

TEACHING SERIES ON HEARING GOD: Hearing God through the Bible

Paul Woodman, May 2022

God speaks through the Bible. Scripture is always the voice of God in the general sense that God inspired the words of Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16). God can also speak specifically to us through the Bible, by drawing a particular passage to our attention, because the Word of God is living and active (Heb. 4:12).

When you open your Bible, you are literally opening the words of God. Scripture is God's voice available for you in every moment, situation, and predicament you face. You can know God desires to speak to you because you have in your possession his voice through the Bible. God desires to reveal to you his will because he has given you his Spirit to "guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come" (John 16:13).

When you read Scripture with the help of your teacher, the Holy Spirit, the Bible is no longer just a book written thousands of years ago but a source of life-giving revelation. Read the Bible prayerfully, paying attention to any words, phrases, or ideas that stand out to you. Allow God to apply Scripture directly to your life through his Spirit. And as you read, submit yourself to God's word with a continual "yes" in your heart. Choose to be a doer of the word that you might be blessed in everything you do (James 1:22-25).

Example – Some years ago I was travelling to a village in North Macedonia and I had some set talks I was using as we travelled. But on the way, God prompted me to speak on Nehemiah 4:2:

And he said in the presence of his brothers and of the army of Samaria, "What are these feeble Jews doing? Will they restore it for themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they finish up in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish, and burned ones at that?"

It's not a passage I'd spoken on before, so I looked it up and prepared a short talk about the redemption that God saw in this story of burnt stones. I had no idea how timely this word would be compared to the ones I had already prepared. When I got to the village, I looked for a burnt stone and found one straight away. I spoke on the passage and the church responded well, but in shock, and they asked what I knew about their church. They explained their church building had been burnt down and destroyed. The stone I was holding was part of their burnt down church. I was shocked. But the 'now word' from scripture encouraged the church that they would be revived through his spirit.

How?

Find **reading plans** on the Bible App – e.g. Gentle and Lowly, Bill Johnson, Joseph Prince

Bible in one Year app

Discovery Bible Study - <https://discoverapp.org/discovery-bible-study>

A **Discovery Bible Study** (DBS) is a discipleship study which enables people to read the Bible and discover what it has to say to them. Simple, memorable questions allow participants to understand the character of God, encourage them to obey what they are learning and help them to share it with others. It is a very easy way to teach people to sit under scripture and learn from it. It's well used by Young Life in its discipleship of young people.

Reading beyond the more accessible books

We find it easier to read the gospel accounts, Acts and the New Testament letters, some more than others. But, the voices of the different books bring a fuller understanding of the word of God. The Historical books, Wisdom books, Prophets and Pentateuch all bring perspective on the heart and nature of God. This past year, with the youth we have studied the Psalms and Job and learnt from what they taught about prayer and suffering. Further study – The Bible Jesus read by Yancey: https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/435307.The_Bible_Jesus_Read

J.I. Packer said, 'Psalms teach us how to worship; Proverbs, how to behave; Job, how to suffer; Song of Solomon, how to love; Ecclesiastes, how to live'.

Bema Podcast can also help us understand the meaning of scripture from an eastern and Jewish perspective. <https://www.bemadiscipleship.com>

Patricia King – Glory School (Word of God)

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path —Psalm 119:105

All spiritual experience must be rooted and grounded on the foundation and the plumbline of the Word of God. We are to be lovers of His Word and those who will cleave to it.

Attributes of the Word of God:

- Eternal in the heavens —Matthew 24:35
- Is truth —John 17:17
- Shall not return void —Isaiah 55:11 (NKJV)
- Frames the will of God —Hebrews 11:3 (NKJV)
- Dispatches angels —Psalm 103:20
- Brings light into darkness —Psalm 119:130
- Is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path —Psalm 119:105
- Secures blessings —Ephesians 1:3; 2 Peter 1:2-4
- The Word is seed —Mark 4^[L]_[SEP]10
- Weapon of warfare —2 Corinthians 10:3-5; Ephesians 6 11
- Pulls down mindsets —2 Corinthians 10:3-5^[L]_[SEP]12.
- Creates —Romans 4:17^[L]_[SEP]13
- Sanctifies —John 17:17^[L]_[SEP]14
- Strengthens the spirit man^[L]_[SEP]
- Ensures answers to prayer^[L]_[SEP]
- Separates soul from spirit —Ephesians 3:16; John 15:7; Hebrews 4:12

NOTES: Faith comes from hearing the rhema word of God

Logos is the written word and rhema is the quickened word of God. Jesus is called the logos and the HS is called the rhema, so biblically they are both the living eternal word of God.

We find the quickened rhema word hidden in the logos word and this produces faith. Every experience of God lines up with the counsel of God in his word and there are layers of revelation inside every scripture. It is a spiritual, rather than academic, book – we must always look for what the Spirit is saying.

In the Hebrew mindset words have 'substance' e.g. a name decrees something over a child and determines its substance. **Words have spirit, power and substance.** Speaking words over

someone can bring life or death. **We set the course of our lives by what we speak; words aren't only print and concept they are substance and life.** The word can launch us into encountering and experiencing God.

Eg. 'I love you with an everlasting love' has substance and it's ours so we can declare it over ourselves and recreate the atmosphere of it. God interjects our decree with his presence and fills our declaration with the substance of his words. We are to love and cleave to God's words. His promises are powerful substance to us and can be taken hold of.

The Spirit leads us into Truth as we believe and stand on God's word. It doesn't return empty but accomplishes everything of its substance; the word sent on its mission until completion. Healing words proclaimed go on a mission, sent into a body to bring healing in the natural. **Decrees and declarations are powerful, going forth and accomplishing substance reality.** The word frames the will of God and provides a framework to step into.

Eg. Marriage prep – draw a house, rooms, walls, foundations etc and write the agreed words for their house. What covering do they want over their home? Find God's words over their house and decree them building a framework for their future lives together.

Build frameworks in the Spirit that will become the manifest reality. Send the words out ahead so that when you step into them, you step into glory – like a wineskin built for the wine! Hebrews 11:3

Sowing words into situations is sowing seed that will produce a harvest, Mark 4, and if we've sown we will reap and **the measure we've used determines our harvest.** The sower sows the word into situations including our bank accounts! Household salvations come through sowing words of salvation into our families. Sow God's words into your home – **recover your seed and sow it into your situations.**

Sow God's words into battle situations to bring about the victory. These times are uncomfortable – but we win! 2 Corinth10:3-5; Eph 6. God's word is a powerful weapon and we do not need to fear because his word tells us we are free from terror. We need a victory mentality because Jesus has stripped the enemy of his power.

God's word secures blessing because every blessing is ours in Jesus and he took all curses! Blessings have substance, by faith Eph 1:3; 2 Peter1:2-4.

The word of God creates, seeing things that are not as if they are and calling them into existence. Call forth what you see Romans 4:17, speak out heaven's downloads, get agreement on it and move forward. Things grow quickly in the glory!

Qs:

- What is our favourite Bible story and why? Read it and see what it teaches us about God? What does He want us to know from this story today?
- What habits do you have to make the most of regular reading of the Bible?
- When was the last time you studied some of the Old Testament books?
- Try praying scripture, prophesying scripture into situations – declaring the word of God into situations. Share testimony of when this happens.
- Take a look at the quotes about the Bible below and highlight the ones that encourage you the most.

Crosswalk put 25 quotes from a variety of influential Christians with their thoughts on the Bible.

Enjoy these many different thoughts on the importance, relevance, and truth of Scripture!

1. "Nobody ever outgrows Scripture; the book widens and deepens with our years." -Charles Spurgeon
2. "We are the Bibles the world is reading; we are the creeds the world is needing; we are the sermons the world is heeding." -Billy Graham
3. "We modern people think of miracles as the suspension of the natural order, but Jesus meant them to be the restoration of the natural order. The Bible tells us that God did not originally make the world to have disease, hunger, and death in it. Jesus has come to redeem where it is wrong and heal the world where it is broken. His miracles are not just proofs that he has power but also wonderful foretastes of what he is going to do with that power. Jesus' miracles are not just a challenge to our minds, but a promise to our hearts, that the world we all want is coming." -Timothy J. Keller
4. "It is mind-boggling to me that the Almighty power created everything I see; the Bible says that God created the entire universe just so he could create this galaxy just so he could create Earth so he could create human beings so he could create a family." -Rick Warren
5. "He does have surprising, secret purposes. I open a Bible, and His plans, startling, lie there barefaced. It's hard to believe it, when I read it, and I have to come back to it many times, feel long across those words, make sure they are real. His love letter forever silences any doubts: "His secret purpose framed from the very beginning [is] to bring us to our full glory" (1 Corinthians 2:7 NEB)." -Ann Voskamp
6. "When the world beats you down, open up your Bible." -Lysa TerKeurst
7. "The Word of God I think of as a straight edge, which shows up our own crookedness. We can't really tell how crooked our thinking is until we line it up with the straight edge of Scripture." -Elisabeth Elliot
8. "Unless we form the habit of going to the Bible in bright moments as well as in trouble, we cannot fully respond to its consolations because we lack equilibrium between light and darkness." -Helen Keller
9. "The Bible is the cradle wherein Christ is laid." -Martin Luther
10. "What I see in the Bible, especially in the book of Psalms, which is a book of gratitude for the created world, is a recognition that all good things on Earth are God's, every good gift is from above. They are good if we recognize where they came from and if we treat them the way the Designer intended them to be treated." -Philip Yancey
11. "The Bible is the book of my life. It's the book I live with, the book I live by, the book I want to die by." -N. T. Wright
12. "I've read the last page of the Bible, it's all going to turn out alright." -Billy Graham
13. "Put your nose into the Bible everyday. It is your spiritual food. And then share it. Make a vow not to be a lukewarm Christian." -Kirk Cameron
14. "The Word of God well understood and religiously obeyed is the shortest route to spiritual perfection. And we must not select a few favorite passages to the exclusion of others. Nothing less than a whole Bible can make a whole Christian." -A.W. Tozer
15. "The Bible is very easy to understand. But we Christians are a bunch of scheming swindlers. We pretend to be unable to understand it because we know very well that the minute we understand, we are obliged to act accordingly." -Søren Kierkegaard
16. "The Holy Scriptures are our letters from home." -Augustine of Hippo
17. "We go from Malachi to Matthew in one page of our scriptures, but that one piece of paper that separates the Old Testament from the New Testament represents 400 years of history - 400 years where there wasn't a prophet, 400 years where God's voice wasn't heard. And that silence was broken with the cry of a baby on Christmas night." -Louie Giglio
18. "Don't fall into the trap of studying the Bible without doing what it says." -Francis Chan
19. "So great is my veneration for the Bible, that the earlier my children begin to read it the more confident will be my hopes that they will prove useful citizens to their country and respectable members of society." -John Quincy Adams

20. "Reading and understanding the Bible involves lots and lots of interpretation. Not just in light of the world and culture around us, but in reference to other parts of the Bible." -John Piper
21. "Most people are bothered by those passages of Scripture they do not understand, but the passages that bother me are those I do understand." -Mark Twain
22. "I am profitably engaged in reading the Bible. Take all of this Book that you can by reason and the balance by faith, and you will live and die a better man. It is the best Book which God has given to man." -Abraham Lincoln
23. "The more I have read the Bible and studied the life of Jesus, the more I have become convinced that Christianity spreads best not through force but through fascination." - Shane Claiborne
24. "Apply yourself wholly to the Scriptures, and apply the Scriptures wholly to yourself." - Johann A. Bengel
25. "I want to know one thing, the way to heaven: how to land safe on that happy shore. God himself has condescended to teach the way; for this very end he came from heaven. He has written it down in a book! Oh, give me that book! At any price, give me the book of God! I have it: here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be: "A man of one book." – John Wesley

<https://www.crosswalk.com/faith/spiritual-life/inspiring-quotes/25-quotes-from-influential-christians-about-the-bible.html>