

Hearing God

Ezekiel 14: 1-8

6/29/03

Intro

- .

.....
One of the most important things for us as Christians is being led by the Lord. But in order for that to be true, we must first be able to hear God.

We know that God does not speak to us in audible voices, except possibly in dreams. But instead, he speaks to us in our hearts.

When we come to the Lord in prayer, we are inquiring of God, wanting the Lord to give us the wisdom, discernment to not make a costly mistake, to have God's will in each area of our lives.

But can we pray and not hear God? Yes. That is exactly **what these verses today teach us, how to hear God.**

The elders had come to Ezekiel in order to inquire of the Lord in some matter. But God saw their hearts; and that is where we no gain great insights for ourselves.

Today we will look for insights in how to hear God, but we begin by understanding some reasons why we don't hear God.

I. Idols keep us from hearing God.

A. Their idols were in secret

- In the world, idols are not hidden. They are unashamed.
- Though in secret, their idols were well known to them (before their face)... **this is a key point.**

Matt 6:6, "But you, when you pray, go into your inner room, close your door and pray to your Father who is in secret,

and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you."

B. The problem was estranged hearts

- Their hearts were turned in the wrong direction, but they wanted to hear God.

Illus – King Saul had in his heart the idols of jealousy, covetousness, and anger. But instead of getting things right with God, he tried to destroy David. Not hearing from God, he even sought a **spirit-medium to call up Samuel, the prophet.**

I Samuel 28:15, "I am greatly distressed; for the Philistines have come up against me, and God has departed from me and answers me no more, either through prophets or by dreams..."

- God said to Ezekiel, "Why should I be consulted at all by them?"
- **Why should God answer if we won't listen anyway?**

C. God may give us what we want.

- This is bad.

Illus- When Israel came into the holy land, they were different than other nations, they were led by God Himself. He was their King.

But their hearts were filled with the idol of fear and wanted to be like other nations... so God gave them what they wanted, but not because it was best, but to show them their hearts were far away from God.

II. Idols bring delusion

- A. People often hear only what they want to hear

2 Tim 4:3-4, “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth ...”

- If we won't hear the voice of God, we will hear the voice of our own heart.

Illus – King Ahab of Israel, when about to go to war in partnership with Jehoshaphat ...

I Kings 22: 5-7

- B. Even the Word of God gets distorted

- People often hear the Bible the way they want to hear it.

Illus – Should I divorce my husband? Well, the bible does say that we should not be unequally yoked to non-believers (and he is acting like a non-believer).

- C. Until we finally say, “enough.”

- God allows us to have what we want and to hear what we want to hear until we have had so much of ourselves that we are sick of it.

Illus – Israel wanted meat and grumbled before the Lord.

Numbers 11:19-20, “You shall eat, not one day, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days, but a whole month, until it comes out your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you...”

III. Let our hearts return to the Lord

Vs 11

- A. Don't make peace with sin

- If it's there, at least be at war with it.
- But don't get used to it and just accommodate its presence.

Illus – The missionary would took over a station and his car wouldn't start. He figured out how to park just the right way or get the kids to give him a push.

Until someone else came to replace him...

- Is there an elephant in the living room?

- B. No more estranged hearts

- It's not enough just to remove an idol.
- We need to fill our hearts again with the love of God.

- C. Let there be a love of the truth

- That is the key to staying in the right place with the Lord

Psalm 1:1-3 His delight is in the Word of the Lord

Conclusion

To hear God is to have the life of God within us. To be alive is the greatest gift God has given us.