

## Hearing and Discerning the Voice of God

“Whenever he has gathered all of his sheep, he goes before them and they follow him, because they know his voice” (John 10:4)

Prayer is often more about listening than speaking, but God’s voice is not always easy to hear amidst the noise of the world. Consider these general characteristics of the message you are hearing or sensing to help discern if it is the voice of Christ, or the clamor of the world, sin, and self.<sup>1</sup>

### **The Nature of the Approach: How are you hearing or perceiving the voice?**

#### God:

Leads and invites  
Quiet  
Internal  
Invited and wanted

#### The World / Sin / Self:

Drives and pushes  
Loud  
External  
Unwelcome distraction

### **The Content: What Message are you hearing?**

#### God:

In line with Scripture  
Has an inner (heart) solution  
Merciful  
Corrects Actual Behavior  
Convicts of Sin (specific)  
Peace Making / Builds Relationships  
Rooted in Fact (Truth)

#### The World / Sin / Self:

Verses out of context  
Has an outer (circumstantial) solution  
No Mercy / Judgmental  
Condemns Personal worth / value  
Condemnation / Critical Spirit (general)  
Divides Relationships  
Based on experience (subjective / relative)

### **Relevance of the Content: What impact or application does it have on your life?**

#### God:

Now  
Practical  
Usual / Ordinary (even mundane)  
Simple  
Definite / Clear

#### The World / Sin / Self:

Future  
Impractical  
Sensational or Extraordinary  
Complicated  
Confused

### **Effects of the Content: How does it make you feel or respond?**

#### God:

Hope  
Peace  
Faith  
Encouragement  
Understanding Others (Empathy)

#### The World / Sin / Self:

Hopeless  
Worry / Anxiety  
Unbelief or Doubt  
Discouragement  
Despising Others (Judgmental)

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Rev. Peter Lord, Titusville, FL, 1986.