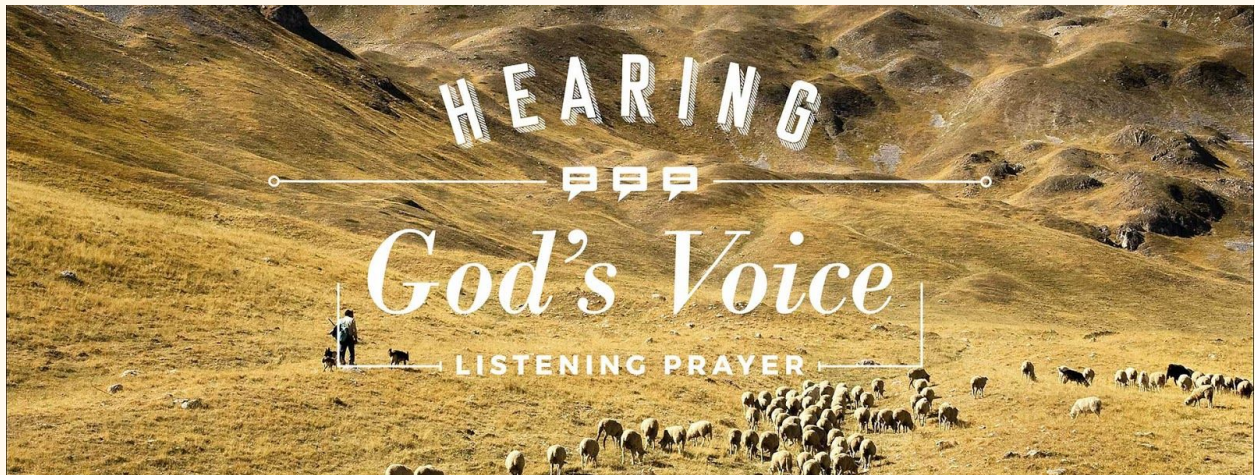

Ignite

“Dear Lord, we are thankful that our church was able to begin meeting in-person last weekend to celebrate Your goodness and praise Your Holy Name. We desire to hear Your voice and know Your heart in our journey as a disciple. Help us to be more attentive to Your voice, obey Your commands that we may grow spiritually and be more Christlike in our walk with You. Amen”



SERMON SUMMARY

[Hearing God's Voice - Listening Prayer :](#)

We can hear Him clearly

Senior Pastor Chris Kam

John 10:27

"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."

John 16:13-15

But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the 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. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you."

Big Idea : We can hear His voice clearly.

Introduction

What the voice is not [John 4:24](#)

God's voice is not a mental condition. It is about ordinary Christians moving about their daily lives, having a personal relationship with God, and like in any relationship, God talks to me and I talk to God. God's voice is also not necessarily an audible voice. It can be, but most of the time, it is not. Communication with God is Spirit-to-spirit, not brain-to-brain nor mouth-to-ear. He speaks to us in the Spirit in thoughts and impressions.

The challenge is this: we often miss the leading of the Lord, thinking that it is our thoughts. We get confused, thinking that it is our own thoughts, therefore we brush it aside. We can hear the Lord's voice clearly through the thoughts and impressions that He has given to us. God always speaks to us in the still, small voice.

1 How do we hear the voice of God? [James 4:8](#), [John 16:13-15](#)

There are four steps.

You must have a desire to want to hear the voice of God. If you don't want to, God will never force it upon you. Come near to God and He will come near to you.

You must set aside a daily time to be still before God. God still speaks today through the Bible. God will also speak to you in a way unique to you.

You must read His Word and journal your thoughts. As you make time for Him everyday, you begin to discern His voice through the Word. Without journaling, you

are simply storing the Word of God in your mind. But when you journal, you begin to process through what you are reading to store in your mind. You cannot write something without thinking through it. God speaks to Pr Chris through journaling. Journalling will help you put God's voice to paper.

You need to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help you. Invite the Holy Spirit so that He can speak to you what God is saying. He will guide you into all truth. If you don't understand any passage, pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help you out. He will speak only what He hears from the Father. He will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to the Father by taking from what is the Father and making it known to you.

2 How do we know whether it's our own voice, the voices of the world, or the voices of the demonic beings? [1 John 4:1](#), [Ephesians 3:10-11](#), [Proverbs 11:9](#), [Proverbs 11:14](#), [John 21:22](#), [1 Corinthians 14:33](#), [Philippians 4:6-7](#)

The Scriptures do not give you formulae or methods, because He wants us to be led by the Spirit as we know His Word well. We need to be filled by the Spirit, walk by the Spirit and keep in step with the Spirit. How do you help people discern the voice of God? In the story of Peter in Matthew 16, Jesus asked Peter, who does Peter say He is? Peter replied that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of the Living God. Peter heard the voice of God. After Jesus has affirmed Peter, a few seconds later, Peter questioned how can Jesus die? Jesus replied "Get behind me, Satan!". Within a span of a few seconds, Peter heard the voice of God, and Peter heard the voice of the devil as well.

Test it first, to see if it is from God, to help us discern.

Is it biblical? Does the Bible agree with what's been heard or said? If it is not, then it is not from God. God will not contradict Himself. He will not tell you something which contradicts the Word of God. Be very cautious of people who say they hear from God all the time. The next question to ask these people is, 'do you read the Bible all the time?'

Is it helping me to be Christ-like, to be more like Jesus? Am I more like Jesus from what I am hearing? If it is not, then it is not from the Lord. Is this what Jesus would want me to do?

Is there confirmation from the church family? The beauty of the Christian life is we do not have to live life alone by ourselves figuring things out. Through the church, through the body of believers, God will make known His manifold wisdom and eternal wisdom. If you believe what you heard is the voice of God, God will also confirm it through others. No single Christian can say that he or she heard the voice of God correctly. Hence, it is very important to belong to a cell group. Who do you go to in affirming what you hear from God? We have people in our lives who can

counsel us, whether we are hearing rightly from God or not. The principle is, if a mature believer questions it, you should question it too. People are not infallible; they will still make mistakes. The wisdom of the righteous can save you. Does the church confirm it?

Is this for me? Is what God is telling me in line with the way God has uniquely made me, with my talents and giftings? God will speak to me first, and He will speak to others too. It is not up to me to be a 'busybody' and listen for others. If God wants me to listen for others, He will tell me. We all need to learn to listen for ourselves. God will tell me what I need to do. There are times when God will ask us to speak to that particular person, because God has already spoken to that particular person, and He wants us to confirm it.

Is there peace in your heart? God is a God of peace. If God tells you something, it will be one of peace, there will be no confusion nor frustration. Most of the things that God speaks to us will be of encouragement and peace. The times when we are frustrated is when we live in disobedience.

3 Why do we need to hear God's voice? [Proverbs 20:24](#)

Someone comes up to you and says, 'God told me to buy a Sports Toto ticket, win first prize and give 10% to the church.'

Is this biblical? No, because the spirit of gambling is one that depends on luck, not dependence on God.

Is it helping me to be Christ-like? No, because you are encouraging greed.

Is there confirmation from the body of Christ? No (with many in the congregation shaking their heads).

Is this for me? No; in the person's mind, he thinks he is helping the church. But God doesn't need your money. It is not for you to help the church this way.

Is there peace in your heart? No, when you make a decision that is not in line with what God has spoken to your heart.

If God is directing your life, wouldn't you want to hear what God is saying about your life? Wouldn't you want to know what He is saying about what is going to happen in your life as He leads and guides you through life. You need to learn to hear His voice for your sake, your ministry, your family, your business and workplaces, because our steps are directed by the Lord.

Conclusion

Prayer is asking God to align you with His will rather than asking Him to be aligned with yours. Often we go to God with a list of things that we want to do our way. If we truly listen to God's voice, we will learn to recognise that often our will is not the Lord's will. We begin to align that back to God. How do we do this? Make time for God everyday, journal and ask the Holy Spirit to help you.



SERMON REFLECTION

Not everyone hears the audible voice of God. I don't. Well, not yet anyway.

By intentionally spending regular time with Him, God has revealed to me that He speaks to me through many different ways.



I visited a friend at her home last week for the first time in months. I wanted to buy breakfast from the coffeeshop for her, but I had a vision of a cake in my mind and found myself heading to the bakery next door instead, and bought a whole cake for her. At that time, I didn't think it was absurd to buy a whole cake for someone's breakfast! A couple of days later, she shared with me that the day following my visit was her wedding anniversary. She has been researching for a suitable cafe to

celebrate with her husband, with the intention to eat cake, as she has been on a cake-free diet for a few months before that. She was unable to find a suitable venue to celebrate; hence, she decided to celebrate at home, and my cake gift to her came at an appropriate time! She said she has been praying, and just when it seemed to her that cake matters are trivial to God, the cake that I bought arrived in time. To think that I wanted to buy coffeeshop breakfast for her initially! God led me to the bakery! This brings to mind Proverbs 16:9 'In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps.'

A few weeks ago, while performing routine chores at home, I had an impression in my mind of one of my friend's father. I haven't met her father before; he has been unwell but praise God, he is on the road to recovery. Of all the people I know, this impression lingered in my mind for quite a few moments, so I knew God wanted me to pray for him there and then, without knowing any specifics yet. Later, I asked my friend about her father's well-being and shared that I prayed for him. She told me that, at the time of my prayers, she received a long-awaited call from the hospital, informing her that his regular, specialist doctor is now available to treat her father the following week, without needing to wait anymore nor see a general practitioner first! I thank God that He gave me the wisdom to do the right thing at the right time, and this further encouraged me to be more obedient in hearing from God.

I have a very close friend whom I have known since I was a teenager. She works in a highly stressful job in a neighbouring country. Sadly, her father passed away last year, and her mother, Auntie Cindy, lives alone now. Upon learning about this, I felt God prompting me to contact Auntie Cindy. So as not to be intrusive, I have been sending her WhatsApp messages, so that she can read at her convenience. I always end each message to her by offering my help, should she need any assistance. However, my messages to her throughout these months were always met with silence; there is no reply from her. Despite this, I did not feel God stopping me from sending her messages to check on her well-being. One day two months ago, I received a call from Auntie Cindy's number; it turned out to be a lady whom I do not know of, using Auntie Cindy's phone to contact me. This lady, Auntie Lee, informed me that Auntie Cindy is very ill and has been admitted to the hospital. Auntie Lee is an old lady herself and has requested for my help; I learnt later that she is Auntie

Cindy's close friend. Not knowing who else to contact, Auntie Lee looked through Auntie Cindy's messages, and found mine. Of all the messages in Auntie Cindy's phone, God led her to mine. Auntie Lee didn't know who I was, but because my messages always end with an offer to help each time, she sensed that God spoke to her to contact me for help. This brings to memory Matthew 25:40 "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' So, Auntie Lee and I attended to the necessary, and thank God that Auntie Cindy is getting better day by day.

While I have yet to hear an audible voice of God, I learnt that I should not confine my Heavenly Father speaking to me in ways that I am familiar with only. I know that my spending more intentional time with Him, and being aware of His constant presence in my life, helps me to be more discerning to recognise His promptings and instructions for me, no matter how seemingly small they are. God's promptings require immediate action and we are to obey by faith, even though we may not understand the purpose or the ends to which they are supposed to meet, or may even run contrary to our limited human understanding.

Contributed by May Ng, PJN6



APPLICATION

Note to Word facilitator:

As you prepare for this session, this is a great time to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you to use the questions efficaciously. You can select, modify or entirely create your own questions, according to the needs of your CG, especially if you feel that there are too many questions than required for the allocated time. The questions below are crafted with a certain flow in mind. You could use these towards the end or insert them in between your own sermon reflection and summary.



Suggested Icebreaker Question (for Welcome that would link to the Word time)

- What is the one superpower that you would most like to have?

Suggested Word Introductory Question:

- Share a season in your life when God was seemingly silent in your life. What did you do or didn't do to press in to hear the voice of God? What were the consequences?

Suggested questions linked to each main point:

How do we hear the voice of God?

- Think about something that you are struggling with right now. How does knowing that God speaks to you impact your thoughts and change the way you respond to your circumstances, even though you may not hear from Him? How does knowing His voice help you trust Him with your daily life? Give an example.

How do we know whether it's our own voice, the voices of the world, or the voices of the demonic beings?

- What are some of the ways/steps that you have taken in the past to discern the voice of God? Do you practice this often? What were the consequences?

Why do we need to hear God's voice?

- God loves us and knows what's best for us. Do you think hearing from God is an act of obedience, submission and humility? Do you think hearing from God is one of the ways that we can show our love to God? Share an example.

Concluding Question/CG Activity:

Practice Lectio Divina during the week - Scripture reading: [Acts 10:24-33](#) (Wednesday), [Acts 10:37-48](#) (Friday) *(To help people shift from a performance-based mentality to a relationship with God)*

Question Bank *(Extra questions you can use to bring discussion further as you see fit):*

- Is there an area in your life where you hear easily from God, and is there another area in your life where you can't hear from God? What did you do to hear the voice of God?
 - Have you ever been afraid to make a move because you are afraid of hearing wrongly from God? What could you have done differently?
 - People often talk about wanting to know God's will for their lives. If God wants you to do something for Him, do you think it's important to be able to hear His voice? If you can't hear God, then how else can you make your relationship with God more meaningful?
 - How much role does the Holy Spirit play in your life, in your journey in listening to God's voice?
 - Share a situation where you thought you heard the voice of God and got it tested, but the consequences turned out unexpectedly. What was the lesson learnt?
 - What is distracting you from hearing the voice of God? Do you think disobedience is a hindrance from hearing God clearly? What are the steps you can take to change it?
 - What are the ways that we can be accountable to God when we hear or don't hear God's voice?
 - How often do you hear the voice of God? In what way does God speak to you?

- How has reading about Jesus in the Scriptures help you in listening to God's voice? Share a situation where this applied to your life.
- Do you think waiting is part of the journey in listening to God's voice? Share if there is any other action that you took while waiting to hear from God.
- Have you ever put a spiritual twist to your fleshly desires? What were the indications that they were not of God? How did you go about resolving this?



WHAT'S YOUR STORY?



Story of the week...

"It was more than 10 years ago when I decided to leave a well paying consulting job and to venture into the food and beverage business. Being a consultant by profession, I prided myself in my abilities to think critically, to spot "gaps" and to come up with the best solutions based on solid data analysis. I was very critical and unforgiving of others who, in my opinion, were never bright enough to see the big picture. It was this overconfidence that led me into a downward spiral..."

- Darren Lim, KL Zone

* Read the rest of Darren's story on dumc.my/blog

"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you."

- Maya Angelou

If you or your CG member(s) has a story to share related to today's Word,
Share their/your story [\[HERE\]](#)



PRAYER

Note to CGL: You (or someone you assign this portion to), may lead by praying OR reading these prayers together as a CG during worship.

God of justice and mercy, I come before You now with an awareness of those whose prayers today are sighs, sobs or even screams for help. Soften my heart to care more keenly, sharpen my mind to think more clearly, and clench my fists to fight more fiercely for those who are oppressed. Amen.

-a Lectio 365 prayer on August 11, 2020.

Nation

*Dear Lord, we stand together as the body of Christ with Jesus as the head of the church to pray and intercede for our nation. We want to uphold our nation and communities as we go through different challenges. **

We uphold Sabah as they head toward a snap election. We pray for the election of God-fearing men and women, who would stand for justice and righteousness.

We also pray for the health and enforcement authorities as they seek to contain the COVID-19 pandemic, and mitigate its impact on the people's health and the economy.

We want to intercede and pray for the Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs that it will practice integrity in its control over goods and prices in the local trade markets as it considers and protects the rights of all consumers.

-taken from NECF 40-day prayer and fast booklet

Churches & Believers

Wonderful Father, we want to seek and ask that the Holy Spirit will fill us afresh today, enabling us to remain true to Your name. Let not our faith be weakened by the temptations that the world brings to us everyday.

We commit all churches' resumption of physical services to You and ask that God, that You may keep us safe from the virus.

- taken from NECF 40-day prayer and fast booklet

The World - Prayer for Beirut

Gracious and loving God who hovers over the pain of your world. We pray for all who suffer or experience pain through the chemical explosion in Beirut.

We pray for the survivors of the devastation, that they may recover both health and remain safe where they are as many will be homeless.

We commit the government in prayer that they will focus on governing as the country struggles to restore the city and nation. We recognise that many may have lost confidence in the government due to mismanagement and corruption over the years however we ask for transformation of hearts today that they may repent and bring about a positive change .

We commit the Church in Lebanon in prayer as they continue to be the voice of hope, in Christ. We ask that the Gospel will be shared during this time of hopelessness so that many will experience God and receive Him as Saviour.

In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen

In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen







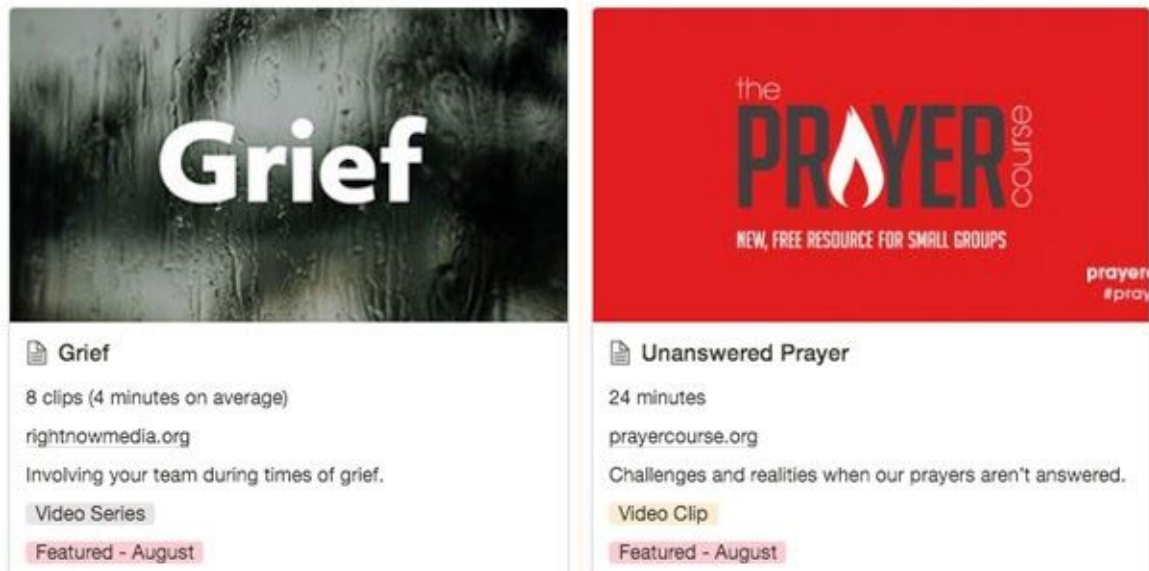
OTHER RESOURCES

Below are some links to resource you. Do **CLICK** on the images below!

FEATURED

In view of our current changing landscape that affects us individually and corporately, here are some featured resources for you this month!

 <h3>The Psychology of Crisis</h3> <p> The Psychology of Crisis 1 hour 35 minutes rightnowmedia.org Truths for facing the COVID-19 pandemic. Video Clip Featured - August</p>	 <h3>Listening</h3> <p> Listening 8 sessions (6 minutes on average) rightnowmedia.org Listening is a critical aspect of leadership. Video Series Featured - August</p>
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OTHER RESOURCES

Discover a host of other resources curated for you here!



DUMC STORIES

Be blessed by a compilation of inspiring DUMC Stories that you can share with others!

