

"Why is it, that when we speak to God we are said to be praying but when God speaks to us we are said to be schizophrenic?" – Lily Tomlin

John 16:12-14

12 "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. 13 But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. 14 He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you."

John 10:4

...his sheep follow him because they know his voice.

How may we live confidently and sensibly with God as a conversational presence in our lives?

➤ The Diversity of Ways God Communicates with Us

- **A phenomenon plus a voice** (Acts 9)
- **A supernatural messenger or an angel** (Matthew 28)
- **Dreams and visions** (Acts 10, 16)
- **An audible voice** (1 Samuel 3)
- **A human voice** (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Paul, Peter, John)
- **The human spirit** – "still small voice" (1 Corinthians 2:9-16)

"...this mode [still small voice] is best suited to the redemptive purposes of God because it most engages the faculties of free, intelligent beings involved in the work of God as his co-laborers and friends." – Dallas Willard

➤ The Ways We Grow in This Lifestyle of Hearing God

- **Abiding includes conversing**

John 15:5

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

The desire to know God is the ethos for communication with God.

- **Immersing heart and mind in the Scriptures**

John 15:7 – "If you remain in me and my words remain in you..."

Romans 12:1-2

1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. 2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.



"The Word of God is, and always was, intended to be the Voice of God that pulled hearers into dialogue with Him." – Sunder Krishnan

- **Paying attention to your life**

Luke 15:17 (prodigal son), "When he came to himself..."

Genesis 3:9, "...the Lord God called to the man, 'Where are you?'"

"The soul is like a wild animal—tough, resilient, savvy, self-sufficient. It knows how to survive in hard places. But it is also shy. Just like a wild animal, it seeks safety in the dense underbrush. If we want to see a wild animal, we know that the last thing we should do is go crashing through the woods yelling for it to come out. But if we will walk quietly into the woods, sit patiently at the base of the tree, and fade into our surroundings, the wild animal we seek might put in an appearance." – Parker Palmer

➤ **What Do We Do When God is Silent?**

- **Don't automatically assume that something is wrong in the relationship.**

Silence can be an invitation to maturity and a revealer of current reality.

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

- **Make a decision with the wisdom and resources available.**

"Human initiative is not canceled by redemption; it is heightened by immersion in the flow of God's life. People with a mature vision of God and extensive experience in his ways have no need to be obsessively anxious about doing the right thing. For the most part they will simply know what is right. But their confidence is finally not in a word from the Lord but in the Lord who is with us." – Dallas Willard