

LISTENING TO GOD'S WHISPERS

(Hearing on God's Frequencies) – Pastor Richard P. Carlson

Job 26:6-14, I Kings 19:9-13, Hebrews 1:1-3, Gal. 4:4-5, Luke 2:25-32

The whole subject of God speaking to us is an incarnational message suitable for this time of Christmastide or Advent. Studying the written Word of God, we see the Living Word, and even creation whispers His Name, character, and will for us. Paul in Romans proclaiming to us the Gospel wrote in Romans 1:16-20, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, "The righteous shall live by faith." For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For His invisible attributes, namely, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So, they are without excuse." During times of being out hunting this fall, I have seen sunsets and sunrises that unspeakably and beautifully speak the grandeur of Almighty God with many rainbows, and the effulgence of God's painted colors.

When Christ was born God spoke to us, in His Son, the Living Word, who was prophesied to come as Messiah in His written Word. God still speaks today also by His whispers to us as to Job through creation, by His divine whispers to us personally as with Elijah, and by His promptings as to Simeon of old or to Paul about going to Macedonia. I love listening to Keith Getty and Stuart Townend's song, "Speak O Lord. written in 2019. (1) Speak, O Lord, as we come to You To receive the food of Your holy Word Take Your truth, plant it deep in us Shape and fashion us in Your likeness That the light of Christ might be seen today In our acts of love and our deeds of faith Speak, O Lord, and fulfill in us All Your purposes for Your glory (2) Teach us, Lord, full obedience Holy reverence, true humility Test our thoughts and our attitudes In the radiance of Your purity Cause our faith to rise, cause our eyes to see Your majestic love and authority Words of pow'r that can never fail Let their truth prevail over unbelief. (3) Speak, O Lord, and renew our minds Help us grasp the heights of Your plans for us Truths unchanged from the dawn of time That will echo down through eternity And by grace, we'll stand on Your promises And by faith, we'll walk as You walk with us Speak, O Lord, 'til Your church is built, And the earth is filled with Your glory."

One of Christianity's distinctives is that we worship the God who has spoken - who is not silent. From God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit speaking the world into creation, to God speaking through His Living word in our Lord Jesus Christ, to God speaking by His Spirit through the written word, and by speaking to us personally in our hearts and spirits. God still speaks. Throughout history the Word of God has transformed the proudest leaders and the most hopeless victims, the greatest civilizations, and the remotest of villages, in every age and in every corner of the world - so incredible is the power of God speaking. Often today, the preaching of the Word has been diminished in value – from its prominence in a

worship service to its passion in being delivered, but most of all, God's speaking has been diminished in our own expectation each time we sit down and ask God to speak to us. In Isaiah's day, God's people were doing many things in the name of God, but the Lord said, "This is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and who trembles at My word." Today, for a few moments, I want us to learn to long for God to speak to us all the time, and especially now at this season of Christmas. How does God speak when He whispers? Here are some answers we all need to consider in this season today.

GOD WHISPERS IN DIFFERENT WORD AND SOUND FREQUENCIES.

(I.) We read in Job 26:11-12 that "The pillars of heaven tremble at His rebuke. By His power He stilled the sea...and then in verse 14, Job continued, saying, "Behold, these are but the outskirts of His ways, and how small a whisper do we hear of Him. But the thunder of His power, who can understand?" The Hebrew word for outskirts is **gatsah**. It means the borders, the edges, the coast, the far corners, the extremities, the brink, the outer frontiers, and the uttermost or lowest part. Job was talking about creation and saying the beauty of creation speaks the outskirts, and the outer frontiers of the glory of God. David the psalmist wrote about these outskirts in Psalm 19 about God's creation speaking with a voice that Job called God's whisper. We read, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky/firmament above proclaims His handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." Creation pours out speech from God, but the frequency of God's speech isn't heard or seen by all.

Our human voice has a normal range of sound frequency from 85 hertz to 2500 hertz. Only a rare person could speak loud enough to reach 2500 hertz. But the human ear can hear from 20 hertz to 20,000 hertz. Anything making a sound below 20 hertz is still making a sound, and though a whale might hear down to 7 hertz, we as humans cannot. Though we cannot hear the sound, there is still sound at a lower frequency called infrasonic sounds. These sounds that we cannot hear can cause headaches. These infrasonic sounds are being used to predict volcanic eruptions and impending earthquakes. The sounds above 20,000 hertz are called ultrasonic sounds. They can crush kidney stones and help us see an unborn baby in the womb; they can heal damaged skin tissue, and ultrasonic sounds can topple buildings. God speaks in many ways at any frequency. Job speaking of God speaking in creation called it (KJV) "parts of His ways but how little a portion is heard of Him? But the thunder of His power, who can understand. In the ESV, we read, "Behold, these are but the outskirts of His ways, and how small a whisper do we hear of Him! But the thunder of His power, who can understand?"

The Hebrew word for "how small a whisper" is **shemets**. It means to emit a sound, an inkling, a whisper. The definition of whisper is to speak very softly, using one's breath, without one's vocal cords, especially for the purpose of privacy. In this message today, God may be whispering to you, while for some of us, He may thunder with His voice. In John 12: 28-29, Jesus said, "Now is My soul troubled.

And what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour? But for this purpose, I have come to this hour. Father, glorify Your Name. Then a voice came from heaven: “I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again. The crowd standing there that heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to Him.” Jesus answered, “This voice has come for your sake, not mine.” Secondly,

GOD WHISPERS BUT HIS WHISPERS ARE POWERFUL. (II.) We heard in Hebrews today that God has spoken to us in these last days by His Son, by whom also He created the world.” We read in Galatians 4:4-5 saying, “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.” These whispers were not heard by all. Simeon was waiting for Messiah to be born of a virgin, Luke 2:25-32, and so was Anna, but most of the Israelites didn’t expect what God promised. They were looking for splendor and grandeur in Messiah’s birth, not humility, with Jesus being born in Bethlehem, and being wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. For the majority of Israel, the speaking of God incarnate in the flesh in Bethlehem, that Word of the Living Word from heaven was infrasonic, and most of them didn’t hear the Word from Glory. Joseph and Mary, Zechariah and Elizabeth, with their son, John the Baptist, and Simeon and Anna—they got the message—Christ is here. Christ has come.

For millions, the idea of God whispering to us is that the absence of volume, pomp, and glory, is the absence of power. When God the Son said, in Genesis 1:3, “Let there be light,” there was light. Imagine the power to engulf the earth that was without form and void and darkness was over the face of the deep, imagine just four words from God, and Hebrews 1:3 says Jesus created the world. Imagine the power of four words. The One who brought darkness to light brings dead things to life. We read in Genesis 2:7 that “then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” Imagine just the power of God’s breath, of Jesus breath. Imagine the power of God bringing a valley of scattered dry bones, (Ezekiel 37) speaking of Israel being dispersed into all the world—bringing back the Jews to Israel, and one day soon the prophecy that the bones will come together and God’s breath will come upon them, and Zechariah 12:10 tells us they will look on the One they have pierced and all Israel will find there is a fountain for cleansing in the house of David, for sin and for uncleanness.

Don’t mistake the signs of Jesus coming which are like birth-pangs—whispers of Christ’s soon return—first for us to meet Him in the air, and then to come with Him on white horses when He returns. That meeting in the air won’t be a whisper—for I Thessalonians tells us in 4:16, “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God.” The whispers of God will be replaced by a shout from heaven. Yet now, in these days prior to Jesus’ return to catch His Bride away to Glory, the whisper of Jesus’ breath by His Holy Spirit is still powerful. Do you remember after Jesus’ resurrection, that He appeared to them (John 20:19-22)? We read, “On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked

where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you." And when He had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit." Remember what happened to them Jesus promised to us in Acts 1:8. "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Beloved, today, I tell you the breath of God is still available for us all. The whisper of God is available saying, "Receive the Holy Spirit." But know unless we listen closely, reading the Word, and believing the Word, we may miss the joy of hearing and knowing the power of His spoken Word, and we may say, "He never speaks to me." Listen! God has power by His breath and spoken whispers to bring life to a dream He gave us that we've given up on. He has the power to bring life to a relationship or to a situation that has seemed long dead. Thirdly,

GOD WHISPERS SOMETIMES TO GET OUR ATTENTION SO WE WILL LEAN IN AND GET CLOSE TO HIM. (III.) Turn to I Kings 19 and remember what happened in verses 9-13. We read, "There Elijah came to a cave and lodged in it. And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" He said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away." And he said, "Go out and stand on the mount before the Lord." And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. And after the wind, an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake, a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire, the sound of a low whisper. And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

What God wants for us as for Elijah is for us to get close to Him. When someone whispers, we have to place our ear next to their mouth or lips. Getting as close as we can to God is key. Intimacy with God is His desire. Is it our desire? When did you last whisper to someone? I know if you did, it was to someone you love. We don't whisper into the ears of strangers. God whispers to those He loves because He wants our attention. God wants to whisper His encouragement, His directions, and His hope is that we will listen. Jesus said in Luke 16:10, "He who is faithful in a very little thing is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much." If you want to get someone's attention, whisper. Remember that when God wants your attention and mine, He often whispers our name. And when all creation bows to God's will, even the Rock Springs whisper His Name, Jesus! Creation is groaning and longing for Christ's return. In this

awesome fall we have had, even the quaking aspens have been whispering His name. Have we heard Jesus call our name as He called to Samuel or to Mary Magdalene. Have we learned like Samuel to say, “Speak Lord, for your servant is listening?”

Few forms of communion and communication are more intimate than whispering. God wants us to draw near to Him and He will draw near to us. (James 4:8) Does God speak audibly? Yes, He does, He has, and He will again. He is the same, yesterday, and forever. Yet not all of us will hear His audible voice. But for Elijah, God did a visitation on Mt. Sinai like when He gave the law. We read in Exodus 20:18-21, “Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off and said to Moses, “You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die.” Moses said to the people, “Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of Him may be before you, that you may not sin.” The people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was. Hearing God’s thunder was too much for the Israelites, as it may well be too much for us.

Yet Elijah saw the second visitation of Sinai, but God didn’t speak the law this time. God wanted a personal word with His mighty, but depressed, and weak prophet. God wasn’t speaking in the wind, earthquake, or fire. God came in a still, small voice, literally in a tiny silent sound. Don’t get the idea that God always acts in the same way He did the last time He spoke to you. God has many frequencies to speak with. He rarely replicates the way He last spoke to us. Because God is big doesn’t mean He will speak loudly. When we think God will speak to us like the last time, we begin going on our feelings. That is a huge mistake. Fourthly,

GOD WHISPERS SO ALL OF US WILL LEARN TO LISTEN WITH OUR HEARTS AND SPIRITS. (IV.)

We read in Luke 2: 25-32, “Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the Law, Simeon took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said, “Lord, now you are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation that You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel.” How did Simeon know what to do that Day. God’s voice was inaudible to his human ear. It was an infrasonic sound, but he knew that he knew that he knew God was speaking in his heart and spirit, and that—that very day, he must go to the temple. It was the day his dreams and God’s Word given to him personally would come true.

Beloved, please know that large doors of opportunity to follow Jesus, swing on very small hinges or small prompts from God. We must learn to discern God’s voice and promptings from other voices. Jesus said, in John 10:4-5, “He goes before His sheep, and the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice. A stranger

they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” God knows if we are listening to Him and delighting in Him. He won’t give us all we want, but he will provide our needs and even give us the desires of our heart when we delight in Him. Psalm 37:4 is still his whisper to us, “Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you’re the desires of your heart.” Fifthly,

GOD WHISPERS BUT HIS WHISPERS WILL BE MISSED IF WE ARE CONSTANTLY SURROUNDED BY NOISE. (V.) Remember it was night when the birth of Jesus was announced to quiet shepherds watching their flocks. (Luke 2:8) Why does God call us to enter into our closet and shut the door? Why is it most often best if we close our eyes when we pray? It’s all about removing all the distractions in our lives. John Donne, the English poet once said, “I neglect God and His angels for the sound of a fly.” All of us are prone to keep our televisions on, our phones in our hand, our radios in the car on, our emails and instagrams going and Facebook messages. None of them are evil in themselves, but we will seldom be quiet long enough to hear the voice of God, or read His Word, take time to meditate on it, and get God’s emphasis for us unless we come close. As Jesus said to Peter, “Come,” and Peter walked on water until the waves distracted him and he quit looking to Jesus.

Each of us need to still ourselves and quiet ourselves and get along with the Lord long enough to separate from all the noise and clamor of our world and or our own minds to incline our ear to hear the whisper of God. God is always speaking in some way to us. The question is, “Are we listening?” Let’s turn down the noise, put our phone away, open our Bible and read what God is saying to us. Hearing God will only happen when we intentionally give Him our time and intimacy.

The devil shouts his lies, “You’re not enough, You’ll never be enough or get it all done. You will always be behind and suffer.” But the Lord whispers His Word, to draw close to Him when we are overwhelmed. God says, “I am enough. Whenever you’re struck down, you won’t be destroyed or abandoned. I’m here to help you be an overcomer. I am with you always and I will never leave you or forsake you.”

In the night seasons of last night, God woke me up at 3:38 AM and I had to get up and write His addendum to this message. He told me in my spirit to tell you, “My Word, scripture is the first way I speak.” Memorize it. Meditate on the Word. Obey it! God speaks through the foolishness of preaching. (I Cor. 1:18) God speaks in our solitude with Him, in our silence with Him and in our fasting with Him. We must be sensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit. If we get cold to a spouse or friend or brother or sister, we will often miss God’s whispers. When we are warm with others, God will speak. When God causes us to tremble in hearing a song, or watching a movie, or gives us special insights that keep speaking to us, He is there.

God desires for us to speak to each other and to ourselves in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. (Eph. 5:19) Songs such as, “Dear Lord and Father of Mankind.” IN verse 5, “Breathe through the heats of our desire, Thy coolness, and Thy balm. Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire, speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire, O still

small voice of calm. Or the Song, Lord, Speak to me that I may speak in living echoes of Thy tone.” Do we have God’s tone in our voice? Or “This is My Father’s World.” Verse two is: “This is my Father’s world, the birds their carols raise. The morning light, the lily white, declare their Master’s praise. This is my Father’s world, He shines in all that’s fair. In the rustling grass, I hear Him pass, He speaks to me everywhere.”

God speaks through promptings, urgings, repeated thoughts, and His gentle impressions. Acts 16:10—That’s how Paul knew God had told him to go to Macedonia. In pleasure, God whispers. In pain, He may shout to us. We must listen. God speaks through people. I Thess. 5:20, “Despise not prophetic utterances, warnings, I Thess. 5:11—Give God’s comfort to each other, a mother’s touch, a nurse’s words in the hospital, a spouse’s hand, or a father’s admonition. Keep sensitive to God’s voice. May there be no “poopooing or putting down of those who have a voice of discernment – I Thess. 5:19, “Quench not the Spirit.” If a person has a true word from the Lord, listen. Some people say, “The Lord told me about everything.” Not that, but don’t throw the baby out with the bathwater. Sometimes people speak to us, and they have no idea they are speaking for God, but they are, and we know it. What blocks God speaking is worry, judgmental words, critical spirits, and rude speech.

God still speaks through dreams, night visions, Joseph’s dream in Matthew 1: 18-25. In Joel 2:28-29, God says in the last days, “He will pour out His Spirit on all flesh, and our sons and our daughters will prophesy, old men will dream dreams and young men will have visions. God speaks through hospitality to strangers, Hebrews 13:2, we may entertain angels unawares. God has spoken twice to me by an angel. Read Matthew 25:5-40. God speaks through open and closed doors. (Paul with Mysia, Bithynia, and Macedonia) God speaks through situations that call us to pray like our prayer chain. When Carmelinda puts out a prayer chain, that is God speaking to “Pray now!” God speaks through unexpected gifts such as the gifts of the Magi/wise men—gold, frankincense, and myrrh and it all spoke to Mary who pondered the wise men and the coming of the shepherds. Why does God often whisper to us. He whispers because He is close—close to the broken-hearted, close to the hurting, close to the grieving, close to the fallen, close to the wounded, close to the contrite and repentant, and if you know Him, He is close to You, Amen.