

Scripture: Hearing God's Voice

HOPE813 FAITH WALK RESOURCES

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." — 2 Timothy 3:16 (NKJV)

Introduction

Every believer wants to hear God's voice. The most reliable, tested, and available place He speaks is the one many Christians open least: Scripture. Before we look for a feeling, a sign, or a word from someone else, God has already given us sixty-six books of His own self-revelation. Learning to read, study, and love the Bible is not a task for pastors alone — it is the birthright of every disciple.

The Word Is Living

Hebrews 4:12 says "the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword." Scripture is not a static historical document; it is God's active voice, applied by the Holy Spirit to the specific moment we're in. This is why the same verse can strike a believer differently at twenty than at fifty — not because the text changed, but because the Spirit is illuminating it freshly to a life that has changed.

Reading Well: Context Before Application

A common mistake is jumping straight to "what does this mean for me?" before asking "what did this mean to its original hearers?" Sound Bible study moves through layers:

1. **Observation** — What does the text actually say? Who is writing, to whom, and why?
2. **Interpretation** — What did this mean in its original context, genre, and covenant setting?
3. **Application** — Given that meaning, what does the Spirit want to do in me now?

Skipping straight to application without interpretation is how Scripture gets bent to say whatever we already wanted it to say. Sound doctrine protects us from that.

The Word and the Spirit Together

Wesleyan-Holiness-Pentecostal theology holds Word and Spirit together rather than choosing between them. The Spirit inspired Scripture (2 Peter 1:21) and the Spirit illuminates it as we read (1 Corinthians 2:12-14). We do not test the Spirit's leading against our feelings — we test it against the Word He already gave. Any experience, prophecy, or impression that contradicts Scripture is to be rejected, no matter how compelling it feels (1 John 4:1). At the same time, we don't reduce Bible reading to cold

academic exercise; we come expecting the same Spirit who inspired the text to speak through it today.

Building a Rhythm

Consistency matters more than intensity. A believer who reads a chapter a day for a year will know Scripture more deeply than one who occasionally reads for three hours and then stops for a month. John Wesley himself called Scripture study one of the essential "means of grace" — an ordinary channel through which God's grace flows into ordinary life, alongside prayer, fasting, and the Lord's Supper.

Reflection Questions

4. What has your relationship with Bible reading looked like over the last year — consistent, occasional, or mostly absent?
5. Have you ever taken a verse out of its context to support something you already believed? What would reading it in context change?
6. How do you currently discern whether an impression or feeling is from the Spirit versus from your own desires? Does it line up with Scripture?
7. What is one book of the Bible you've never read carefully that you could commit to this month?

This Week

Pick one short book of the New Testament (Philippians, James, or 1 John are good starting points) and read it in one sitting, then again slowly, a chapter a day, asking: what did this mean to its first readers, and what is the Spirit saying to me through it now?

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for giving us Your Word — living, active, and sufficient. Forgive us for the times we have neglected it or twisted it to fit our own desires. Open our eyes, by Your Spirit, to see wonderful things in Your law. Give us hunger for Scripture and discipline to return to it daily. In Jesus' name, Amen.