

Hearing God's Voice Produces Faith



Hearing God's Voice (Part 4)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as we continue to study together our exciting theme for this week: Hearing God's Voice.

In my talks this week I've explained that through all the different dispensations of God's dealings with men, the one great, unchanging, basic requirement for an ongoing relationship with God is to hear God's voice.

Yesterday I dealt with three distinctive features of hearing God's voice which make it significantly different from much of what is traditionally accepted as normal religious conduct or activity. The three features that I mentioned were these. First, hearing God's voice is personal. It involves a direct, intimate person to person relationship with God. Second, hearing God's voice is intangible. We can't just locate it in a building. We can't tie it down to some familiar situation. It isn't something that we apprehend with our eyes. It isn't something that we feel with our hands. The only sense that apprehends it is the sense of hearing and that is not tied to any particular time or place. Thirdly, hearing God's voice is present in time. It's not past; it's not future. A voice has no past; a voice has no future. A voice is always now. And so when we relate to God through hearing His voice, we're relating to God in the eternal now. God told Moses the name by which He was to be known to Israel was "I am. I am that I am." That's always true. God always is. There's a certain sense in which He is in the past and He is in the future. But essentially, we know God always in the eternal present, the great "I am." And that is part of what comes in hearing His voice. It's always present in time.

Today I'm going to speak about one particular result of hearing God's voice which is of inestimable value. There's no way we can express the value and this result is faith. Hearing God's voice produces faith.

Many people long for faith, struggle for faith, and run to and fro seeking faith, but they don't achieve it because they haven't discovered the secret of faith. Faith comes by hearing God's voice.

This is stated in Romans, chapter 10, verse 17:

> "So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ [or from the word of Christ]." (NASB)

So "faith comes from hearing, hearing from the word of Christ." We need to understand that in the New Testament (Greek), there are two distinct words, each of which in English is translated by the English word, "word." These two distinct Greek words are logos and rhema. Now if we don't see the difference, we won't grasp the meaning of what I'm saying today.

Let's look at logos first. Logos is one of the great concepts of the Greek language. Let me say that I studied Greek since I was ten years old and I'm qualified to teach it at the university level. I only say that just so that you may know I have some idea of what I'm talking about. Logos is one of the great concepts of the Greek language. It has all sorts of meanings. It means, mind: counsel, reason, it's comprehensive. Really, logos in the Bible, is the mind of God. It's the counsel of God. It's God's total purpose. For instance, listen to what David says about it in Psalm 119, verse 89.

> "Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven." (NASB)

Another translation says:

> "Your word, oh Lord, is eternal. It stands firm in the heavens." (NIV)

That's God's logos, His total counsel. It never changes. It's eternal. It's out of time. It's in heaven. It's settled. From beginning to end it's there, all the time, always. It's the mind and counsel and purpose of God. This logos, this counsel of God, is summed up in a person. John, chapter 1, verses 1 and 2 says this:

> "In the beginning was the Word, [logos] and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning." (NASB)

So, Jesus is also the personified logos. He's the total counsel and purpose and mind of God. You remember Jesus said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; I represent everything the Father is, everything the Father does, everything the Father wills, every plan, every purpose, I represent it." That's logos and it's settled for ever in heaven. It can't be changed. It's eternal.

Now the word rhema has a different meaning, though at times, of course, they overlap. The word rhema means specifically, a spoken word. It is not a rhema unless it's spoken. God's Word, God's counsel is settled in heaven forever, whether it's spoken or not, it's there; it's eternal. But a rhema is only a word that is spoken. Now listen to what Jesus says in Matthew, chapter 4, in verse 4, and He uses the word rhema.

> "He answered and said, 'It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'" (NASB)

Every rhema that proceeds out of the mouth of God, every proceeding word. So there's the counsel of God if you can picture it, eternal, unchanged, complete, in heaven. But we don't know the whole counsel of God. We can't apprehend with our finite minds the whole counsel of God. But God measures it out to us in a rhema, in a word that's spoken to us, in a word that becomes personal, in a word that we receive personally. So man lives by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. The total counsel of God is imparted to us in portions as we're able to receive it, rhema by rhema by rhema. The implication of what Jesus said is that God has a rhema for us each day. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but every day the proceeding Word of God, the Word of God, the rhema that comes out of the mouth of God shall be his portion for that day. So that's the difference between logos and rhema, logos, eternal in the heaven, unchanged, rhema, coming down to us, personal, a word that we hear, something that's spoken. And so you see, in Romans 10:17 it has to be rhema. Faith comes from hearing and hearing from the rhema, the Word of Christ. If it weren't spoken, we couldn't hear it. We can't hear the logos; that's eternal; that's the counsel of God in heaven. But we hear the rhema that brings that little portion of God's counsel we need at any given moment to us, personally, and that's how faith comes.

Listen, I hope I will not offend you, but the Bible doesn't say faith comes from reading the Bible. Lots of people think it does. Why not? Well, be honest. Many times you read the Bible and hear nothing. All you have is black marks on white paper in front of your eyes and you can go through that process for an hour and get no faith. But another time you can just pick up the Bible, open it, and one sentence leaps out of the page, and you say, "That's it; that's what God's saying to me right now." I can't tell how many times that's happened in my life. Sometimes quite accidentally, I just open the Bible, the Holy Spirit focuses my eyes on a verse, God says, "That's it; that's My rhema." And when you hear that rhema, that's a lot more than reading the Bible. That's the personal Word of God. That's God's voice speaking to you and faith comes by hearing the spoken Word of God. See, it all centers around hearing God's voice. "Obey my voice and I will be your God." "If thou shalt listen diligently to the voice of the

Lord, then none of these diseases will come upon you."

I want to go back again for a moment to Romans 10:17:

> "Faith comes from hearing, hearing from the rhema of Christ."

I want to explain something to you which I've learned and experienced which is of inestimable importance in value if you can grasp it. It's how faith comes.

You see, I lay in a hospital bed for a year on end as a Christian. The doctors were not healing me. I knew that my only hope was in God. I kept saying to myself, "If I had faith I know God would heal me." But then I always said, "But then, I don't have faith." And then one day Romans 10:17 came to me, "Faith cometh by hearing," and I leapt at it. Faith comes, if I don't have it, I can get it. And then I looked at the rest of the verse and I pondered and I prayed and I sought God and gradually God opened it up to me, and when He'd opened it up to me, how faith comes, I received the faith for my healing. I thank God for the ministry of doctors and nurses, but they weren't able to heal me. Healing had to come to me that time direct from God and it came when I heard the rhema,the spoken Word of God. It brought faith.

So you see, there's a process by which faith comes. Lay hold of this.

There's three stages in the process. First of all, God's Word, God's rhema, God speaks. Secondly, your response, hearing; you're open to the Word of God. Later in these talks I'll explain more about hearing. Thirdly, out of hearing faith comes. Now usually there's an element of time in hearing. Hearing isn't usually something instantaneous. We have to get into a certain attitude. We have to come to a certain frame of mind. We can sit reading the Bible or maybe listening to a sermon and it's just words flying past us. But then we settle down into a kind of inner stillness. Our mind is at rest. Our busy mental processes are suspended from them. We're hearing. And out of that hearing, faith comes.

Let me advise you, cultivate this ability to hear. Be open to what God says to you personally. It will be in line with Scripture. It will never be out of line with Scripture, but it will be Scripture quickened, made alive, made personal by the Holy Spirit. That's how faith comes, that way, by hearing the voice of God.

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this same time. Tomorrow I'll be describing the distinctive life style that results from hearing God's voice.

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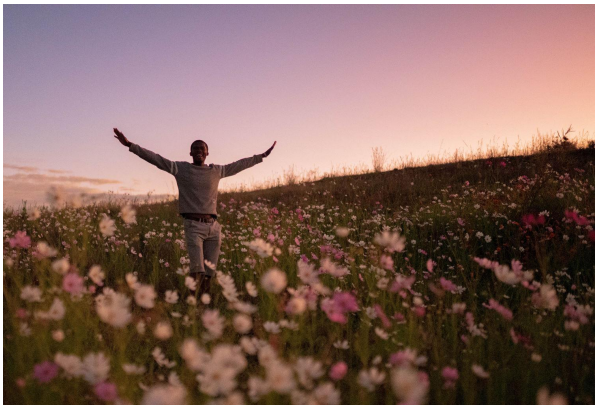

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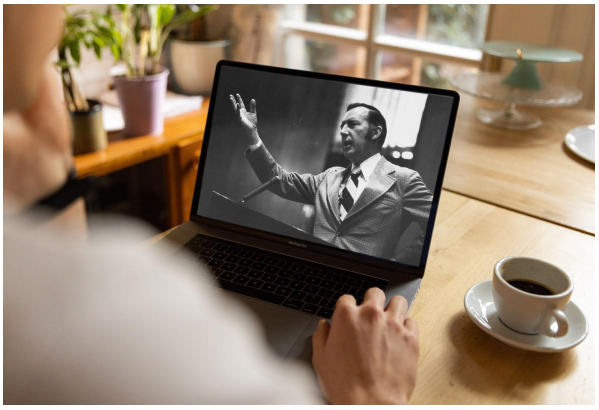

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