

The Kingdom of God
The Government of God – Prophets

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Probably one of the longest running battles between those who are led by the Spirit and those who are led by reason is the question of whether or not we can actually hear God. It's not just a question of theology, it's not just a matter of whether or not, theologically, this is sound. The outcome of this is critical to the life of the believer. If you cannot hear God, if there is no way that God speaks to you and even if God were to speak to you, if there is no way for you to hear God, then the question of how you are to be directed, in all manner of decision-making, becomes a moot point, because if you can't hear God, then how exactly are you to make decisions? The funny thing about the argument for "reason"—that is: God has given you a good mind, so reason it out—is that the problem with "reason" is that it cannot peer into the future. It can only look at the past, overlay the present upon the past and guess as to what the future is going to be. Apart from that process, which employs precedent, the status quo and then an inferential "leap"—a guess—apart from that process, is there a way to be sure that you should do *this* and not *that*?

The problem with that process that I've outlined for you is that the future always, invariably, inevitably "throws us curves", as the expression goes, meaning: it is unpredictable. Now would you rather believe in a process that cannot bridge the gap between what you used to know, what you now know, together, and what the future will demand? Is there a process that bridges the gap between the present, reasonable analyses and the future? What would it be like if you could actually know what to do today? Well, obviously everybody, you would think, would want to know that; would want to be in on that.

The fact is that it is not necessary for you to know what tomorrow is going to bring. If you can hear God, He who knows tomorrow is going to prepare you today without necessarily telling you what tomorrow will be. This is one of the great secrets of life. It took me decades for my soul to be disciplined to the point where I could trust that what God was going to do tomorrow. He was preparing me for today without actually telling me what tomorrow was going to be so that when I arrived at tomorrow I would be fully prepared for it—and at that point I would praise God, and at that point I would appreciate how God had prepared me.

I'll give you an example: When I was in law school and the law professors were training me to think, to reason and to build arguments, I didn't see so much, the *value* of that, apart from law. And one of the most difficult things with which I was confronted in my training in law school was the need to be bold, the need to be forthright and direct, the need to be able to express what I was actually thinking in a hostile environment. Well, at that point I couldn't see any value to it, beyond law, and when the Lord called me out of law to the kingdom, I thought that all of that was simply a waste; it was all gone.

On one occasion I found myself sitting across the table from a group of leaders who were the rebels who overthrew Slobodan Milosevich. We were in the city of Belgrade, in the former republic of Yugoslavia and I had gone there to talk to these rebels about the

kingdom of God. In that instant, the enemy began to attack me by asking me the question, “How do you suppose that you are prepared for this moment? How do you think that you are relevant to this point in time?” And just as a flash, the Lord brought back to my mind the fact that for three years I sat under the rule of law professors in an environment that was hostile and incredibly challenging, in which every assumption you have, would have been addressed and attacked. Suddenly—by the realization that God had prepared me, many years in the past through this very rigorous process, for the moment that I was in—suddenly I knew that this was not beyond what I was prepared for.

That’s my point about hearing God. You don’t have to know the future. See, the way that the dichotomy is framed is: How can I know the future? And so the question is: If I understand the past, if I overlay the present upon it, can I then, reasonably extrapolate to the future, and is that a sufficient process that allows me to be prepared for the future when it comes? The assumption is—in this stream of thinking, this pattern of thought—the assumption is that you have to know the future. I’m here to tell you, you don’t have to know the future. There is an incredible relief that comes to us if we understand that we don’t have to know the future. Humanity is obsessed with being able to predict the trends of the future, being able to figure out what tomorrow is going to bring. There are multi-billion dollar industries dedicated to trying to refine the process of looking at the past, overlaying it with the present and being able to predict trends for the future.

You do not have to know the future... if you know God. Why? Because here is the alternative: God, who knows the future, who holds the future, who directs the future and who loves you, is willing to prepare you now for the future. What need do you then have to know the future? You have no need to know the future; you need simply to be able to hear God. Now religion is very tenacious in its attempt to hold onto its primary spot. Do you realize that if people did not believe that there was anything between them and God—no organization, no man—if we believed that, religion would instantly lose any credibility that it has, because it would have no value. Religion attempts to tell you how you are to understand the mind of the Lord, but the truth of the matter is that the mind of the Lord is imparted to you—the Holy Spirit to your spirit.

But the big question in all of this is: How can you be sure that you can actually hear God? And, if you assume that you can hear God, how can you be confirmed that you do? How can you be sure that God is speaking to you and that you can hear God? If my premise is that you do not need to know the future, you simply need to hear God. And if religion insists that you cannot hear God—because the assumption that you cannot hear God requires you to rely on religion to tell you what God is saying—then the question becomes: How can you be sure that it is God? How can you be sure that you have heard God?

Before I get to that, let me say that religion does no one any service. It enslaves you to its demand to be primary in your life. The goal of religion is to be primary in your life. I mean by that: the goal of religion is for you to believe that you have no access to God except such access as religious thought specifies. We watch today as these global religions come up with the most absurd and foolish notions. Notions that, if you knew God, would seem so outrageous that you would say, “Why would anybody who knew God believe this?” For example, there is a man who calls himself “the holy father”. That’s a blasphemous name for a man to take on because the Holy Father is God... the Living God, who has said, “Call no man on the earth your father.”—in exactly this sense. (Inserted – actual verse—“**And do not call anyone on earth ‘father,’ for you have one Father, and he is in heaven.**” – Matthew 23:9)

He—God Almighty—is the Father of our spirits, but we call a *man* “the holy father”. We give to such a man, and he demands that such be given to him, that he demands that we call him by a title which God alone, the Living God, the Almighty alone, should be called by. This is how bizarre religion is, but people believe it because they don’t know God. It’s understandable that, not just this form of religion, but religion that takes the view that you can’t hear God yourself so your pastor is to hear God for you. And the pastor becomes... in fact that model of pastor is derived from the “holy father model” that I just described. It’s by a different name, but it’s the same spirit. It’s no small matter that we know that we can hear God because it is the alternative to someone telling us what God is saying and someone trying to describe to us who God is, for our benefit and for our consumption.

God would have you know Him and knowing God is not an intellectual process. The intellectual process, if it has any real value, is that it confirms the spiritual process. But here, in **Romans 8**, the following is said, this is **Romans 8: 15**, “**For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, ‘Abba, Father.’ The Spirit himself**” (the one who lives in us) “**The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.**” Now in the matter of you belonging to God, in the matter of your being a son of God, you are not that [a son] because religion says that you were made a Christian “when your name was given, one of God’s dear children and an heir of heaven”. That’s rubbish. That’s not when you are a believer, it’s not when you are made a believer, it’s not how you know that you are a son of God.

This Scripture [**Romans 8:15**] says that you know you are a son of God because of a witness born to your spirit by the Holy Spirit. In short, you have a spirit within you and the Holy Spirit comes into you and speaks to your spirit and that’s how you know that you are a son of God. What if you don’t believe that you can hear God? What if religion succeeds in robbing you of the belief that you can hear God? Then, to begin with, you can never actually have the confirmation that you belong to God. This very concept demands that you have an absolute confidence that when the Spirit, who speaks to your spirit, does so, that you can hear Him in your spirit. He speaks to your spirit because your spirit is capable of hearing God. Your spirit is able to hear the Lord because your spirit originated out of God. God blew a spirit into man, so the spirit of the human being is of the same kind and nature as God, himself.

Now, one of the five gifts given to equip the saints is the gift of prophets. The gifts, according to **Ephesians 4**, and we’ve been looking at them, **Ephesians 4:11** says, “It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers for the equipping of the saints.” (Inserted – actual verse—“**It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.**” – **Ephesians 4:11-13**)

Why have we been given apostles? We spoke about that earlier: to demonstrate power, to reveal mysteries and to bring order. Why have we been given prophets, then? What is the function of the prophet? The gift of the prophet is for the confirmation to your spirit, that you do hear God. When the church becomes “without prophets” then no one can be sure that he is hearing God because there is no confirmation, there is no familiarity with the

ability to hear God working within you. How often has it been, if you've been in a meeting, say, where people are prophesying, has it not commonly occurred to you that you will hear, in your spirit, in the inner man, you will hear something. And you'll be sitting there thinking, "I can't say that. If I do, they'll laugh. I'll sound foolish. They won't believe me. I'll be ridiculous."

And surely, not very long after that, someone else in that meeting will speak up and say the very thing that you just heard. And then—and everybody applauds, or everybody confirms it, or other people add to it—and suddenly it is before you that God spoke to you, that you refused to declare what He said to you. Somebody else did and then your reaction is almost like, "I could have said that. I knew that." It's almost like you knew that it was yours to say and to do, but by failure to take it in at the moment, it slipped through your hands and passed to another. And at that time you'll typically promise yourself that whenever this happens again you will speak up and likely, if the environment repeats itself, the same outcome will come. You'll hear from God, you'll let it go and somebody else will take it, will pick it up.

If you grew up in the body of Christ around prophets; if, in your fellowship, in your association with believers, if you had been exposed to the function of the prophet, what you would have noticed is somebody who confidently declares the word of the Lord as if every day of his life, every moment of every day, that such a person is hearing God. And there is such confidence, and they carry the weight of this without boastfulness or arrogance, on the one hand. Or they will pray for people to receive the impartation of the prophetic and people will begin to prophesy. Or they will stand around and listen to people speaking and would point out that they had heard God or that what they were saying, God had already spoken or God had said in another place and so on. In short, if you had grown up in your life as a believer, among groups of people who believed in prophets and who regularly had prophets come through, the fact is, that by now you would be sure that you are hearing God.

And you'd be able to distinguish between your own voice, which usually doesn't want anything to change—you know, your voice wants to maintain the status quo. Or the voice of your enemy which always accuses you, belittles you, humiliates you—the worst fears you have about being exposed and being ignored or being thought foolish—the enemy's voice amplifies the sound of that. Or you would have been able to distinguish between the voice of God, the voice of the Spirit of God who speaks to the inner man and that voice will typically be one in which you are able to know what God is saying—it's different from your own voice, it challenges you but you never feel as though if you follow that voice you'll be endangered. Now, if you grew up around the prophetic, if prophets had touched your life, you would never have been at a point in your walk with the Lord where you didn't believe that you could hear God, or you didn't believe that God was speaking to your spirit and that you were able to hear God.

Everyone who is religious is religious in part because he or she is looking for a way to be pleasing to God by doing what religion demands. And "what people think" is how God speaks and acts. You see some person running around being very busy, trying to do all that they think everybody else would look upon and approve. Such a person, commonly is religious and such a person is one who really has no confidence that he can hear God. The argument usually, against hearing God is, "Who are you that you might think that God is speaking to you?"—number one. Number two, "If you say God is speaking to you, then how are we to correct you?"

Let's begin with the first one: How do you know that God is speaking to you? The Scriptures very specifically say, "The Spirit bears witness with your spirit." (Inserted – actual verse—**"The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children."** – **Romans 8: 16**) That's a fact. And who are you? God loves you; you are a son of God. That's why He would want to talk to you. He is the Father; you are the son. Why would a father not want to talk to his son? From the very beginning, even in the Garden of Eden, it was the habit of God, every day, to show up and talk to man. Instead of doing that now, He lives in you by His Spirit and the Scriptures—**Romans 8: 14,15**, specifically—say that He gave you the Spirit to dwell in you to speak to your spirit. (Inserted – actual verse—**"Because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.'" The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.**" – **Romans 8:14-16**)

Your spirit has a mind that is able to hear God and when you believe that God speaks to you, then you will hear what He is saying to you. How about if you just want what you want and you say that God is speaking to you as a way of justifying that? Well, the answer is simple enough. The Spirit speaks and confirms what He says by the Letter. The same Holy Spirit who wrote the Letter is the one who is speaking to you. He will never contradict Himself. So if somebody says, for example, that God told them to divorce their wife, well the Scriptures express God's preference for marriage and there is a whole wealth of information in the Scriptures by which you can judge whether or not that assertion has come from the Holy Spirit. So, in short, the prophetic confirms that you can hear God and the prophetic—among the believers—establishes in you the reality that the Holy Spirit speaks to your spirit. The impartation—when you receive a prophet, like when you receive an apostle—the impartation when you receive the prophet is you have the confidence that you can hear God. That's why that gift is necessary for the equipping of the saints. We'll continue to look at the rest of the five gifts. I'm Sam Soleyn, God bless you and I'll see you then.

Scripture References:

Matthew 23: 9

Romans 8:14-16

Romans 8: 15

Ephesians 4: 11-13