**The Hearing God Series Week 1**

Welcome to The Hearing God Series. This is the start of a four-week mini-series designed to help you hear God.

In week 1 we are going to ask whether God speaks.

In week 2 we are going to find out how God speaks.

In week 3 we are going to look at the ways in which God speaks.

In week 4 we are going to learn practical skills to hear God.

So welcome to week 1: Does God speak?

Sharing: Turn to the person next to you and ask them whether they have ever heard God speak to them.

God Speaks to Create. Let’s start by looking at the Bible to where we discover that God speaks to create. Genesis 1:1 says:” In the beginning God created heaven and earth!”. Like an artist God used a tool to create everything. How did he do it? In verse 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, and 26 – eight times the tool God used is mentioned – “God said!” The tool is his Word. God just speaks and things come into existence.

Day 1: Then God said, “Let there be light!” So there was light. God saw the light was good. So God separated the light from the darkness. God named the light day, and the darkness he named night. (Genesis 1:3-5)

Day 2: Then God said, “Let there be a horizon in the middle of the water in order to separate the water.” So God made the horizon and separated the water above and below the horizon. And so it was. God named what was above the horizon sky. (Genesis 1:6-8)

Day 3: Then God said, “Let the water under the sky come together in one area, and let the dry land appear.” And so it was. God named the dry land earth. The water which came together he named sea. God saw that it was good. (Genesis 1:9-10)

Then God said, “Let the earth produce vegetation: plants bearing seeds, each according to its own type, and fruit trees bearing fruit with seeds, each according to its own type.” And so it was. (Genesis 1:11)

Day 4: Then God said, “Let there be lights in the sky to separate the day from the night. They will be signs and will mark religious festivals, days, and years. They will be lights in the sky to shine on the earth.” And so it was. God made the two bright lights: the sun to rule the day and the moon to rule the night. He also made the stars. (Genesis 1:14-16)

Day 5: Then God said, “Let birds fly through the sky over the earth.” Then God said, “Let the water swarm with swimming creatures. God saw that they were good.” (Genesis 1:20-23)

Day 6: Then God said, “Let the earth produce every type of living creature: every type of domestic animal, crawling animal, and wild animal.” And so it was. (Genesis 1:24)

On day 6 God creates Adam and once again he speaks: “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness”. This time there is a conversation where God - the triune God - decide among themselves to create man in their likeness!

God Speaks To People. Here are a few examples from the Bible where God speaks to specific individuals:

God Speaks To Noah. In Genesis 6-7 we read the story of how God speaks to Noah about building an Ark.

Video: God Speaks to Moses. Get it from YouTube at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q56vE0xG8dw

God Speaks To Moses. In Exodus 3 we read the story of how God speaks to Moses in the wilderness.

Video: God Speaks to Moses. Get it from the 2007 animated move: The Ten Commandments.

God Speaks to Samuel. In 1 Samuel 3 we read the story of how God speaks to Samuel.

Video: God Speaks to Samuel. Get it on YouTube at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P9D35Gtd2ys

God Speaks to Job. In Job 38-42 God speaks to Job.

Video: God Speaks to Job. Get it on YouTube at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrMVf2msBKk

From Genesis to Revelation we read of how God speaks to people. Speaking is central to God. The Bible records God speaking audibly to people many times (Exodus 3:14; Joshua 1:1; Judges 6:18; 1 Samuel 3:11; 2 Samuel 2:1; Job 40:1; Isaiah 7:3; Jeremiah 1:7; Acts 8:26; 9:15 - this is just a small sampling).

God Speaks to Believers. Jesus said in John 10:27: “My sheep listen to my voice. I know them, and they follow me.”

God Speaks To Unbelievers. In John 10:16, Jesus says: “I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.” Anyone who has ears can hear God speak to them.

**God Speaks To Me.** I could spend all day talking about the times that God has spoken to me in my life.

But one of the most dramatic happened when I was booked to fly to Burkina Faso (with a fellow leader) to train some leaders and then we would fly on to Ghana to launch a movement in that country in West Africa. For what seemed like an unknown reason my visa for Burkina Faso was denied which was very disappointing - and especially to the other leaders of the movement who believed that we simply needed to pray and God would make the embassy change their minds and I would get my visa and be able to go to both Burkina Faso. When I opened my Bible that morning it was like God appeared in the room and spoke to me as clearly as I am speaking to you now.

My daily reading was from John 7:1-9 and it told the story of how Jesus’s disciples told him to go to Judea (Jerusalem) but Jesus said that they need to go on without him. This was the verse and how I heard God speaking to me: “You go to the festival (Burkina). I am notgoing up to this festival (Burkina), because my time has not yet fully come.” After he had said this, he stayed in Galilee (Joburg).” (John 7:8). I knew immediately that God had spoken and I was not to travel to Burkina Faso. I then made plans to travel directly to Ghana because my visa for that country had come through. Incredibly, the guy who went to Burkina Faso ended up getting stranded there because flights were cancelled and did not make it to Ghana to do the training. If I had not gone to Ghana directly instead of via Burkina Faso we would not have launched the movement there! Because I heard the voice of God through His Word God’s plans were fulfilled!

Here is a pic of one of the training seminars that I did in Ghana - because I heard God speaking to me and obeyed his voice.

I eventually went to Burkina Faso and helped to further develop the movement of disciplemaking in that country!

**God Speaks To You!** If you are a follower of Jesus - and even if you are not - as we learnt from John 10 - you can hear God speak to you! For the next 3 weeks we are going to learn how to hear God speak to us!

**Prayer**

Next Sunday morning we will learn how God speaks to us.