



**LifeGroup Study**  
**2024-02-04**  
**OPEN**  
**How to Hear God's Voice**  
**Leader Notes**

**OVERVIEW:**

Welcome back to our study, Open to the Spirit. Over the six weeks of our series we are exploring who the Holy Spirit is, how He is at work in our lives and how we can follow his lead. For this week, our topic is "How to Hear God's Voice". Throughout scripture we find a God who speaks and guides his people. This same God speaks to and guides his people today. In our LifeGroup study we'll explore 5 tools to help us discern God's voice. We'll also look at 8 key areas where God speaks to us through his Word, the Bible.

**ICEBREAKER:** That Voice Helped Me a Lot

God has used my dad's voice to help me a lot. I haven't always appreciated his words as I should, and I know he's not perfect, but God has used my dad's voice in my life to help me with decisions and life direction many times over the years. Whose voice, or voices, is God using in your life these days? Do you remember a moment someone shared a timely word with you that helped you a lot? **Share your story with the group!**

## **STUDY:**

- 1. Have there been times in your life when you feel you have heard from God?** If yes, share your story with the group. What helped your confidence that you were hearing from God? What questions did you have?
- Perhaps you would say, "I am not sure God has ever spoken to me. I'm not sure I've ever heard anything from him." **What might help you be open to hearing from God?**

Whether or not you feel you have heard from God in the past, all of us can tune our ear to be quick and alive to hear the voice of his Spirit speaking into our life.

Imagine you are facing an important life decision or change. You have been receiving input (voices) about this decision but you are not sure whether or not they are really from God. The following tools are designed to help you discern whether a voice is from God. These tools are described in more detail and with examples in the book, The Power of a Whisper: Hearing God and Having the Guts to Respond.

### FIVE TOOLS FOR DISCERNING GOD'S VOICE

- i. Is this Prompting Truly from God?

Here are two questions you can ask to help you discern if a voice is from God. Ask – "Does the voice align with who I know God to be?" "Is it aligned with his character and attributes?"

READ: Psalm 103:8

The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. NIV

READ: Revelation 15:3-4

"Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty.

Just and true are your ways, King of the nations.<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Who will not fear you, Lord, and bring glory to your name?

For you alone are holy.

All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed."<sup>[b]</sup>

- 3. This first tool for discerning God's voice is a prayer where you ask God, "God, is this prompting really from you?" As you ask this question, think about who He is. How might this question help you hear God's voice?**

LEADER NOTE: This first tool is important to help us turn down the volume on voices that are not from God. For example, someone in your group may be feeling judged or condemned by God. The voice may be saying, "You're no good. God doesn't love you." We can know this voice is not from God

because it doesn't align with his character. This tool helps us turn up the volume on God's voice to his children, that we are loved and accepted by Him.

ii. Is it Scriptural?

For this tool, ask, "Can I imagine Jesus taking this action I am considering?"

READ: Galatians 5:16

<sup>16</sup> So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. NIV

READ: Philippians 4:8

<sup>8</sup> Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. NIV

**4. How might the question, "Can I imagine Jesus taking this action I am considering?" help discern whether a voice is from God?**

LEADER NOTE: This question, "Can I imagine Jesus taking this action ..." can help us discern in the area of morality. Is the voice I am hearing prompting me toward God honouring choices morally? This is also a helpful question in the areas of my life's mission and purpose. As a child of God I have been set apart by him to serve him and live for him. I have been commissioned by him to make disciples (see Matthew 28:18-20). Is the voice moving me toward or away from God's plan for my life?

iii. Is it Wise?

Ask, "Would this be a biblically wise choice for me to make?"

READ: Job 28:28

"The fear of the Lord—that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding." NIV

READ: Proverbs 16:16

How much better to get wisdom than gold, to get insight rather than silver! NIV

**5. What is the difference between the world's wisdom and biblical wisdom?**

LEADER NOTE: The world's wisdom is based on a system of thinking that does not consider God or his ways. Biblical wisdom seeks God's truth and direction for my life. The question, "Is this a biblically wise choice for me to make?" is a reminder to prioritize God's wisdom and plan for my life in my decision making.

iv. Is it in Tune with your own Character?

Does this seem to fit how I'm wired? (personality, temperament)

**6. Why is it important to consider my own character (the way I'm wired) when discerning whether or not a voice or prompting is from God?**

LEADER NOTE: When God speaks into your life, He cares about and takes into consideration who you are and how he has wired you up. Consider how your education, expertise and life experience might help speak to whether or not God is prompting you toward a decision. For example, imagine you are considering beginning a new business venture, school or career choice – is the way God wired you a good fit for this?

v. What do wise people in your life think about it?

Who are 2 or 3 wise people in my life who I can ask for advice on this?

READ: Proverbs 11:14

“Without good direction, people lose their way; the more wise counsel you follow, the better your chances.” THE MESSAGE

**7. How can God use the wise counsel of others to help you discern his voice?**

LEADER NOTE: God puts wise people in our life to help us discern his voice. Look for people with a deep love for God, a good knowledge of the Bible and life experience that can speak into your situation. Your LifeGroup is a place where you can seek wise counsel from your fellow group members as you pray and seek God's voice together.

THE VOICE OF GOD'S WORD

Of all of the ways and means God can use to speak to us, the primary way He talks to his children today is through his Word, the Bible. Below you will find some key life areas where God speaks to us through his Word. Read the key areas and then read each of the verses out loud together as a group. After each section, talk together about how God can use these verses to speak to you about that life area.

Source: The Power of a Whisper: Hearing God's Voice and Having the Guts to Respond.

**8. Salvation**

<sup>5</sup> he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, Titus 3:5 NIV

<sup>12</sup> Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— John 1:12 NIV

<sup>9</sup> If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>13</sup> for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Romans 10:9,13 NIV

- **Why is it important to have God’s voice speaking to you about the assurance that you are saved?**

## 9. Assurance

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, Romans 8:1 NIV

“Come now, let us settle the matter,” says the LORD. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. Isaiah 1:18 NIV

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we<sup>[a]</sup> have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, Romans 5:1 NIV

- **How can these verses help us turn down voices that say, “God doesn’t love you. Your sins are too bad to be forgiven by God.”?**

## 10. Fear

<sup>7</sup> For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline. 2 Timothy 1:7 NIV

<sup>31</sup> What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? Romans 8:31 NIV

So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God.

I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10 NIV

- **How can these verses encourage you when you are feeling anxious or fearful?**

## 11. Temptation

<sup>13</sup> No temptation<sup>[a]</sup> has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted<sup>[b]</sup> beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted,<sup>[c]</sup> he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it. 1 Corinthians 10:13 NIV

<sup>5</sup> Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. Romans 8:5 NIV

<sup>7</sup> Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. James 4:7 NIV

- **How does God's voice give you strength to face temptation?**

## 12. Wisdom

<sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. James 1:5 NIV

My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you,

<sup>2</sup> turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding—

<sup>3</sup> indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding,

<sup>4</sup> and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure,

<sup>5</sup> then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.

<sup>6</sup> For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. Proverbs 2:1-6 NIV

- **In what area of your life are you seeking the wisdom of God's voice?**

## 13. Power

<sup>13</sup> I can do all this through him who gives me strength. Philippians 4:13 NIV

<sup>27</sup> Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God." Mark 10:27

<sup>6</sup> 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the LORD Almighty. Zechariah 4:6 NIV

- **Where in your life do you need God's voice to give you power?**

## 14. Contentment

<sup>11</sup> ... I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. Philippians 4:11 NIV

<sup>5</sup> Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you never will I forsake you." Hebrews 13:5 NIV

<sup>6</sup> But godliness with contentment is great gain. 1 Timothy 6:6 NIV

- **How is God's voice growing your contentment these days?**

## 15. Peace

<sup>27</sup> Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. John 14:27 NIV

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Matthew 5:9 NIV

<sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7 NIV

- **When do you most need God's voice to give you peace?**
- Look back through these key life areas where God can speak to us through his Word. Which area do you sense God speaking to you about today? Consider memorizing one or more of the verses in that area.

### **PRAYER:**

Key to hearing God's voice is taking the time to quiet ourselves and listen. For your prayer time in group, allow God to speak. Thank him for this time of studying about his voice. Ask him to give you an ear that is quick and alive to hear from Him.