

GOD SPEAKS. WHY LISTEN? THOUGHTS FROM A STUDENT.

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God speaks to us. Now, you may be thinking, "God has never told me anything." Well, have you ever gotten a hug from someone when you really needed it? Have you ever seen a sunrise that took your breath away? Have you ever witnessed someone go out of their way for the sake of another? If some memories are coming back maybe God really has spoken to you.

You must be pretty special.

I mean, God is God! He created the entire universe. Pause here and really take that in. The God who created the universe has spoken to you! Countless times when you

think about it. **He loves you that much. He cares for you, personally, individually, right now, exactly who you are, where you are at this very moment in time. No exceptions.** You are that special to God. So many times I have felt caught up in my tasks and overwhelmed with plans and to-do lists and post-it notes filled with reminders. It is often in those moments God finds a way to remind me of his love and to remind me of the bigger picture. Because in the grand scheme of things what does my to-do list really matter? God cares about us so he finds a way to pull us out of our stressful moments and reminds us of these truths.

I was once rushing around doing last minute things and getting ready for school when my mom told me to come to the back door because the sunrise was so beautiful. I appreciated her thought but my thought was, I do not have time to come look at the sunrise. I went over quickly so I could go on to my next thing. When I saw the sky my jaw dropped and I felt so full of joy. **I stepped outside with my mom and my brother and felt the cool air on my cheeks. My anxiety melted away and my heart felt full and peaceful and I stared at a truly glorious sunrise.** God cares about me and this is an example of how he takes care of me. The same goes for you. **So, where do you feel close to God?** In what special way has he chosen to show you his grand love? He doesn't speak like a human because he's not. He is God. And God's form of communication goes way beyond words. He speaks to us through his magnificent creation, through music, through experience, and through the people he puts in our lives. **God speaks to us.**

So if God speaks to us, *he must have a reason* – which means we should listen. God loves us, and he wants to communicate with us, but **hearing him requires intentional listening on our part.** When you interact with the world, try and see it through God's eyes. Take the time to literally stop and smell the roses, recognize the wonder and magnificence of the world around you. You see wonderful things every day. A tree lives and grows and produces food that nourishes our bodies when we eat it. The sky is so vast it never ends and every time you look up the beautiful sky is filled with a unique array of colors, clouds, and stars. These grand expressions of God's love are always there but we have to notice their wonder and beauty. We have to notice these things as works of God in order to hear his voice. Besides just nature, think of people! Every day you witness love in some form or another. That is God! God may speak to you through some simple, heartwarming act of kindness. But you have to stop and notice its splendor, **notice who is behind all these beautiful works.**

Now What?

Alright so God speaks to us, we listen, but why? Why is it so important to hear God's words to us? Because, **it changes us!** When we hear God's voice and listen to his call, we respond by growing closer to him, and becoming more like him. When we listen, God is able to shape our hearts, minds, and souls. Our relationship with God grows, and we slowly become more and more **faithful**. We are more **loving** to those around us. We are more joyful, regardless of our struggles. We are more **trusting** of God and his plan. **Let God shape you.** Strive to live, looking for God, and you will find him. God speaks to us! How wonderful! Let's listen and let him shape us!