

February 7, 2015

Learning to go directly to God has always been something of a challenge for the church and this has created a variety of barriers via church doctrine as well as ourselves. We have developed diverse methods of hearing from God: we consult the Bible by randomly opening it and placing our finger on the page. We use promise boxes, ask prophets, pray to Mary or the saints but DO NOT GO DIRECTLY to God Himself. Jesus, by contrast, went directly to His Father. What are we missing?

Now you may argue; “well Jesus was the sinless Son of God and so He had no barriers.” But what would you say if you discovered that Jesus had the same challenge as ourselves? The New Testament reveals that Jesus lived out His earthly ministry as “the Son of Man;” “Let Christ be your example as to what your attitude should be for He, Who had always been God’s Equal, but STRIPPED HIMSELF OF ALL PRIVILEGE by consenting to be a slave by nature and being born as a mortal man. And having become man, He humbled Himself by living a life of utter obedience, even to the extent of dying, and the death He died was the death of a common criminal.” Philippians 2:5 (J.B. Phillips)

You will recall that Jesus had to persuade John to baptise Him. John knew that Jesus was the sinless second Adam and it was confirmed when Holy Spirit filled Him after He arose from the water (Matthew 3:13-17). Just as we do, Jesus needed the power of the Holy Spirit in order to fulfil His ministry. Based on this relationship He could say; “I only say the things I HEAR my Father SAY and DO the things I see my Father DO,” and He prayed that; “We might be ONE even as He is ONE with the Father.”

“Without faith it is impossible to please God” writes the author of Hebrews and because God said of His Son “I am well pleased,” we can assume that the relationship Jesus had with His Father was by faith. If Jesus the sinless Son of God had to walk by faith, can we not conclude that we need to do the same? But you say, “Jesus was the perfect Son of God and was sinless therefore He has an advantage.” This is true but Jesus also said of us; “greater works than these shall you do.” He was 100% man and 100% God and He Himself shared fully in our experience of temptation except that He never sinned; “For by virtue of His own suffering under temptation He is able to help those who are exposed to temptation”(Phillips). Because of His victory in this realm, He became the perfect substitute for our sin. He provided for us through His death and resurrection access into the very presence of God. Now; “we can come boldly to the very throne of God to stay there to receive His mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need” (LB). There are no barriers between God and us other than the ones we erect by our faithlessness or habitual sin.

The Psalmist states of the one who loves God; “He will CALL upon me and I WILL answer him and honour him” (Psalm 91). This is God’s reassurance that we can go directly to Him. God wants this type of relationship because we were made for this kind of fellowship with Him.

How then do we know what God is saying if we do not hear a voice or see with our eyes what God is doing? This is where faith comes into play and the example of Jesus. His walk with God was by faith and so we, by faith must believe that if we ask God a question then He will answer.

I have developed some methods of my own. For most of my life I have been guilty of asking something of God then expecting His response to be via a scripture that may occur ten weeks later which appears to be the answer, or through circumstances, or “fleeces,” or through confirmation by messages we hear... and so on it goes. All these are good and valid but I don’t think Jesus walked this way. He is our model and pattern for relationship to God and living the Christian life so it follows that we need to abide by His example not the methods of man.

This may not fit your present doctrine but I believe God wants us to do just as Jesus did and “go to God directly” and expect Him to answer what we have asked. He will speak some word instantly to our mind and spirit... conversation with God, “face to face” like Moses.

How then do we check whether what we believe we hear is from God and not ourselves or from Satan? Jesus stated; “My sheep hear my voice.” We need to cultivate the language of heaven by saturating our minds with the scripture; “Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its mould, but let God remould your minds from within” (Romans 12 – PHILLIPS). The best way is to read His love letter and memorise it so that we can also judge what we hear from the scripture. Paul instructs the church in Corinth to “judge” the words of prophecy based encouragement, revelation of spiritual things, messages from God or teaching.

This however is not the total scope of words from God. We have to be open for God to share things with us that appear to be “out of the box,” but this is for another teaching..

Shalom.

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