

# STAND ALONE MESSAGE WITH PASTOR STEVEN: VOICE OF GOD

## Day 1: Is That You, Lord?

**READ:** 1 Samuel 3:1–10

### REFLECT:

Samuel hears God's voice—audibly! But he thinks it's Eli. And honestly, we're still doing this. We think it's a friend, a feeling, a burrito talking... but it might just be God.

God often speaks in ways we can recognize—through thoughts, Scripture, nudges, people. I once heard that God begins by speaking in our voice in our head because it's the voice we are most familiar with. Dallas Willard writes that *"God's communications come to us in a form that we can understand. They are not meant to crush, confuse, or scare us—they're meant to form us."*

And formation takes familiarity.

Elijah in Kings expected God in the wind and fire—loud, dramatic displays. Instead, God came in a still, small whisper. Why? Because intimacy doesn't require a megaphone.

As Willard emphasizes in *Hearing God*, learning to recognize His voice is part of growing in spiritual maturity. It takes *time*, *relationship*, and *quiet*. Relationships can't be built overnight and they can't be formed without the time and attention provided to them.

The Hebrew word *shema* means both "hear" and "obey." In Jewish tradition, to truly hear God was to respond. Hearing was never passive. It's not just about tuning your ears—but turning your life.

### JOURNAL:

What are you doing in your daily rhythm that helps you "tune in"? When was the last time you slowed down enough to ask, "God, is that You?"

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## Day 2: Whose Voice Is That?

**READ:** John 10:1–5, 27

### REFLECT:

Jesus says, "My sheep know My voice." That word "know" implies experiential intimacy, not just intellectual awareness. In other words, you *recognize* His tone, not just His truth.

Bill Hybels in *The Power of a Whisper* puts it this way: *"God speaks to His people not to give us goosebumps, but to give us assignments."* Sometimes what we think is God's voice is actually our ego wearing a halo.

So... how do we test it?

- God's voice will never contradict Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16).

- His voice often calls us to love, truth, and sacrifice—not just comfort.
- The Spirit's fruit (Gal. 5:22–23) helps you test the tone. Is this voice harsh, frantic, shame-inducing? That's not the Shepherd—it's likely the accuser or your anxious brain chemistry.

The doctrine of **illumination** says the Holy Spirit helps believers understand and apply God's Word. So when you're not sure, start with the Word. The Spirit speaking to you won't say anything new that contradicts what He's already inspired.

That's why God gave us the Church, the Word, and the Spirit—not just our feelings.

#### JOURNAL:

Where are you seeking clarity right now? Write down what you *want* to hear God say... and then ask: would Jesus say that?

Think about a recent decision or prompting. How did you try to discern if it was from God? What fruit (or lack thereof) did it produce?

### Day 3: When God Goes Silent (Or So It Seems)

**READ:** Proverbs 3:5–6 | Psalm 37:23 | James 1:5

#### REFLECT:

Priscilla Shirer says, *“God does not always speak in dramatic ways, but He always speaks on purpose.”* So what happens when He doesn't seem to say anything?

- Silence is often God's invitation to trust.
- Brad Jersak, in *Can You Hear Me?*, introduces the idea that sometimes God invites us to use *wisdom*, not wait for a mystical nudge. He's not a magic 8-ball; He's a Father.
- God's silence isn't the absence of relationship—it's the **development** of it. Even Jesus in Gethsemane experienced the weight of God's quiet.

In *Experiencing God*, Henry Blackaby says we must look for God's activity before listening for His voice. Ask not only “what is God saying?” but “where is He already moving?” Obedience doesn't require full clarity—just the next step. **To consider:** Sometimes God isn't saying anything new because He's still waiting on you to obey the last thing.

#### JOURNAL:

Where do you feel like you're in a season of silence? What would trusting God practically look like in this area—even without a specific word?

### Bonus Resource List: Want to continue learning about hearing the voice of God?

Here are some powerful reads by trusted Christian voices:

- **Hearing God** by Dallas Willard
- **The Power of a Whisper** by Bill Hybels
- **Discerning the Voice of God** by Priscilla Shirer
- **God Guides** by Mary Geegh (an older, lesser-known gem)
- **Draw the Circle** by Mark Batterson
- **Experiencing God** by Henry Blackaby
- **Can You Hear Me?** by Brad Jersak (for those open to contemplative depth)