

GOD SPEAKS

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I love and adore my wild little boys more than my own life. Remarkable feeling, perhaps, but not unique- there are a lot of parents out there. There is an intensely committed kind of love that is birthed with our babies and one that continues to pleasantly surprise and even leave me in awe as it grows and develops with startling strength. It's like my heart now walks around outside of my chest. I started talking to them long before they made an appearance, and as I watched my stomach growing and swelling the perception I had of the world and everything around me changed. From day one there was in me a deep sense of responsibility to provide for them the best opportunity to know and be known, to love and be loved, to become wise, and to gently reveal our less than perfect world that is currently their home. I have not stopped talking to them either... and they know my voice well. They heard it when they were too little to offer anything back, too helpless to make it without me, and the most important thing for them to know at that point was that I loved them, I wasn't going anywhere, and I could be trusted. I find a remarkable parallel with us and God.

*"You have searched me, Lord, and **you know me**... For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb." - Psalm 139:1,13*

God Speaks. It's true. It's huge. **The fact that we have access to and ability to hear from the God who with a word created the universe is a tremendous thing.** Each of the 7 days of creation outlined in Genesis 1 starts with the phrase "And God said..." and it was. I am *for sure* not that big. I don't even have that much control over my own story, but this is the God who is both completely sovereign and completely powerful – he can do what he wants to do when he wants to do it – without any responsibility to be accountable. *And he chooses to speak to us!* And I also believe that **one of the most important messages he has for us is that he loves us, he is available to us, and he can be trusted.** I believe he beckons us with whispers to our hearts before we even know him; when we're in our "spiritual womb" per say, but he doesn't stop there. He invites us to engage with him. He promises to be available and to reveal.

"Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know." – Jeremiah 33:3

I would be so deeply disappointed, wounded to the core of my heart, if my children were battling the harsh introduction into the reality of evil and pain without acknowledging my presence. I would be desperate to enlighten them of my deepest desire to see them prospering and growing and managing life's big and little complications; and I would do just about *anything* to capture their attention while I still had the ability to lead and direct in the midst of chaos. If ever they were wounded and in need, or lost and confused it would grieve me deeply if they did not reach out for my loving arms to minister to their broken hearts or searching souls. And if they did stop and give me a moment to speak, it would devastate me, perhaps even discourage or anger me if I were able to offer a solution and they didn't trust me.

How much more does God feel this for us?

We see all over scripture clear examples of God speaking. If ever anyone had the impression that God was distant, silent and removed from our lives, you need only open the Bible and history tells us very differently (yep, I said history – textual critics give us a really good reason to accept it as such, but that's another story for another time). Here are a mere handful of examples: God spoke to Adam and Eve and instructed them in their roles. God spoke to Moses; "With him I speak face to face, clearly and not in riddles..." – Numbers 12:8. God spoke to multiple kings (David, Solomon, Josiah, etc.) in various ways, many times through prophets. Mary heard from God through the angel Gabriel, Daniel also, heard from God through the angel

Michael. God spoke in person, used prophets, his Word (what was available at that time), priests, angels, etc... He spoke to prepare, to instruct, to empower, to warn, to bless, to reveal. He spoke to rebuke, to heal, to show his love. He spoke because we hear – he made us that way. If he spoke then (and he very clearly did), I see no reason why he would stop with us.

The crazy and confusing part is that we live in a world where there are a LOT of voices. A LOT of influences. A LOT of distraction. And so we have to get to know his voice in order to know when he's speaking and when he's not; to distinguish between a valuable voice and the noise around it. And because God presents himself differently than you or I do, it requires intentional listening. Interaction with our creator is a special thing; to me it only makes sense that it is going to be a different experience than calling up your friend on the phone. And if you know the sweetness of a phone call with your best friend, imagine the impact of speaking to and hearing from a perfect and powerful God. Wow. But it does require something from us – listening. And I believe there are 2 reasons why people chose not to do so – which we'll cover next time. In addition, it helps to know how he speaks if we are to listen – which we will also cover soon. In the meantime, my encouragement to you would be to just ask – ask God to speak to you, ask him to reveal himself. He delights in this my sweet friends – if you ask, and mean it, he will always say **"yes."**