

# Hearing, Seeing, and Believing

## I. **God speaks much more than people think. The problem is on our end. Hearing is from the heart.**

- A. Quote from a frustrated spiritual seeker: "It seems to me that an all-powerful God could do a much better job of convincing people of His existence than any evangelist ever does...just write it in the sky, nice and big: 'Here's your proof, Ed. Believe in me or go to hell!' Sincerely, The Almighty" (The Case for Faith, Lee Strobel).
- B. God speaks every day through what he has made (Psalm 19:1-4; Romans 1:18-23).

## II. **How critical it is to respond in faith when God speaks!**

- A. Healing and salvation are in the balance (Matthew 13:13-17).
- B. Our identity, calling and ministry to the world are at stake (Luke 10:17-24)
- C. John records a dramatic moment when God revealed himself by speaking out loud (John 12:27-34).
- D. Most missed it, and the door closed. "Some said it thundered" (John 12:29).

## III. **Expecting the unexpected.**

- A. God speaks in all sorts of ways "for our benefit" (John 12:30).
- B. To hear and believe we must settle the fact that God's ways and thoughts are not our ways and thoughts (Isaiah 55:8, 9).
- C. The diversity of ways God speaks
  - 1. The language of the Scriptures: "The more of the written word (the *logos*) we have in our hearts, the greater capacity we have to hear the spoken word (*the rhema*)" (Bill Johnson; Matthew 4:4).
  - 2. The audible and inaudible voice of God
  - 3. Impressions
  - 4. Dreams and Visions: open, dreamlike, mind pictures (Numbers 12:6-8)
  - 5. Symbols, riddles, unusual circumstances
  - 6. Prophecy and Testimonies

## IV. **Love opens our ears. It secures our souls and casts out fear so we can hear.**

- A. The Father and Son were partners (John 5:19, 20).
- B. Reading I Corinthians 13:4-7 in the light of your relationship with God.
- C. In great relationships between children and parents, sister-to-sister, or wives and husbands, the communication circuits are all wide open. For the Christian who feels God's love, life is just one big microphone from God.

## V. **Growing in our believing and hearing—remembering the past**

- A. At first, the miracles did not help the first disciples to grow in their understanding and experience of God (Mark 6:35-44, 49-52; 8:1-10, 14-21).
- B. A poor memory causes the heart to harden (Mark 8:17, 18).

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