

Lesson
3

Your Father Is Speaking to You

How does a sheep know when to graze on the hillside and when to go into the fold? How does it avoid following a stranger? A sheep is led and protected by listening to the voice of its shepherd. Because the shepherd has cared for the sheep since it was a lamb, the sheep knows the shepherd's voice. It won't follow anyone else.

In some ways, your relationship to God is like that of a sheep to its shepherd. God wants to lead you and care for you. He speaks to you every day to guide you and protect you from danger. As you keep listening to His voice, you will be able to recognize it more. You will know what to do, and those who wish to confuse you will not mislead you.

This lesson will help you understand how God speaks to you. Sometimes He will speak to you directly. At other times He will use His Word, the Bible. At still other times, He will use another Christian.

As you study this lesson, you will discover how to recognize your Father's voice no matter what method He chooses.



In this lesson you will study . . .

God Wants to Talk to You
God Speaks in Many Ways
God Has a Book for You
How to Hear God's Voice

This lesson will help you to . . .

- Give reasons why you can expect God to talk to you.
- State several ways God speaks to you.
- Describe the Book God has for you.
- Know how to hear God's voice every day.

GOD WANTS TO TALK TO YOU

Objective 1. *Identify the reason why God chooses to talk to you.*

What father doesn't enjoy talking with his children even when they are babies and can only smile an answer? Your heavenly Father also likes to talk with His children, showing His love for them, teaching them, and helping them with their problems. Would you like to hear His voice?



For You To Do

- 1** You can expect God to talk to you because He
- a) loves you as your heavenly Father.
 - b) made everything that exists.
 - c) is able to do anything He decides to do.

GOD SPEAKS IN MANY WAYS

Objective 2. *Identify examples of six ways God speaks to you.*

Hebrews 1:1-2. In the past God spoke to our ancestors many times and in many ways through the prophets, but in these last days He has spoken to us through his Son.

Here are some of the ways that God speaks to you.

Directly to Your Heart

The Holy Spirit makes the presence of Jesus known to you. He may speak through your conscience, making you feel what you ought to do or warning you not to do something. He may make a spiritual truth clear to you. Or you may feel a deep impression that God wants you to do something. When you pray, ask God to speak to you and expect to hear His voice in your heart.



For You To Do

- 2** How does God speak directly to your heart? (Two statements are correct.)
- a) You always hear a distinct voice just like you would if a person were speaking to you.
 - b) You may be impressed to do something.
 - c) God's voice must be through a dream or a vision.
 - d) A spiritual truth may suddenly become real or clear to you.

Through His Blessings

Many Christians say that the whole world looks different to them since they have been born again. You too may have a new appreciation of God's blessings as you look around you. You can feel His presence in the wonders of nature. He speaks to you through music and art. You feel Him near in the warm friendship of other Christians. A thousand blessings all around you tell you of the goodness of God. He speaks in the answers to your prayers. The eyes of faith see the smile of God, and the ears of your spirit can hear Him say, "My child, I love you."



For You To Do

- 3 Name a blessing in which you can see that God loves you.

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Through Other Christians

Sometimes the older children in a family say to the younger: “No, no! Papa doesn’t like that!” Or, “Look, this is what Daddy wants.”

God, too, speaks to His children through older brothers and sisters in the Lord. He wants us to meet often with other Christians so that He can use them to encourage, guide, and help us.

Ephesians 5:21. Submit yourselves to one another because of your reverence for Christ.



For You To Do

- 4 Have other Christians ever helped you understand what God wanted you to do?

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- 5 Has anyone encouraged you to be a better Christian?.....Who?.....

- 6 Thank God now for the way He speaks to you through other Christians. Ask Him to speak to you to help others find salvation or encourage others to follow the Lord.

Through Spiritual Gifts and Ministries

The Holy Spirit has put in the church many different spiritual gifts. He speaks to us through them. He gives God’s message for the church to pastors, teachers, evangelists, and writers. He wants to use every Christian to tell about God. It is important for you to attend church services as often as you can. Every time you go, listen for what your heavenly Father wants to tell you.

Matthew 18:20. “For where two or three come together in my name, I am there with them.”



For You To Do

- 7 From the following list, choose three ways that God uses to speak His message to people.
 - a The preaching of evangelists
 - b Spiritual mediums
 - c Witchcraft
 - d Christian pastors
 - e Books by Christian writers
- 8 When you are in church, do you expect God to speak to you?
- 9 Has God spoken to you through this book?
Ask Him to speak to you in every lesson.

Through Songs

God will often speak to you through the words of a gospel song or chorus. You will be surprised to see how often He will bring to your mind the words of some song just when you need its message.

Ephesians 5:19. Speak to one another with the words of psalms, hymns, and sacred songs; sing hymns and psalms to the Lord with praise in your hearts.



For You To Do

- 10 Ask the Lord to help you learn quickly the songs and hymns that are sung at your church. Sing them at home as much as you can.
- 11 Make a habit of thinking about what you are singing. Is there a song with a certain truth you want to become part of your life? Write that truth in the following space and ask God to help you apply it to your life.

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Through the Bible

God speaks to you through His book, the Holy Bible. This is the surest way of knowing His message. The pastor may not always know what God’s will is for you. Your brothers and sisters in Christ might give you the wrong advice. Dreams and even visions are not always from God. They can come from what you have been thinking about or from your subconscious mind. You may feel that God wants you to do something when it is just your own desire that urges you to do it. So how can you know God’s voice?

Thank God that you have God’s message written down for you in the Bible. You must test everything else by what God tells you in the Bible. That is why it is so important to study God’s Word as you are doing now. Through these basic studies you will come to understand the Bible better. You will learn how to put its teachings into practice in your life.

Psalm 119:18, 89, 105, 130, 160. Open my eyes, so that I may see the wonderful truths in your law. Your word, O Lord, will last forever; it is eternal in heaven. Your word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path. The explanation of your teachings gives light and brings wisdom to the ignorant. The heart of your law is truth, and all your righteous judgments are eternal.



For You To Do

- 12** What is the surest way for you to know what God’s message is for you?
- a) Study what God says in the Bible.
 - b) Listen to the advice of your friends.
 - c) Follow your feelings about what you should do.

GOD HAS A BOOK FOR YOU

Objective 3. *Identify facts about the Bible.*

How God’s Book Was Written

The Bible is made up of sixty-six different books. Over a period of around 1,600 years, about forty different men wrote these books. These were men God chose, and He sent His Holy Spirit to help them know what to write. As a result, we have God’s message to us. Together, the sixty-six books are called the Holy Scriptures. All agree perfectly with each other. They develop the same theme in such unity that we know they have come from one single Author—God.



For You To Do

- 13** Which statements below are TRUE?
- a Although the Bible has sixty-six different books, it has only one theme.
 - b The Holy Spirit guided each man who wrote a book of the Bible so that he would know what to write.
 - c All sixty-six books of the Bible were written at the same time.
 - d Forty books of the Bible were written by the same man.

Godly people recognized the special quality of the sixty-six books God had inspired. About two hundred years after Jesus was born, they gathered the books together into one book, the Holy Bible. *Holy Bible* means the books of God. The first thirty-nine books were written before the birth of our Lord Jesus. They are called the Old Testament. The second part of the Bible is called the New Testament. In it are the twenty-seven books written after Jesus came and made a new covenant between God and humankind. They give us the terms of this covenant.

Most of the Old Testament was first written in Hebrew, and the New Testament in Greek. (A small part of the Old Testament was written in Aramaic.) God has given us His book for all humankind and wants everybody to read it. He has helped His children translate it into many languages. Now there are parts of the Bible in more than 1,300 languages.



For You To Do

14 Match the part of the Bible (right) to each phrase that describes it (left).

- | | | |
|--------|-------------------------------|------------------|
| a | Describes the new covenant | 1) Old Testament |
| b | Mostly written in Hebrew | 2) New Testament |
| c | 27 books | |
| d | 39 books | |
| e | Written in Greek | |
| f | Written before Jesus was born | |

In some languages there are several different translations, or versions, of the Bible. Some of them are Protestant and others Catholic, but to a large extent they all say the same thing.

Old Testament quotations in these lessons are taken from the *King James Version*. New Testament quotations are from *Today's English Version*, also called the *Good News Bible*.



For You To Do

15 The Bible is a book for

- a) only the well educated who can read Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek.
- b) everyone.
- c) ministers or pastors and no one else.

Bible References

Each book of the Bible is divided into numbered chapters. The chapters are divided into small paragraphs called verses. The verses are numbered so that we can tell exactly where to find what we are looking for in the Bible. If you want to make a note of where a certain passage is found in the Bible, you write first the name of the book, then the number of the chapter followed by a colon (:) and the number of the verse. "John 3:16" refers to the book of John, chapter 3, verse 16.

To refer to two or more verses that are not consecutive, separate them by commas. "John 3:16, 18, 20" means John, chapter 3, verses 16, 18, and 20. This is a Scripture reference.

A hyphen between two numbers means that all the verses in between are included. "John 3:16-22" means John, chapter 3, verses 16 through 22.

A hyphen is also used between two consecutive verses. "John 3:16-17" means John, chapter 3, verses 16 and 17.

When referring to verses in different chapters, use a semicolon (;) to separate the references. "John 3:16; 6:24" means John, chapter 3, verse 16; and John, chapter 6, verse 24.



For You To Do

16 The Scripture reference for the book of Matthew, chapter 6, verses 31, 32 and 33 should be written as

- a) Matthew 31-32, and 33.
- b) Matthew 6:31, 32, and 33.
- c) Matthew 6:31-33.

17 The reference Luke 13:18-19; 20:25-26 means

- a) chapter 13 of Luke, verses 18, 19, 20, 25, and 26.
- b) Luke, chapter 13, verses 18 and 19; and Luke, chapter 20, verses 25 and 26.

HOW TO HEAR GOD'S VOICE

Objective 4. *Take steps that will help you hear God's voice every day.*

Before listening to a certain station on the radio, you must set your dial to tune it in. How can you set the dial of your spirit to tune in God's voice? Here are a few ways to do it.

- Read the Bible every day.
- Keep on thinking about what you have read in the Bible. Meditate on the Word.
- Make a habit of rereading and memorizing the Bible verses that you especially like.

2 Timothy 3:16-17. All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching the truth, rebuking error, correcting faults, and giving instruction for right living, so that the person who serves God may be fully qualified and equipped to do every kind of good deed.

If you are just now starting to read the Bible for the first time, begin with the book of Mark in the New Testament. God will speak to you very clearly through Jesus' life and teachings. You will learn more about the new covenant that the Lord has made with us before you study the Old Testament.

Hebrews 1:1-2. In the past God spoke to our ancestors many times and in many ways through the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us through his Son.

- Go to church regularly expecting to hear from God.
- Pray every day. Ask God to speak to you. When you pray, you may want to close your eyes to "tune out" thoughts about the things around you. Don't use all the time talking to God. Wait quietly for Him to speak to your heart.
- Sing gospel songs and think about their words.
- Practice looking for God's goodness, power, and love all around you.
- Read Christian literature and listen to gospel broadcasts when you can.
- Talk with other Christians about God and His Word.
- Do what God tells you to do. Remember that to have Him lead you, you must be willing to follow.
- Faithfully do your lessons in this book and in other Bible studies, and ask God to speak to you through them.



For You To Do

18 Go back over the list of things you can do to hear God's voice. Put a check mark beside each one that you are already doing. Pray about each one that you aren't doing yet or that you aren't doing regularly. Underline each one that you plan to start doing.



Check Your Answers

13 Statements **a** and **b** are true.

1 a) loves you as your heavenly Father.

14 a 2) New Testament

b 1) Old Testament

c 2) New Testament

d 1) Old Testament

e 2) New Testament

f 1) Old Testament

2 Statements **b** and **d** are correct.

15 b) everyone.

7 **a** The preaching of evangelists

d Christian pastors

e Books by Christian writers

16 c) Matthew 6:31-33.

12 a) Study what God says in the Bible.

17 b) Luke, chapter 13, verses 18 and 19; and Luke, chapter 20, verses 25 and 26.