



Practical Prayer Course

Session Three: Listening To God

Part of a six week group study
to help start or renew a life of
prayer

find this and other resources at redeemermcr.com/prayer

Watch the video together and talk through any questions.

Developing a spiritual ear.

Psalm 16.7: I will praise the Lord, who counsels me; even at night my heart instructs me.

How does the Lord's counsel, which is a way of referencing the Bible, counsel you?
How can your heart rightly instruct you?

How do we know that we're listening to God?

1. If it aligns with Scripture. God never contradicts Himself, and therefore, He will never go against Scripture. The Bible also gives us all that we need to know about God, ourselves, and living the Christian life.
2. If what comes up surprises us, this might be proof that we're doing more than listening to ourselves.
3. If others in our community are speaking to us about the same thing.
4. If it comes true.

Have you had an experience where it seemed like God was speaking to you? What was that like?

How we can (easily) get this wrong.

1. Word only. If we don't "watch and pray" as in Matthew 26.41, we miss out on how God wants us to engage the world around us, and as Jesus says we would be more likely to "fall into temptation." This side will likely downplay our emotions and circumstances.
2. Spirit only. This side will elevate personal emotions and circumstances over and above everything else. In getting this wrong, we bypass the authority of Scripture and others (the church). The easiest way to muzzle God is to neglect the Bible.

So one side says feelings are nothing, the other says feelings are everything. Which wrong road do you most lean towards? Why do you think that is?

The goal: an integrated prayer life.

John 4.23–24: Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.

Knowing what you know now, what does Jesus mean when speaking these verses?

Through Jesus and His work, this time that Jesus is speaking of is now. He has created these true worshippers, rightly integrating with the Spirit and the truth (aka the Word). The Word is never opposed to the Spirit and the Spirit is never opposed to the Word. In John's gospel, the Holy Spirit is described as the Spirit *of truth*. And in 1 John 5.6 we read "the Spirit is the truth."

Jesus died and resurrected to make us the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. In fact, it is impossible to be who God has created us to be *without* living by the Word and the Spirit.

Knowing what you do now, how does that change you will listen to God in the future? What small steps could you take to become more integrated with the Spirit and the truth, to be Word *and* Spirit Christians?

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