

(How to Hear the Voice of God) pt 3

Ps 85:8

"I will hear what the Lord God will speak in me..."

DRB

Principles for Hearing:

- 1) God is my Father 1 Jn 2:1
- 2) My Father has a plan for my life Jer 29:11
- 3) My Father wants to make known the plan for my life. Is 30:21

Today's memory verse:

Jn 2:5

"Do whatever he tells you."

Jn 2:5

Imitation of Christ Book 3, Chapter 3

I taught the prophets from the beginning, and even to this day I continue to speak to all men. But many are hardened. Many are deaf to My voice. Most men listen more willingly to the world than to God. They are more ready to follow the appetite of their flesh than the good pleasure of God. The world, which promises small and passing things, is served with great eagerness: I promise great and eternal things and the hearts of men grow dull. Who is there that serves and obeys Me in all things with as great care as that with which the world and its masters are served?

God wants to speak to us -

Thy will be done

Mt 6:10

10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven.

We need a desire to do God's will.

Eph 5:10

10 and try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

Eph 5:17

17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Wherefore become not unwise, but understanding what is the will of God.

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Ps 143:10

10 Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God! Let thy good spirit lead me on a level path!

Level path – not up and down.

Gal 5:25

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

NIV

Holy Spirit, Guide to all truth

Jn 16:13

13 When the Spirit of truth comes, he will 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.

As we seek to follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit we must not trust in our own understanding:

Pro 3:5-8

5 Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. 6 In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. 7* Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. 8 It will be healing to your flesh* and refreshment* to your bones.

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Discernment of Spirits

One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit that we are to eagerly desire, to covet.

1 Cor 12:10

10* to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, To another, the working of miracles; to another, prophecy; to another, the discerning of spirits...

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Test the spirits

1 Thes 5:19-22

19* Do not quench the Spirit, 20* do not despise prophesying, 21* but test everything; hold fast what is good, 22 abstain from every form of evil.

What are the spirits to test:

1. Human spirit
2. Evil spirit
3. Divine spirit

Our first stance is that of faith in the Principles for

Hearing:

1) God is my Father 1 Jn 2:1

2) My Father has a plan for my life Jer 29:11

3) My Father wants to make known the plan for my life. Is 30:21

God is going to give us good things (Mt 7:7-11).

Do not let fear capture your heart.

Difference between caution and fear.

Many fear when they approaching hearing the voice of God.

Remember:

Jn 10:27

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me"

Is 30:21

21 And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it," when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.

In Confirmation you have been given Counsel To know God's will

Wisdom To know how to do God's will

There are three principles of Discernment:

1. Peace
2. God does not contradict himself
3. Seek wise counsel

First principle of discernment:

Do you have peace?

Peace is the gift that Jesus' last desire to leave with the disciples:

Jn 14:27

27* Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

Peace is the first gift of the resurrection

Jn 20:19

19* On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

Is 26:3

3 Thou dost keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusts in thee.

If we are stayed on God, locked on his will, determining in our hearts, "I will hear what the Lord has to say, a voice that speaks of peace" (Ps 85:8), we will be kept in peace. Peace is the confirmation of the Holy Spirit that we are in the will of the Father.

First principle of discernment:

Do you have peace?

Second principle of Discernment:

God does not contradict himself as he is not the author of confusion –

1 Cor 14:33

33 For God is not a God of confusion but of peace.

God will not contradict

1. Scripture
2. Tradition
3. Magisterium

Third principle of Discernment:

Seek Wise Counsel

Sir 6:2

2 Do not exalt yourself through your soul's counsel, lest your soul be torn in pieces like a bull.

Pro 12:15

15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.

Pro 15:20

22 Without counsel plans go wrong, but with many advisers they succeed.

Pro 19:20

20 Listen to advice and accept instruction, that you may gain wisdom for the future.

Pro 13:20

20 He who walks with wise men becomes wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.

Sir 32:19

19 Do nothing without deliberation (counsel); and when you have acted, do not regret it.

Where do we find wise counsel?

Spouse

Those in authority over us:

Priest

Parents

Teachers

Spiritual Director

CCC #2690

The Holy Spirit gives to certain of the faithful the gifts of wisdom, faith and discernment for the sake of this common good which is prayer (*spiritual direction*). Men and women so endowed are true servants of the living tradition of prayer. According to St. John of the Cross, the person wishing to advance toward perfection should "take care into whose hands he entrusts himself, for as the master is, so will the disciple be, and as the father is so will be the son." And further: "In addition to being learned and discreet a director should be experienced. . . . If the spiritual director has no experience of the spiritual life, he will be incapable of leading into it the souls whom God is calling to it, and he will not even understand them."

Introduction to the Devout Life

St Francis DeSales

CHAPTER IV.

The Need of a Guide for those who would enter upon and advance in the Devout Life.

WHEN Tobias was bidden to go to Rages, he was willing to obey his father, but he objected that he knew not the way;--to which Tobit answered, "Seek thee a man which may go with thee;" (Tob 5:3) and even so, daughter, I say to you, If you would really tread the paths of the devout life, seek some holy man to guide and conduct you. This is the precept of precepts, says the devout Avila,--seek as you will you can never so surely discover God's Will as through the channel of humble obedience so universally taught and practised by all the Saints of olden time. When the blessed Teresa read of the great penances performed by Catherine of Cordova, she desired exceedingly to imitate them, contrary to the mind of her Confessor, who forbade her to do the like, and she was tempted to disobey him therein. Then God spoke to Teresa, saying, "My child, thou art on a good and safe road:-- true, thou seest all this penance, but verily I esteem thy obedience as a yet greater virtue:" --and thenceforth S. Teresa so greatly loved the virtue of obedience, that in addition to that due to her superiors, she took a vow of special obedience to a pious ecclesiastic, pledging herself to follow his direction and guidance, which proved an inexpressible help to her. And even so before and after her many pious souls have subjected their will to God's ministers in order the better to submit themselves to Him, a practice much commended by S. Catherine of Sienna in her Dialogues. The devout Princess S. Elisabeth gave an unlimited obedience to the venerable Conrad; and one of the parting counsels given by S. Louis to his son ere he died was, "Confess thyself often,-- choose a single-minded, worthy confessor, who is able wisely to teach thee how to do that which is needful for thee." "A faithful friend," we are told in Holy Scripture, "is a strong defense, and he that hath found such an one hath found a treasure;" (Ecclus 6:14) and again: "A faithful friend is the medicine of life; and they that fear the Lord shall find him." (Ecclus 5:16) These sacred words have chiefly reference, as you see, to the immortal life, with a view to which we specially need a faithful friend, who will guide us by his counsel and advice, thereby guarding us against the deceits and snares of the Evil One:--he will be as a storehouse of wisdom to us in our sorrows, trials and falls; he will be as a healing balm to stay and soothe our heart in the time of spiritual sickness,-- he will shield us from evil, and confirm that which is good in us, and when we fall through infirmity, he will avert the deadly nature of the evil, and raise us up again. But who can find such a friend? The Wise Man answers:--"He that feareth the Lord:" (Ecclus 6:17) that is to say, the truly humble soul which earnestly desires to advance in the spiritual life. So, daughter, inasmuch as it concerns you so closely to set forth on this devout journey under good guidance, do you pray most earnestly to God to supply you with a guide after His Own Heart, and never doubt but that He will grant you one who is wise and faithful, even should He send you an angel from Heaven, as He sent to Tobias. In truth, your spiritual guide should always be as a heaven-sent angel to you;--by which I mean that when you have found him, you are not to look upon him, or trust in him or his wisdom as an ordinary man; but you must look to God, Who will help you and speak

to you through this man, putting into his heart and mouth that which is needful to you; so that you ought to hearken as though he were an angel come down from

Heaven to lead you thither. Deal with him in all sincerity and faithfulness, and with open heart; manifesting alike your good and your evil, without pretence or dissimulation. Thus your good will be examined and confirmed, and your evil corrected and remedied; --you will be soothed and strengthened in trouble, moderated and regulated in prosperity. Give your guide a hearty confidence mingled with sacred reverence, so that reverence in no way shall hinder your confidence, and confidence nowise lessen your reverence: trust him with the respect of a daughter for her father; respect him with the confidence of a son in his mother. In a word, such a friendship should be strong and sweet; altogether holy, sacred, divine and spiritual. And with such an aim, choose one among a thousand, Avila says;--and I say among ten thousand, for there are fewer than one would think capable of this office. He must needs be full of love, of wisdom and of discretion; for if either of these three be wanting there is danger. But once more I say, ask such help of God, and when you have found it, bless His Holy Name; be steadfast, seek no more, but go on simply, humbly and trustfully, for you are safe to make a prosperous journey.

Find wise counsel in Prayer Groups

CCC #2689

Prayer groups, indeed "schools of prayer," are today one of the signs and one of the driving forces of renewal of prayer in the Church, provided they drink from authentic wellsprings of Christian prayer. Concern for ecclesial communion is a sign of true prayer in the Church.

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Tool:

4 Keys to Hearing the Voice of God

Hab 2:1-4

1* I will take my stand to watch, and station myself on the tower, and look forth to see what he will say to me, and what I will answer concerning my complaint. 2 And the LORD answered me: "Write the vision; make it plain upon tablets, so he may run who reads it. 3* For still the vision awaits its time; it hastens to the end--it will not lie. If it seem slow, wait for it; it will surely come, it will not delay. 4* Behold, he whose soul is not upright in him shall fail, * but the righteous shall live by his faith.

Stand and Watch – Prepare your heart to be ready to receive a word from the Lord knowing that he wants to speak to you.

Look to see what He will say. Free your heart and allow the Holy spirit to begin to flow into your soul with a word from the Father. Do not judge. Let words and images flood your soul. Receive the answer.

Write in your journal all that the Holy Spirit is bringing to you.

Run with what the Lord has placed in your heart, standing in faith, believing that He will do as He promised, no matter how long it may take.

1 Be Still – (Ps 42:10) Prepare your heart to be ready to receive a word from the Lord knowing that he wants to speak to you.

2 Fix your Eyes on Jesus (Heb 12:2) – We are not looking to our thoughts. We are looking to Jesus to hear what he will say and see what he will show us. Be aware of both word and images that come to you.

3 Surrender to the Flow of the Holy Spirit (Jn 7:38-39) - Allow the Holy Spirit to begin to fill you inmost being with words and images. Do not judge them at this point.

4 Write (Hab 2:1-3) in your journal all that the Holy Spirit is bringing to you.

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Spiritual Exercise:

1) What do you want, Lord?

As you go through your day, stop and ask God, "What do you want, Lord?" This will help you to be sensitive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

2) Journal using "4 Keys to hearing God's Voice." Find someone that you know will be open to the work the Holy Spirit is doing in you to hear God's voice and share this journaling experience with them.

3) Lectio Divina

Rm 8:28

Is 43:1-7

Ps 91