicts and _____.

“...for the Lord disciplines those whom he loves, and chastises every child whom he accepts. Endure trials for the sake of discipline. God is treating you as children; for what child is there whom a parent does not discipline?....” (Hebrews 16:6-11)

Conviction arouses _____—it moves us beyond _____ and causes us to want to know God more fully and to _____ in His ways. Condemnation brings _____, fear, and _____.

Conviction is always about a _____ sin—it pinpoints something in our heart that God wants to _____ with. Condemnation is a _____ accusation against our _____.

Guilt is feeling bad about something you've _____; shame is feeling bad about _____. It's _____ and normal to feel guilty when we're initially convicted of sin. It's like a _____ that goes off to tell us something's wrong. Guilt only becomes unhealthy when we don't heed the warning light; when we allow it to _____; when we fail to address the issue at hand and _____; or continue to feel guilty after we've repented. Unresolved guilt almost always leads to shame and _____ from God.

Conviction is God speaking to us about His _____, providing protection for us. God convicts us to restore _____ and faith. He corrects us to _____ us up, and His conviction always brings hope and a way of escape—a way forward.

“No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.” (1 Corinthians 10:13)

Satan condemns us to _____ us down and to keep us weak and in _____ to shame and false guilt.

“Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.” (1 Peter 5:8)

Conviction isn't always about sin or wrong doing. Sometimes God convicts us in order to _____ us to do certain things.

Do you know the difference between conviction and condemnation? How has God spoken to you through conviction?

#2. God speaks to us through our _____.

What I mean by this, is the open and closed _____ of circumstances in our lives can help us to hear God's voice.

“Write this letter to the angel of the church in Philadelphia. This is the message from the one who is holy and true, the one who has the key of David. What he opens, no one can close; and what he closes, no one can open.” (Revelation 3:7)

“After I go through Macedonia, I will come to you...I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits. But I will stay on at Ephesus until Pentecost, because a great door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many who oppose me.” (1 Corinthians 16:5-9)

THREE IMPORTANT THINGS

• **Not every open door is from _____.**

Before we walk through an open door—before we make a _____—we need to know that God is _____—even if the circumstances are favourable.

Have you ever been tempted to walk through a door that wasn't opened by God, simply because it looked good?

• _____ is everything.

Sometimes we can be so sure that something is God's will, but He doesn't _____ the door for us because it's not the right timing. When this happens, it's best to let

the desire _____. If it's really from God, He will _____ it in the future when the timing is right.

When the Lord is it—when it's within His will, purpose, and timing—the _____ will work out.

Has there ever been a time when you “pulled an Ishmael” and ran ahead of God—when you acted outside of His timing? What was the result?

• **We need to _____ God even when our circumstances don't line up with what God's calling us to do.**

Elijah was _____ in prayer because he believed that God would be _____ to His promise. He prayed until his circumstances changed.

Have you ever felt like God was calling you to do something, but the circumstance didn't line up? What did you do?

Sometimes the only way to discover God's will is to practice _____ and _____. If I pray about a situation and don't seem to know what I should do, I need to take a step of _____.

_____ is sometimes needed because some doors will never open unless we take a step toward them.

We too can hear God's voice though _____, as He opens and closes doors of opportunity in our lives. However, the key is to always be led by the _____, not the circumstances themselves.

What circumstances has God used in your life to speak to you? What doors has he opened and closed?

The Bible is the _____ by which we judge everything else in our life. It's the standard we use to ensure that what we're hearing is in line with God's perfect _____. God's written word never changes—we can trust it as the final _____ in all things—and we need to reject anything that _____ the written Bible.

**Do you long to hear God's voice?
Have you heard Him speaking to you this morning?
What are you going to do about it?**

**“Today, if you hear God's voice, do not harden your hearts...”
(Hebrews 3:15)**