

GOD SPEAKS PART 2 - THE RELATIONSHIP

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Hearing God speak hinges on relationship. We are by nature relational people. So we like to know and be known – so does God. And truly if we're going to trust anyone with the intimate details of our heart, or lives, we must have reason to believe that they will manage our hearts well; that they will do what's in our best interest – to protect us and grow us. Vulnerability is a hard ask for many of us, and admittedly it's wise not to offer when not earned.

I believe there are two major reasons why we don't hear God speaking – either we don't know him, or we don't trust him – and sometimes it's both. And one flows out of the other. If we don't know him, we can't hear from him, and if we don't trust him, we don't take the time to listen.

Those who know your name trust in you, for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you. – Psalm 9:10

Think of someone you love – if you were to hear them speak even in a crowd of people, you wouldn't even have to see them to assuredly affirm their presence. You know their voice because you have heard it frequently. You know their heart because

you spend time with them, invest in them, and have built a history with them. My 17 month old, Cruz, knows my voice. I can walk into the child care at our gym to pick him up, and the moment he hears my voice I get the same reaction every time – a shriek of sheer delight. It's awesome. He will come tearing across the room in the full out run/toddler wobble in all the strength he can muster and propel himself into my arms. Now, if someone were to stand nearby and call for Cruz he might look, but with me nearby there's NO CHANCE he is averting his attention. He knows my voice – because he is with me a LOT. We cannot expect to hear God or follow him if we do not know his voice. There's a big difference between knowing *about* someone, and actually *personally knowing* them; and we cannot engage in relationship with him if we do not personally know him.

*"When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him **because they know his voice**.⁵ But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice."* – John 10:4-5

But just because you know someone doesn't mean you trust them. There are plenty of people in this world I could say, "yep, know them, don't trust them." So God does a great and loving thing for us – he makes himself known and accessible, and he gives us a history of trustworthiness to reference in the Bible before he has even built a referable history with us. I believe that when we choose to know God personally, we learn with our own personal stories that he is deeply trustworthy – not to be mistaken for predictable or compliant; but trustworthy and good.

So, in regards to this big 2nd question; how do we know he can be trusted? **God makes a lot of claims, and offers a lot of promises – and if they are true, they impact us TREMENDOUSLY. Eternally.** Here's an interesting and Biblical truth – God has a *really good* track record for doing what he says he is going to do. The good, the bad, and the ugly. His follow-through is impeccable. And out of his love he has made available resources which underscore and validate his Word to us. History itself makes a phenomenal case to support the accuracy and consistency of his words. [John Burke](#), pastor of Gateway Church in Austin, TX delivered a PHENOMENAL sermon on May 20, 2012 entitled: "[How do we know the Bible isn't just propaganda.](#)" He makes an undeniably powerful case for trusting the legitimacy and the accuracy of the Bible. It's not just some outdated contradictory piece of literature meant to

make us feel better when we're having a bad day. Burke highlights the findings of textual critics, examines historical accuracy, and makes comparisons to other justifiable legitimate history books we accept. I could NEVER do a better job of reporting this stuff, so I'll recommend you take a listen.

But that's all practical stuff underscoring why we can intelligently trust and consider *his Word* to us through the Bible – we absolutely can't stop there; we must consider the relationship.

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight." - Proverbs 3:5-6

I love that verse because it's such a clear call to action. God responds to our trust.

I confess there was a season of my life where in retrospect I thought I could not trust him. I looked around at the opportunities before me and felt like all the "rules" God offered bound me to a boring and simple life... like I subconsciously thought that I could do a better job of penning a path of life. What if his purpose for me was something I didn't want to do? What if the guy he has for me is was boring and unattractive? I knew following God was right, and I knew he was who he said he was, but there was something I did not trust. I subconsciously felt I was missing out, and that there was a lot of fun to be had and things to be experienced that God said "no," to. I am so happy and relieved to say I was wrong; never in my life have I been more fulfilled, more in love, more satisfied, more passionate or *purposeful* as when I *choose* to trust. **Oh sweet people, how he must shake his head and sigh when he sees his sons and daughters attempting to write their own stories when he holds the pen of life and has the ability to write the most creative fulfilling life for us.** How it must grieve him when we refuse to trust him - the one who made us, sees all things, and knows how the story ends.

So do you know him? Do you trust him? The obvious next question is: so *how*? I know some of you are saying – GET TO THE POINT, WOMAN!! If I know him and trust him, how can I get to know his voice?! The same way you get to know anyone – you spend time listening. And the specifics, the application piece of getting to know his voice is exactly where we'll be going next.