



soulmind

Connecting you with God's heart

## Hearing God

Psalm 23

Have you heard people say, "God spoke to me, God told me..." with great authority and conviction, and you kind of quietly wondered about that whole thing? One of the unique claims of Christianity is that the God of the universe is personal, is very much interested in being with us, is someone we can talk to and who will answer us.

Like you, most people pray in some form or another, and do believe that we are meant to have a personal relationship with God. But you are not alone if you are confused and foggy about how to hear back from him.

We will be using Dallas Willard's very practical book, "*Hearing God: Developing a Conversational Relationship With God*" as the basis for the next few weeks of **Soulmind**.

Learning to listen and hear well,  
~Jeannie



[LISTEN TO THE DEVOTIONAL](#)

You may find it helpful to get a copy of Willard's book to read along as we learn together. If interested, you can order from Amazon [HERE](#).

Be sure to check out the **SOUL PRACTICE** suggestion for this week (*see below*).

## Topic Overview

Over Christmas we celebrated the gospel – that God loved us so much that the Father sent the Son in the power of the Holy Spirit to bring us home into life with him. If you think about it, there's a lot of relational imagery in that sentence; this is not a dry theological doctrinal statement.

I grew up believing this, but secretly, I had this feeling that there must be something really wrong with me, because I didn't quite get how in world this "relationship" actually works. When I would hear people say that God had spoken to them, I didn't necessarily doubt that He had; it's just that he didn't seem to be talking to me like that. And to complicate matters, I subconsciously

imagined God to be a stern authority figure, sitting on a massive throne somewhere far above all of us, looking down to see who was obeying the rules. Friend? Trusted father? Not so much. It seemed that maybe only pastors or especially spiritual people were the ones that might actually be able to get close enough to God to “hear” his voice.

*In Hearing God, Dallas Willard nails the situation: “Sometimes it seems that our personal relationship with God is treated as no more than a mere arrangement or understanding that Jesus and his Father have about us. Our personal relationships then only means that each believer has his or her own unique account in heaven, which allows them to draw on the merits of Christ to pay their sin bills.”*

Not very relational. If this describes your experience, you are not alone. I am so grateful to be learning that we *can* understand the different ways that God speaks to us, and become confident that not only does he hear us, but actually communicates back. Think of all the stories of the interactions between God and people – Adam/Eve, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Mary, Peter, etc. Relationship imagery is everywhere throughout the Bible. shepherd/sheep, father/child, lover/beloved. friend of God. Nothing in the Bible suggests that God is an uninterested divinity who set things in motion and then left us to muddle on by ourselves.

## Daily Scriptures

### MONDAY

#### John 15:15 (TLB)

I no longer call you slaves, for a master doesn't confide in his slaves; now you are my friends, proved by the fact that I have told you everything the Father told me.

### TUESDAY

#### Psalms 23:1 (TLB)

Because the Lord is my shepherd, I have everything I need.

### WEDNESDAY

#### John 14:26 (NIV)

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

### THURSDAY

#### John 10:2-4; 27 (NIV)

The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

### FRIDAY

#### Luke 12:6-7 (NIV)

Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

## Doing Your Part

## SOUL PRACTICE

### Praying Psalm 23

This familiar Psalm is a beautiful picture of our relational God as a caring shepherd. Use the [SCRIPTURE and MUSIC](#) audio track, or print out whatever translation or paraphrase that is most meaningful to you ([biblegateway.com](http://biblegateway.com)). Listen, read or recite right before you fall asleep at night and again when you wake up, trying to slowly meditate on each phrase.

### Wise Words

*The Spirit that inhabits us is not mute, restricting himself to an occasional nudge, a hot flash, a brilliant image, or a case of goose bumps.*

**Hearing God**, Dallas Willard

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*Because the Lord is my shepherd, I have everything that I need.* Psalm 23

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