



LISTEN

What does God sound like?



Raining cats and dogs? Thunder? Unless you are living in the Old Testament, chances are slim that you will hear God in a loud booming voice from Heaven. Instead, it will be like a soft voice, an impression in the heart that comes with the sense of love, kindness, compassion, purity and even peace. Because God is Spirit, He speaks to our spirit – which is our heart from the inside. And because of that, sometimes our heart might beat a little faster from excitement or it might feel a sense of warmth. But when God speaks, you will always have a sense of peace.

How can I tell if it's God I'm listening to?

Firstly, God can confirm that He is speaking to you through signs – something that you will see or hear or experience. God can also confirm that He is speaking to you through His scriptures. And He never contradicts His Word. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says, “All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

Secondly, God also speaks through confirming it with other people. So don't be surprised if after praying, all the other people praying in your group also get the same idea or the same impression to do the same thing. Don't believe me? Check out this scripture from Proverbs 11:14 where it says, “For lack of guidance a nation falls but victory is won through many advisors.”

Thirdly, you know that God is speaking to you when you feel the peace of God in your heart as mentioned in this scripture. Philippians 4:7 says, “And the peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

And **fourthly**, confidence is built through practice. The more we practice hearing from Him, the clearer His voice gets. It's like talking to a new friend for the first time on the phone. We won't be able to recognise his or her voice immediately the first time or even the first few times. But if you continue talking, after a while, you'll recognise his or her voice just from "hello". As the scripture says in James 4:8, "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you..."

Last but not least, God doesn't want us to fail. So the pressure is not on you. God will speak to you in a personal way that you will definitely know it is from Him alone who can speak to you in such a way. Don't believe me? Check out this scripture from Psalm 23:3 which says, "He refreshes my soul, He guides me along the right paths for His name's sake."

How do we listen?

Just like the fourth point above, we listen through practice. The analogy above with the phone call can also be applied here. Except that we need to not do all the talking – that's not what prayer is only about – but we need to learn how to pause to listen. If we're doing all the talking, just like some friends we know who can hijack a conversation, then there'll be no chance to listen. We often do that in prayer without realising it and that's why so few of us actually hear His voice.

So listening to and recognising God's voice comes with practice... and patience. The art of listening to God invites us into the realm that most find uncomfortable: silence. We must quiet our hearts and embrace the stillness that allows us to truly know that He is God.



In our silence, we open our hearts. In the stillness, we learn to recognise that still, quiet voice. Psalm 62:5 says, “My soul, wait silently for God alone, for my expectation is from Him.” The secret in listening is actually found in the waiting. We must learn to pause. Prayer is not complete without listening to God.

In Isaiah 40:31, it says, “But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.”

Practice makes perfect. The more we do it, the better we become. Don't be afraid to try, don't be afraid to make mistakes. You will get better at listening to God's voice.