

Hearing God's Voice - Habakkuk 2:1-3 & 3:2

Pastor Burt Garwood – July 23, 2017

God speaking through the Bible, teachers, friends and family, events and circumstances are all things that we understand pretty well. But impressions, pain and silence are things we just don't talk much about. The prophet Habakkuk did six things to prepare himself to hear God's voice.

I. Want. I must want to hear God.

- I must be willing to listen. I must desire God's will. It all starts with desire.
- READ: Habakkuk 2:1. He's saying, "I'm deciding to listen to God."
- You're much less likely to hear God unless you want to hear God. God speaks to those who want to hear from God. (Psalm 85: 8, Psalm 40:8, Deuteronomy 4:29)

II. Withdraw. Get alone in a quiet place.

- Habakkuk 2:1 "*I will climb up into my watchtower...*" (NLT) "I'm going to get alone, I'm going to get above it all."
- You can't hear God if you are surrounded by noise.
- My dad gets up every morning before 5am and sits in his favorite chair, by himself, in the quiet of the morning, listening to God. Most of the ideas for my sermons begin at home in my quiet spot in the house, so that I can hear God.
- Do you have a quiet place? It is vital for you to have a quiet place in your house where you can withdraw from the noise to hear God loud and clear.
- Luke 5:16 "*Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.*"
- Until you pause, and allow silence in your quiet place, you won't be able to hear God...or at least as fully as you could. READ Matthew 6:6

III. Wait. Calm your thoughts and emotions.

- Habakkuk 2:1 "*I will wait...*" (NLT)
- Now it's time to settle yourself down on the inside. (Psalm 46:10)
- "Hurry up and wait!" We can get ourselves all worked up waiting.
- What if we became still? What if we planted ourselves in that favorite chair in the silence of the early morning and simply said, "I'm waiting and ready Lord to receive a word from you today."
- Hurry is the death of prayer. A hurried prayer sounds like this: "God I've got 2 minutes, so make it quick." God replies "I'll pass on that. You're going to get a lesson on patience instead."
- God speaks to people who take time to listen. My wife won't talk to me if I start to multitask because she knows that she isn't getting my full attention. And she deserves my full attention!
- Waiting for God means that we surrender to His timing in our lives, not ours. ((Psalm 62:5, Psalm 37:7)

IV. Watch. Let God give you a mental picture.

- Habakkuk 2:1 "*I will look to see what he will say to me...*"
- The Bible is full of examples of God giving people a mental picture. In the Bible it's called a vision or dream. God puts a picture in your mind that you can actually see.
- Each of us needs perspective in life. We get caught up in the small things and forget to see the big picture God has for us.
- Another way of understanding why God would give us a picture is that about 50% of us are "visual learners". We hear a story or a joke, and we begin to picture it in our mind. So why wouldn't God give us a picture to make sure that we know what he's trying to say?
- Psalm 119:18 "*Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in Your law.*" We see God when we read his Word.

V. Write. Record the answers you receive. Habakkuk 2:2

- A journal allows you to slow down and really examine the very thoughts you are writing down. Then you have a record of God's faithfulness to you and how God is moving in your life.
- Write down your prayers. Then write down how God answers in the future.
- Write down how your life aligns with God's Word, not how scripture applies to you. The latter is egocentric.
- Ask yourself: "What was God trying to teach me through this event?" We get too busy and we miss connecting the life-lesson God is trying to teach us with the current painful event in our life.
- Writing things down also helps your children and grandchildren who will be interested to read your journal someday. (Psalm 102:18)

VI. Worship. Thank God for speaking to you.

- Habakkuk 3:2 "*O Lord, now I have heard Your report, and I worship You in awe...*" (The Living Bible) Thank God for speaking to you. When you receive God's response to a question it makes you love Him more.

So now comes the point where you open up your Bible and read God's Word.

- In reading the Bible, learn to read for depth instead of distance.
- Stop trying to check off your daily reading schedule in an effort to get through the Bible in a year...if this routine is keeping you from really going deep with God.
- God wants to have a conversation with you. If you practice what I've shared with you, it will turn your prayer life from a one-way conversation to a two-way street where God's voice becomes much more loud and clear.