



How to Hear God and Respond

Doug Addison [Episode 02]

January 18, 2017

Welcome to *Spirit Connection*. I get a lot of questions from people on how to hear the voice of God clearly. You know, people want to know if what I am hearing is accurate, is it from God, is it from Satan, other sources? They ask me because they notice that my *Daily Prophetic Words*, my monthly and yearly prophecies seem to be accurate.

So, I get a lot of people who come to me and want me to answer these questions. Also, I do a lot of training on hearing the voice of God, so this week I want to talk about how God speaks and how you can actually activate a prophetic word in your life. We are going to cover tips on how to know if something is from God, yourself or other sources, and also how to track what you are hearing and how to activate it.

You know, whether you get a prophetic word from someone else or God is speaking to you directly, what I am going to share with you is so valuable on how to respond. Too often, people get a prophetic word from God and they do not follow through with it, let alone know how to activate it in their lives in some practical way. So, let's go through some principles and experiences that I had that are going to really help you. Let's pray.

God, I thank You for all the ways that You speak to us. And, Lord, I pray that You would begin to speak to everyone listening to my voice right now. Father, I pray that You would open up our ears and eyes to hear spiritually, that we would be able to understand what You are saying today. Holy Spirit, come and activate us. Lord, get us into Your timing and help us understand what is for now and what is for later, in Jesus' name. Amen.

You know, God speaks in so many ways, but most people miss it. One thing that Jesus said more than anything else—over 15 times—is that we must have eyes to see and ears that hear. He was talking about spiritual things and He was talking in the context of

parables, but it was the parables that taught us how to hear the voice of God. God is speaking to us all the time, but most people are either not understanding it or missing it.

I base everything I do—my entire prophetic ministry—on Ephesians 1:17. The apostle Paul says, *“I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know Him better”* (NIV). Wow! The sole purpose of hearing God is so that we may know Him better. It is not to get a wild prophetic word or have an experience. It truly is about knowing God better. I would give up all my encounters for a good day with the Lord on the couch. Now, 25 years later, I have come to that place to know that hearing God really is about getting deeper with Him.

In Ephesians 1:18–19, the apostle Paul says, *“I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of His glorious inheritance in [his holy people], and [his] incomparably great power for [us] who believe ...”* (NIV). The closer we get to God, the clearer His voice becomes. The apostle Paul compares this. He compares God’s wisdom and revelation to riches. These are the true riches that God wants to open up to you, namely, the ability to hear His voice and to know Him better. So, it is really, really amazing. I love the prophetic ministry. I love training people on how to hear His voice, because it really does so much in our lives.

We need to base hearing God and the gift of prophecy on Ephesians 1:17, but also on 1 Corinthians 14:3, “But everyone who prophesies speaks to men (or women) for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort.” There are unfortunately many examples of prophetic words, you know, that have been out of judgment or other negative things these days, but this is because they come through someone’s negative filter or the belief system that they have, or a way that God has trained them that might be outdated for today. You know, a lot of people have a filter or a belief system that God still speaks in an Old Testament way, with judgment. I believe the New Testament prophecy should result in strengthening, encouragement and comfort. Yes, God can speak words of direction. Yes, He can bring correction, but you need to do this with tactfulness and wisdom. Since many people today have a negative view of God the Father, then communicating more negativity might not bring about the change that God has intended for them. You know, the prophetic ministry really is to get us to change—to get us into God’s will, to get us out of the wilderness, to get us into these next places. So, communicating in a positive way, I have found over 25 years now, is a really good way to go.

So, God is calling you to go beyond just hearing His voice and take it to the next step of understanding God’s love for a person to help change their lives. Also, for you—God wants to communicate a message of love to you and as we talk about hearing God, so many things might go through your mind. Most people think that you have to be a prophet or have a specific prophetic gift to hear God. Yes, some people are gifted to hear God more clearly than others, but I am convinced that we can all hear God,

because Jesus demonstrated this for us that we all have access to all the gifts. You might be better at one gift over another, but you can still prophesy. We can all hear the voice of God. It does not need to be mystical and I think that the supernatural things of God are actually a natural part of our lives. So, we really need to become naturally supernatural. You do not have to be a prophet to hear the voice of God. As we develop our ability to hear Him, it will actually help us get into our destiny more quickly. If we are able to hear God guiding us, we can help others.

There are countless benefits of hearing God, including breaking the power of fear in our lives. Boy, that is a big one. Fear is holding people back. Gaining insight into what to do. Growing in our faith and healing. It is important that we understand clearly what God is saying to us. Misunderstanding or misinterpreting what God is saying has caused disappointments in peoples' lives and even heartbreak in some. Some people have been given ... they have even given up on the ability to hear God or the prophetic ministry because of a bad experience. And I find that once we get people back into hearing God, bring a good healthy balance and get them connected back with God's love, then we invite them back into this deeper relationship and discovery, and they are so amazed at the benefits that open up. It is amazing what God can do when we reconnect in a deeper way with Him and bring balance to it. That is what I feel ... I feel like my ministry is to help people bring a balance into hearing God and understand how it works.

One benefit of hearing God is that it breaks the power of fear over us. I mentioned that. Did you know that discernment allows us to have perfect peace? It brings healing. In Luke 6:18 it says that people from everywhere came to hear Jesus and they were healed. So, that is an amazing connection between healing and hearing. Hearing the voice, hearing the word of God brought healing, but healing does not have to be physical. It can also be emotional, relational or spiritual. There are all types of healings that can happen, especially now days. God can also bring clear direction to you. In John 10:27 Jesus says, "My sheep hear My voice and know." You know, it is not just about hearing a prophetic word, it is not just about reading the Bible, but it is learning to hear His voice as well as His word. So, it is sad when someone has used the gift of prophecy incorrectly and wounded others, but this does not mean that we should stop listening to God. We do not need to judge the prophetic ministry because of a bad experience. Do not throw out the baby with the bathwater.

Prophecy is a function in our lives and not a title. You know, as I coach and train people in hearing God, one of the biggest things that I see is the fear of being deceived, "*But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil,*" Hebrews 5:14 (NIV). Many people who are afraid of being of being deceived have not really studied Hebrews 5:14, because by constantly using your gift you can train yourself to distinguish good from evil. One reason why people do not hear God consistently is because they have not practiced, they have not constantly used their gift. So, if you start to practice listening and then activating what you are hearing, you are going to find in a short period of time that your accuracy level is going to go up

and your fear level is going to go down. You can start trusting God. Yes, we will make mistakes, but that is okay. That is part of learning.

They may also have trouble discerning whether what they hear is from God, themselves or other sources. Practice is required to grow in maturity in all of our spiritual gifts. You know, there is no gift formed mature. None. Even the prophetic gifts. You know, people do not understand this. We need to be trained. People who work with money ... Now, here is the deal. How to determine if a word is from God, the enemy or ourselves. People who work with money in the banking industry—they understand this, because they distinguish between real and counterfeit money. In order to tell the difference between the two, you would need to become familiar with the real. Then if you come across the counterfeit, you would immediately be able to recognize it by its touch, by its feel and everything, because you are sensitive to it. You know, Christians today are focused too much on the counterfeit, therefore they are not able to discern. We need to get back to getting in touch with the real, getting into that deep relationship with the Lord.

People often say to me, “You know, if God wants to speak to me, He is just going to say it plainly.” Well, boy, those people have obviously either not read the Bible very well, or they are not familiar with all the different ways that God speaks. Jesus did not even speak plainly to his disciples. You know, they pulled Him aside and said, “Why don’t you speak plainly,” Matthew 13. He was speaking in parables. The Bible is full of metaphor, symbolism, hidden language. You know, even just reading the Bible requires a degree of interpretation. We often use external Bible study tools to help us. It is the same with hearing the voice of God. We need to study it. It does not come automatic and God conceals some things to be able to reveal them to those who are hungry. He wants to know that you are going to go search the matter out, like in Proverbs 25:2. According to Matthew 11:25–26, God will also hide things from people who consider themselves wise in their own eyes and He will reveal deeper spiritual truths to those who are humble and childlike. Humble yourself and God will lift you up. These are spiritual principles that work in all different ways.

Sometimes God speaks more clearly, but most of the time God speaks to us personally in the form of a small, quiet voice inside us. Unless we train ourselves to listen to it, we can consider this a coincidence. This is the way the spiritual gifts work. We have to have that ability to hear clearly, but we have to train ourselves to be able to distinguish it. It does not make them more spiritual. People who hear God like me, or who practice more or hear God more, it does not make us more spiritual or special in God’s eyes. I just want you to know that if you are learning or if you have not heard the voice of God, you know, God loves you just the same. We are no more special. We are the body of Christ with different parts and therefore, you know, it is not like someone is more special because they are able to hear God. But we can all hear God and we can all grow in this amazing gift.

I want to talk about some practical steps to hearing God. First of all, be expectant that God really does want to communicate with you. Most of the time, we simply need to clear away some business in our lives to perceive what God is saying. He longs to convey those messages of love, comfort, wisdom, guidance and even warnings, through a variety of methods. They can be through dreams, visions, through the Bible, through a conversation with a friend, nature, a song on the radio or a variety of the arts. The possibilities are endless. Now I love training people on how to hear God and also how to activate what you are already hearing.

Now, I want to go to a question from one of our students in our *Hearing the Voice of God 365*. It is an online activation school.

Q: Hi, Doug. The question that I had was: The Lord shows me different things and some things are, you know, specifically for me, some things are kind of on a grander scale for like the world. I do not know if it is appropriate for me to share what the Lord has shown me or how do I know how to discern that? If you could help me with that question, that would be great. Thanks.

Great question, Melinda. Here is the thing. It goes back to ... Well, just to recap the question: How do you know if what you are hearing from God is something that you should share with the person, or maybe even a bigger thing, with the world, or whether to sit on it and pray about it? Well, the first thing ... the first thing, and always the first thing, is to pray. Pray and ask God what to do and then the more you do this, the more you are going to start to hear His voice.

Now, you might need to try this a few times, you know? Write it down in a journal or write down what it is God is saying and how people respond. It takes practice. I want to really encourage you to not take it personal. Do not take getting something wrong when you are going through a training time of hearing God ... do not take it personal. God does not beat you up. He does not expect a 5-year-old to do brain surgery. If you make a mistake, God still loves you. You did not grieve the Holy Spirit. You might have felt grieved, but the Holy Spirit most likely was not grieved over you. And it is time to give yourself a break, cut yourself some slack and realize that God wants to use these small little things, these exercises even.

Even when we make a mistake, God is going to redeem it, because every time I have missed it with God—you know, like I will give someone a prophetic word and it did not come out right—and then what will happen is within a week or so I am going to find someone else with that same type of thing and I have learned that already and, wow, it is going to hit them. So, God will use one mistake to help train you for another and it is really important to not take it personal.

So, to answer the question, it takes practice and that is why we have our school—*Hearing the Voice of God 365 Online Activation School*—and I am able to help with the

questions and we are able to walk people through with some exercises. You know, get a word for someone, share it and see what happens.

So, let's go back into hearing God, because it requires us to develop a lifestyle of listening spiritually. You know, there is not like one way to do it and there is a cookie cutter method. The best way is to find time to quiet yourself to hear the Lord. Remember, Jesus actually got up early and went off to pray before the sun came up. Now that is my style. I love getting up early. I love the 4:30–6:30 or so, but that is me. My wife, though—she is a night person, so she does not get up. We are almost passing each other in the night, you know? What matters is that you find a specific time that you can take to listen to God. Now I know that it really helps to have peace in your life and it all depends on what is going on, because many of us are hurried or stressed out. But when we get that way, when we get stressed, we are less likely to be able to consistently hear God.

So, it is good to set aside some regular time, daily if possible. I know that if you are busy and have kids and all that stuff that it might not work out the way you think, but find something. Now listen, I worked a corporate job in San Francisco for a number of years. I would drive, you know, to the city and I would pull my car over at the side of the freeway, over by SFO—by the San Francisco International Airport, where you can watch the planes. I would have some coffee and I would have a small quiet time with the Lord, just a few minutes. See, it does not matter how long, but I quiet myself. Many of us have busy lives with lots to do, but we do not have to be too hurried to not listen to the Lord. We will go through times when we have more time with God and less time, depending on your life situation.

So, I talk with a lot of people about the fact that we need to journal. You will hear me talk about this. We need to write down what God is saying. God might be speaking to you, but maybe you do not understand it. I cannot stress enough the fact that journaling will change your life beyond what you dream possible. Now, when I say journaling, it really brings up some negative things to most people. Journaling does not mean that you are sitting there with “Dear Diary” or opening and spilling your guts out.

What I am talking about ... I mean, I have an elaborate prophetic journal. I have over 20 journals in my computer, all tied together in one, and that way when I hear God speak, either through dreams, either through the prophetic or day-to-day life, I capture it throughout the day using my iPhone or use whatever it is that you can do. Send yourself a message, send yourself a text, but get it in there because God speaks over time. Now I journal 365—365 days a year. I do not expect you to do that. I did not do that even five years ago. I just started this recently. I have always written down things. I used to have a paper journal, and I had a pile of them, but in 2016 I converted over to a computer journal so I can cross reference. I am not asking you to do that. Do whatever really works for you. Since I take time to journal every day, I am consistently surprised to see things come to pass that God has spoken to me and you will be surprised, too.

In my opinion, hearing God clearly cannot happen without valuing what He is speaking to you and tracking it, especially over time. Believe that God wants to speak to you. Unbelief killed miracles around Jesus. Spend time listening to the Lord. Write it down. If it is a powerful prophetic word that someone gave you, get it transcribed. Pray and ask God how you should respond. Pray and ask Him if it is from Him or not—that is the first place to start. Ask the Lord. Seek confirmation from others. Look for other sources of revelation ... maybe dreams, prophetic words, look it up in the Bible, Google things. Look supporting verses up that can actually confirm what God is saying to you.

You know, you can do something small to respond to how God is speaking to you. This is called activation. I want to tell you a story about how I actually activated a word. Now, I hear God quite clearly, but there are times ... Let me just say this. I am not saying this in pride at all. This is not just my job, but this is my position as a prophet who has 25 years in the prophetic ministry and being commissioned into the prophetic ministry. This is my job, but it has never been easy and it still is not easy. Just like the prophet Elijah could not hear the Lord and he had to finally hear the Lord in a still small voice, God still speaks to all of us in these ways. So, what I am trying to say is I am not usually surprised too much when someone gives me a prophetic word, because I have probably heard it. Oftentimes it is confirming to me. I am not bragging in any way.

I was sitting in a conference and this prophetess was up there and I felt, oh my goodness, I felt like I was going to get a word from God. I could feel the presence of the Lord starting to increase and I knew the Lord was about to speak to me through her and, sure enough, she gave me a life changing prophetic word, and it kind of threw me. So, what I did was I took some steps, what I am telling you here. I prayed about it, got it transcribed, I put it in my journal, I got with some other intercessors and we began to pray and look into it. We began to find some Bible verses that lined up to it. Now, also, I took one practical thing from it and took a step to see if something was going to open or was going to happen.

So, this is what I am talking about. Learn to discern. Learning to discern takes practice. Knowing if something is from God, from ourselves or from the enemy takes practice. Words from God will stand out very well. You know, they usually stand out because they are tested over time, they line up with the Bible. But what I found is usually there is more peace around those words. Words from the enemy do not have peace. They will tell us to respond out of fear. There will be a threat. You know, “Do this else ...” type of thing. That can be a word from yourself as well. A word from yourself actually can sometimes have a prideful tone or a fearful tone. We want to just look for peace. Peace is the best fleece.

Now, in the Bible, Gideon wanted to make sure that what He was hearing was from the Lord, so he asked the Lord to confirm it. The Lord told him to take a piece of fleece and lay it out and if the water is on the outside of that (I am not sure if the Lord told him or he came up with that; I cannot remember at the moment) but this is what is in the Bible. The water, the dew, was not on the fleece. So, the fleece is a word that we get to say,

“Okay, God, if this is from You then this will happen.” Well, sometimes God will do that for us, but we are in the New Testament now. We have the Holy Spirit in us and God is training us. So, sometimes we use the “open-door strategy.” The open-door strategy is like, “All right, God, close every other door.” Well listen, that is dangerous. It might work once or twice at the beginning, but God wants to train you in hearing His voice, so later on it may not work. You need to learn to discern. I talk about that quite a bit about how to be able to learn to discern God’s voice, words from ourselves, words from God. This is what we go through in all my trainings.

Psalm 37:4: *“Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart”* (NKJV). Now this is important, because some people are trying to determine if something is from themselves. Well, there has been a training around the church for a while there that, “You are nothing. You cannot do anything. There is nothing you can do in your own desires.” I just want to say, you know, if you delight yourself in the Lord and you line yourself up with His heart, there comes a time of maturity in your life where you can begin to move into the desires of your heart, because they are in line with the Lord’s. I help people with this all the time, because early on when you are learning to discern, I am helping people realize, “No, that is not ...”—especially words about marriage—“that is not what God is saying right now.” And then other times later on, people have died too much, and they have now had to come back to life and realize God wants to use them and He wants to ignite those desires. So, as we are learning to discern it takes time, it takes testing, it takes practice.

So, what is God speaking to you? Here is how to activate it. Do something small towards it. If God is speaking to you to do something new then an activation test would be do some research, read a book, take a course. When God spoke to me about starting an online school, I then took a course. That is how I started IC. I started to pray about it and get intercessors. That is activation. You do not have to make a big decision and go out and shipwreck yourself. You know, buy a \$10,000 website because the Lord spoke to you, but you did not even have anything yet, a product or anything. Do not shipwreck yourself. Do not make major decisions on a small amount of revelation. Get confirmation for things like job changes, marriages, starting a business or spending a lot of money. Again, do not get shipwrecked.

Consider two steps that you can take. These are easy ones. Actually, I will help you out here. I wrote a book called, [*God Spoke, Now What: Activating Your Prophetic Word*](#). It will help you. It will help walk you right through how to learn to discern. Also, *Hearing the Voice of God 365*, my online activation school, 12 sessions. Go to www.hearinggod365.com and you will see what I am talking about. We have so many people who are really loving it, especially, you know, like the woman who asked the question. Well, she is part of the monthly calls that we do. I do a monthly call and people can ask questions, because that is how you are going to learn. That is how I learned. You know, I got around people who were doing what I wanted to do and I began to ask them questions. I started to read their books, I started to study what they did. There is wisdom in that. You can do this. You can hear the voice of God.

So, I want to pray and activate this word over you. Father, I thank You that each one listening to my voice right now has a call, they have a destiny, they have a next level. We just ask, God, that You would activate that now—that You would help them to learn to discern the voice of the enemy from the voices of other things around them. Father, I pray that You would activate the gifts in them. I pray that You would fan into flame those gifts—either that were from the laying on of hands or that they were born with or by faith that they can pick up based on 1 Corinthians 12, that we can actually operate in the spiritual gifts like Jesus did. So, Father, I activate those gifts: dreams and visions, having encounters with the Lord, angelic encounters, and the ability to have wisdom, revelation and understanding, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Wow! Well, let me know. Get back to me on Facebook or Twitter; thedougaddison on Facebook and Twitter and Instagram is dougtaddison. Also, check out my daily prophetic word, #dailyprophetic. They are on all of the social media sites, but you can go to my website, dougaddison.com, and you can have it delivered to your email box. That is what I do and I put it in my journal every day. I am just as surprised as anybody, because I get the daily prophetic words way in advance. Also, while you are there, download my free eBook, *How to Hear the Voice of God Clearly for Yourself*. It will help you. If you would like to buy the products I was just telling you about, you can use the coupon code PODCAST10 and you will get a 10 percent discount on it.

Anyway, I hope you are doing well and that you are having a great year. I look forward to seeing you online or at one of my events. Bless you!

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