

God Speaks to our Hearts

Psalms 46:10

Online Sermon: http://www.mckeesfamily.com/?page_id=3567

God is speaking but are you listening? While we would all like to say, “if God spoke to me I would hear Him,” how often does the noise of this high paced, frantic world we live in drown out the gentle whisper of our Lord? Revved up to 10,000 RPMs, in an attempt to keep up and exceed the performance of all others, has left most Christians with no time to hear the voice of God and develop a living, dynamic relationship with their Savior. When one becomes too busy to read the Bible, meditate and pray; business becomes the unrivaled archenemy of spiritual authenticity and a god to that person! The Psalmist says that we are to be still to know God. The first part of this sermon is going to explain how one can reduce one’s RPMs through journaling, fasting and by practicing silence and solitude. And the last part of this sermon is going to explain how to listen as God speaks directly to a person through the direct promptings of His Spirit.

Your RPM Level

The world tells us that the key to promotions, more money and power is accomplished through the sheer grit to work the relentless hours needed to outperform all others.¹ Once



indoctrinated with the phrase “time is money,” one can easily justify “revving up our business engines” by adopting a work ethic that crams more into a day by starting work earlier and finishing late. While the average work week has dropped from about 70 hours a week in the late 1800s² to about 40 today, considering about 2/3rds of households have two people working,³ not much has changed in relation to the insane number of hours we have to work. What revs up our business engines even more is the constant drive to have our children and ourselves involved in as many events possible. To have our children become well

rounded and successful in life the world tells us to sign them up to as many sports, music, arts and leadership activities that we can find. The world tells us adults that success is measured by the number of events on our calendars! Chocked with life’s worries while chasing riches and pleasures (Luke 8:14);⁴ we rev our business engines to peak capacity and as a result can almost

¹ Bill Hybels, *Too Busy Not to Pray*, 46.

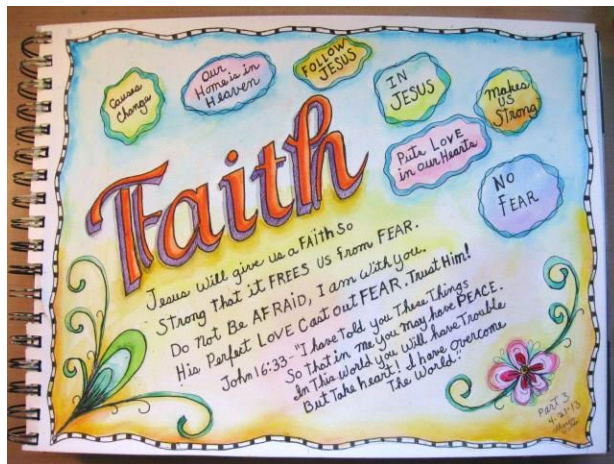
² Taken from the following website: <https://ourworldindata.org/working-hours>

³ Taken from the following website: <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/famee.nr0.htm>

⁴ Bill Hybels, 120.

see the living waters of God's presence give way to our fiery passions of ever increasing performance.

If one truly wants to obtain a “supernatural walk with a living, dynamic, communicating God”⁵ then one simply must learn how to slow down and be still (Psalms 46:10). One method of reducing RPMs is the practice of journaling. Those who write down their experiences,



observations, reflections and feelings each day not only increase their self-discipline but often receive the benefits of an increase in their mindfulness, IQ, emotional intelligence, memory and comprehension, ability to achieve goals, communication skills, healing, creativity and self-confidence.⁶ Even though we are told in Scripture to examine ourselves to see whether we are walking in the faith (2 Corinthians 13:5), most Christians rarely do so and end up repeating the same spiritual mistakes over and over again and as a result do not grow closer to Jesus.⁷ Buying a notebook

and taking even ten minutes a day to journal not only slows down the revs but also helps to soften our hearts so that we might better distinguish and confess our sins, and strengthen our faith to see the face of God both in the good and bad times.⁸



Another method of slowing down those business revs is through fasting. The Yale Anchor Bible Dictionary defines biblical fasting as the “deliberate, temporary abstention from food for religious reasons.”⁹ While there are examples of “absolute fasts” in the Bible in which the people abstained from both food and water such as Ester 4:16, most fasts in the Bible do not restrict water.¹⁰ Some of the medical benefits of fasting are weight loss, the detoxification and rebooting of the immune system, lower triglycerides,¹¹ blood pressure and cholesterol levels, reduced

⁵ Ibid., 121.

⁶ Taken from the following website: <https://www.huffingtonpost.com/thai-nguyen/benefits-of-journaling-b-6648884.html>

⁷ Bill Hybels, 122.

⁸ Taken from the following website: <https://charlesstone.com/5-spiritual-benefits-journaling-gods-spiritual-cross-trainer/>

⁹ John Muddiman, “Fast, Fasting,” ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 773.

¹⁰ Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Disciplines: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (HarperSanFrancisco, 1998), 49.

¹¹ Taken from the following website: <https://draxe.com/benefits-fasting/>

insulin resistance, inducing cellular repair¹² and increasing levels of endorphins that makes you feel “good.”¹³ While these benefits are impressive the main benefit and goal of fasting is to draw nearer to God while feasting on His word and voice through prayer.¹⁴ Fasting has a way of drawing out those things in life that control us and as such should begin with a time of reflection and repentance.¹⁵ It is amazing how much clearer we can talk to God when we focus on nothing but Him!

One of the best methods of slowing those business revs and hearing the voice of God in our prayers is by practicing the spiritual discipline of silence and solitude. This discipline involves removing every distraction of the body, mind and spirit so that one might hear a Divine whisper when spoken.¹⁶ While we know we



are to be still to know God (Psalms 46:10), many Christians rarely practice this discipline not only due to being too busy or too lazy but mostly out of fear of being alone with a holy God who is going to confront them on how they are living their lives.¹⁷ Since the tongue is a powerful weapon of manipulation, being silent is uncomfortable for it puts a stopper on our self-justification.¹⁸ Being alone with God is also frightening to those who do not want to give Jesus the “wheel” of their hearts and allow Him to direct their paths. To overcome our

fear of being confronted by a holy God one must not forget that God truly loves us and merely wants us to be more like Him. Examined, confronted and repented sin is forgiven (1 John 1:9) and forgotten (Isaiah 43:25); while cherished sin means that God won’t listen to our prayers (Psalms 66:18). And when it comes to who should make life-decisions we should take Jesus’ example who through solitude and prayer sought advice from God the Father before starting ministry (Matthew 4:1-11), choosing the twelve disciples (Luke 6:12) and before going to the cross (Matthew 26:36-46).

¹² Taken from the following website: <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/10-health-benefits-of-intermittent-fasting#section6>

¹³ Taken from the following website: <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/295914.php>

¹⁴ Richard J. Foster, 55.

¹⁵ Walter A. Elwell and Douglas Buckwalter, *Topical Analysis of the Bible: With the New International Version*, vol. 5, Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1996).

¹⁶ Robert J. Foster, 97.

¹⁷ Taken from the following website: <https://www.thoughtco.com/the-power-of-solitude-712390>

¹⁸ Robert J. Foster, 101.

Listening to the Voice of God

Twenty years or so ago NASCAR race drivers did not have any built-in communication between them and their crew chief. This meant the driver had to count the laps, know the position on the track they were in, how much fuel they had burned and whether or not they could



make it another lap without a pitstop ... all while navigating on the track at 200 plus mph! When NASCAR legalized the use of in-helmet head-sets do you think any of the drivers refused communication with their crew chief who had a better vantage point and could keep better track of these details than they could?¹⁹ NO, but if the driver refused to talk to the chief or when he did talk he merely babbled about how hot it was, how his date was, how the football game went without letting the chief speak; would not the chief

think that driver was insane? How do you think our crew chief in life, God feels when we refuse to seek and obey His instructions on how to run the race He has constructed (Colossians 1:16) and set before us? Prayer is our spiritual headset in which we get the honor of not only talking to God but more importantly listening to His advice!

Effective prayer is more than just speaking to God, it is listening to His voice! The same God who spoke to Adam and Eve in the garden (Genesis 3:8), to Moses through the burning bush (Exodus 3) and Saul on the Damascus road (Acts 9) is the same God who wants to talk to us today! While God speaks indirectly through creation (Romans 1:20) and His word (2 Timothy 3:16), He also speaks directly to us through the direct promptings of the Holy Spirit (John 16:13-15). While this should give us reason to jump in great joy, those who are “accustomed to walking by sight, steering their own ships and making their own decisions apart from God tend to be squeamish about letting the Holy Spirit begin His supernatural ministry in our lives.”²⁰



Responding to the promptings of the Spirit is not only crucial for our salvation, for no one can come unto the Father unless drawn by the Spirit (John 6:44), but also for our assurance and growth as a Christian.

¹⁹ Bill Hybels, 127.

²⁰ Ibid., 132.

Listening to the promptings of the Holy Spirit is also important to those who want



assurance of their position before the Lord. If you were told that you had 15 minutes to get ready to stand and be judged before a holy God what would your reaction be?²¹ Would you pace around nervously thinking about all your short-comings or would you be on your knees in frantic confession? While we hope to hear the words “good and faithful servant,” would it cross our minds that we might hear “I never knew you, away from Me you evildoer” (Matthew 7:21-23)? After all, if some who prophesy, drive out demons and perform miracles in the name of Jesus Christ do not make it then what makes us think we will?

Praise be that God knows we have doubts from time to time, so He sent the Holy Spirit testify to our spirits that we are indeed children of God (Romans 8:16-17)!

Listening to the promptings of the Holy Spirit is also important if you want to grow spiritually mature in Christ.²² There are a lot of commands in God’s word that are very difficult to interpret. For those who are still babes in Christ (1 Corinthians 3:1) and even for those who



are spiritually mature, we only see dimly now what one day will become clear (1 Corinthians 13:12). To help us interpret God’s word we have been given the Spirit of truth to live inside of us (John 16:12-15). Not only do we need the Spirit to teach us about the truth but also to give us the power to obey what we have read. For those who have the Spirit living inside of them the commands of God are not a burden for those who are born of God have already overcome the ways of this world (1 John 5:3-5). Furthermore, when we do not know what to pray for the Spirit

groans in wordless groans and make petitions on our behalf that are in accordance with the will of God (Romans 8:26-30). Praise be that the Spirit convicts and gives us the power to have our minds transformed and renewed (Romans 12:1-2) in our love for Jesus each day!

²¹ Bill Hybels, 134.

²² Ibid., 155.

Conclusion

Going 10,000 RPMs to outperform all others has left many Christians with no time to spend with God. Success in life is not measured by the number of hours we work or how full our calendars are but in how close we walk and become like Jesus! To obtain a supernatural walk with a living, dynamic, communicating God we need to slow down and embrace spiritual disciplines. By journaling one can soften the heart to that one might better distinguish and confess sin that so easily entangles and keeps us from being close to a holy God. By fasting one can learn to surrender those things that are controlling a person. Through solitude one can remove any distractions of the body, mind and soul that might keep one from hearing a Divine whisper during one's prayers. Even though some Christians are fearful of hearing the voice of God whom commands change, we need not fear being alone with God for the Spirit guides and enables us to be holy as God is holy. Prayer is more about listening than speaking. So, I leave you with this parting question: God is speaking but are you listening?