

How Jesus Speaks



The Door Only You Can Open (Part 2)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again as we continue with our theme for this week, "The Door Only You Can Open," a theme which can determine the entire course of your life so I plead with you to listen carefully.

In yesterday's talk, we looked at the picture found in the Book of Revelation of Jesus standing outside a Christian church and seeking to gain admission. The picture is found in Revelation 3:20, Jesus is speaking to this church, the church of Laodicea, and He says this:

> "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me."

I asked the question: What was missing? It wasn't religion, it wasn't the forms of worship. They were Christians, they sang hymns, they said prayers, they probably repeated something in the form of a creed, they even celebrated the Communion or the Eucharist. And yet, in spite of all that, Jesus was outside and apparently they were unaware of the fact. I think that's even more astonishing that you could be a Christian and not aware that Jesus isn't there with you. And yet that's the situation.

I asked the question: What was missing? Why was that situation in that particular church the way it was? The answer is found in the words of Jesus: "...if any one hears My voice and opens the door..." That's the key, the decisive experience is hearing the voice of Jesus. These people were busy with their religion but they weren't hearing the voice of the Lord. You see, hearing somebody's voice indicates a personal relationship. A voice is one of the most distinctive features of human personality. They say, scientifically, every voice is different, just as different as a person's fingerprints. I know when I pick up the phone and my wife is on the other end, I don't have to ask, "Who's speaking?" I know the voice. Why do I know the voice? Because I know the person intimately. It's the same with the Lord. If you know the Lord, you'll know His voice. If you don't know His voice, I question whether you know Him.

Well, in my talk today, I'm going to deal with a vital practical question which arises out of this picture there in Revelation, the picture of Jesus standing outside the church door and

knocking. The question is this (it's very, very practical, very important. Listen carefully): How can a person hear the voice of Jesus?

To answer that question I'm going to take a simple, practical example from the physical world, the example of electricity. Something that we're all familiar with, and let me assure you I am no scientist. But let me point this out to you. The same electric current can produce various different manifestations that we're aware of. I'll give you some examples. You can channel that current into a light bulb and it produces light. You can channel the same current into a radio, as you are doing, and it produces sound. You can channel it into a television set, and it produces vision. You can channel it into a cooking stove and it produces heat. Or you can channel it into a sewing machine, and it produces power.

Now, the point of my illustration is this: there are five different possible manifestations of the power of electricity but the power that produces those manifestations is the same in every case and that is a little illustration of how God may speak to us. He may speak in various different ways but the power that brings His voice to us, that connects us to Him, is always the same—it's the power of the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit, we cannot hear the voice of God. We are like a light bulb that's not connected to the current or like a sewing machine that's not connected. Everything potentially is there but nothing is working. There are no results because we are not connected to the power. And in the case of hearing the voice of God, the power that alone can bring His voice to us is the power of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus spoke about this in many places. I'll just give you a couple of examples. In John 14, verses 25 and 26, He says to His disciples:

> "All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."

So Jesus says, "Your continuing relationship with Me, being able to go on receiving from Me will depend on your relationship to the Holy Spirit." And then in John 16, verses 12 and 13, He says again:

> "I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come."

So the Holy Spirit is the one who brings the voice of God into our lives.

Now, there are various different ways in which the Holy Spirit can speak just as there are various different manifestations of the power of electricity. For instance, one primary way is through the Scriptures, through the Bible. But the Bible is just a book until the Holy Spirit speaks through it. It's just black marks on white sheets of paper. There's no life in it until the Holy Spirit speaks.

Many years ago, as a professional philosopher, I started to study the Bible as a work of philosophy. It made no sense. It was dull. It was dreary but I was just determined that I wouldn't give up, that I would finish the book. But as I went on, the Holy Spirit began to move. Some strange things happened. I thought that I was studying the Bible. After awhile, I began to realize that the Bible was studying me. And many of my ideas about myself which were false were dissipated. And ultimately, I heard the voice of Jesus speaking very, very clearly through the Scriptures, the Bible. And from the day that I heard His voice till this day, there are two things I've never doubted: I've never doubted that Jesus is alive and I've never doubted that the Bible is the Word of God.

Another way that the Lord may speak to us is through the life of another person. You see, you might be one of those people who would never pick up a Bible, you wouldn't read it. But God puts in your presence, maybe in the place where you work or in some other close association, a real, born-again, living Christian. And day by day you look at his life and you notice the things he says and his reactions and his responses and his priorities and gradually it begins to dawn on you—"There's something different about that person that works with me. He's not like the rest. He's not like me. He has something that I don't have." And so, the Holy Spirit can begin to awaken you through the life of another person. Maybe you don't altogether enjoy that person. Maybe he's a continual reminder to you of something missing in your life and yet you can't escape the message. So that's one way that God speaks is through the life of somebody who already knows you.

And if you already know the Lord, let me give you this thought: There may be somebody close to you who'll never read the Bible. He just doesn't mean to do that. It's not in his list of priorities. So the only Bible he'll ever read is you and your life. Let me leave that thought with you. It's very important. You may be the only Bible that some other person will ever read. So I want to ask you: What is your life telling

that other person? Is it telling them the truth about Jesus?

Then another way that God often speaks to us is through a personal crisis, a narrow escape. You have a car wreck, the car is totaled but you walk out without a scratch and as you stand there and look at the wreck you say to yourself, "I could be dead. Something saved me!" And you begin to wonder: "What was it that preserved me in that wreck?" Or you may go through a very bitter and difficult experience—a business failure or a divorce and in the midst of that you realize that you're a lonely person, that you're inadequate, that you don't have the answer, that you need a wisdom and a power greater than your own in your life. And so God uses what could be a disaster to make it a blessing.

Somebody has said, "Man's disappointments are God's appointments." If you've been passing through a time of disappointment, I suggest to you that you begin to inquire if it wasn't really an appointment with the Lord, that He was speaking to you through that situation.

Another way that God speaks is through the marvels of what He does in our lives. I've met more than one person who, when he became the father (or when she became the mother) of the first child, they were brought face-to-face with something higher than themselves—something more wonderful, something that couldn't be explained simply by a test tube.

And then one other way that I want to mention that God may speak to you is through the marvels of creation. In Psalm 119, verses 1 and 2, David says this:

> "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge."

You see, God has got His witnesses in many different places. The heavens are a witness to God: The sun, the moon, the stars, their beauty, their perfect order, their tremendous magnitude. They're speaking to us of something that's greater than we are. Something that you just can't put in a test tube and say, "That's all there is to life."

I heard a scientist say once: "I don't believe in anything I can't put in a test tube. I don't believe in God." To me that's a foolish statement. If you can put God in a test tube, He isn't much of a God.

So, has God been speaking to you? And, if He has, what are you doing about it?

Our time is up for today. I'll be back with you again tomorrow at this time. Tomorrow I'll be speaking about the decisive response which the Lord requires once we hear His voice.

Radio Program

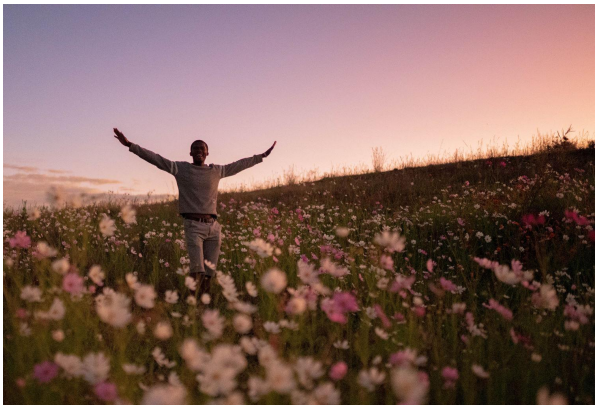
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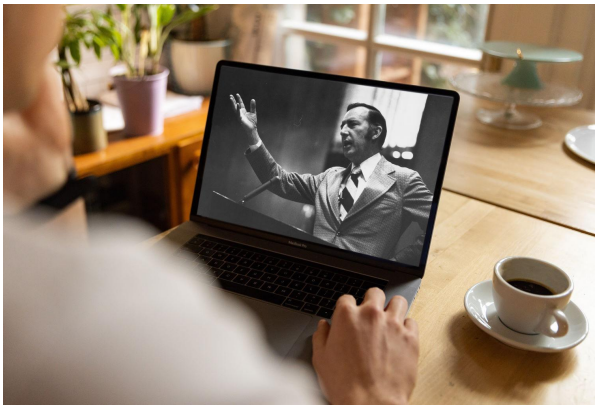
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