

Voices & Choices – Choosing to Hear God’s Voice Above All Others

THEME: God is constantly communicating with us; it’s really our choice to listen or not.

Voices of advertising are powerful, pervasive, & everywhere. These ad voices are a constant plea to develop a desire within you to want their products with the ultimate goal being for you to buy them. And advertising voices are only some of the voices in this world. Of course, you have the choice to listen to the ad or “skip ad”; you can mute the commercials on TV, or you can simply plug your ears & not listen. But beyond ad voices, there numerous other voices in your world: pop stars, sport stars, news people, politicians, internet personalities, people on social media, friends, enemies, etc. The voices often want something from you – your money, your vote, a “like”, your support, your reaction, your love. And sadly, these voices don’t always have your best interests at heart. And with any voice in your life, you really have the choice to listen or not.

Last week, we talked about the importance of choices in our lives. Perhaps equally important are the voices we choose to listen to, believe & follow. The voices you listen to, believe & follow **will have a vast impact** on your life, even to the point of life or death. So what if there was **one voice** that you could listen to that would *always* be right, that would always lead you in wisdom, goodness, protection, truth, & life. Listening to this one voice alone would lead you away from trouble, anxiety, depression, disaster, & death. Would you listen to that **single voice**?

The recent story of Indonesian airline pilot, Captain Ricosetta Mafella, & **the voice** that he heard shows us the importance of listening to the **one voice**. On Sept. 28, only 19 days ago, Cpt. Mafella was flying a Batik Air flight carrying 140 passengers to Palu when he heard the voice of God thought the Holy Spirit. First, the voice told him to circle the airport one extra time & land very carefully due to high winds. On the ground, Mafella heard the voice again telling him to hurry up & take off as quickly as possible. Mafella even stayed in the cockpit during the extra-short layover. Sensing great urgency from **the voice**, Mafella requested to take off three minutes earlier than scheduled, which the air-traffic controller allowed. With **the voice** telling him to hurry, he launched the jet at full-speed down the runway. Less than a minute later, a 7.5-mag earthquake hit Palu & bucking the airport’s runway. Three minutes later a tsunami swept over the area doubling the damage. 2000-6,000 people perished there that day. If Mafella hadn’t listened to the voice of God, he & his 140 passengers would have died on that buckling runway. Cpt. Mafella said afterwards, “It’s important that we hear the voice of God. And whatever happens, we must be calm, not in panic so that we can clearly hear the voice of God coming to us by the Holy Spirit.” As Cpt. Mafella has shown us, God is speaking & the choice of listening has life-&death consequences.

<https://blog.godreports.com/2018/10/indonesia-christian-airline-pilot-prompted-to-speed-departure-before-earthquake-and-tsunami-hit/>

Just as God’s voice called out to help Cpt. Mafella, God’s voice is calling out to us all, every moment of every day. And I would content that His is the best voice to listen to. He made you, He loves you more than anyone else, He knows all & is wisest of all. So based on these few important facts, we should all listen to God first & foremost.

God is one of the many voices in our world today, but are we listening? Have we drown Him out? It seems like more & more people don’t listen to the Voice of God. Instead of choosing to listen to God, we listen to voices that aren’t all-knowing, all-wise, all-loving. We listen to voices that don’t have our best interests at heart, voices that change with times, trends & popularity. And the results of listening to those voices are clear- the negatives are on the rise: family breakup, depression, sexual confusion & disease, drug abuse, suicide, etc. If we choose to listen to the voice God, *we’d never fall for any of these traps!*

Of *all the voices* out there, the voice if God is by far the most important one to listen to. He made you, He loves you more than anyone else, He knows all & is wisest of all. So based on these few important facts, we should all listen to God first & foremost. We can begin to hear God by:

- 1.) **Asking God to reveal His voice to you.** (Jn 16:24 Jer 33:3) God wants you to hear Him, but you have to want to hear Him too. Ask God to speak
- 2.) **Trusting in Jesus Christ & getting to know Him.** (Jn 10:14-15, 27-28) Once you trust in Jesus, you begin to hear His voice clearer & more often.
- 3.) **Realizing that God speaks to you in many ways:** (Ps 32:8) God speaks to us through His Spirit (like with Cpt. Mafella), thru His Word, thru His People, thru circumstances, and even in an audible voice (as happened multiple times in the Bible & is still happening today.) Most of the time, God speaks to us in our hearts or mind. Though this is inaudible, God’s voice is still clear. **Remember, God’s voice will never violate His Word** (the Bible).
- 4.) **Obeing what God says.** (Lk 11:28) The more we listen to God & obey, the easier it is to hear from Him & the more we’ll be blessed by Him. Of course, the opposite is true to (the less we listen to God & obey Him, the harder it will be to hear from Him).
- 5.) **Letting God renew your mind.** (Rom 12:2) Let God clear out the junk & lies of this world that have patterned your thinking. Turn off the distractions, make time for God, adopt the mind of Christ.

God’s voice is calling out to you. He wants the best for you now & forever. Please don’t ignore His voice. Choose to listen. You’ll never regret it!

BIBLE VERSES

Is 30:21a (ESV) And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it...”

Ps 32:8 (NCV) The Lord says, “I will make you wise and show you where to go. I will guide you and watch over you..”

Jn 10:14-15, 27-28 Jesus said “I am the good shepherd; I know my own sheep, and they know me, just as my Father knows me & I know the Father. So I sacrifice my life for the sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life & they will never perish. No one can snatch them away from me,”

Jn 16:24 Jesus said, “Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask & you will receive & your joy will be complete.”

Jer 33:3 (ESV) Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known.

Lk 11:28 Jesus replied, “... the people who are really blessed are the ones who hear and obey God’s message!”

Rom 12:2 says, “Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS/EXERCISES

1. Tonight we talked about voices & but before we get serious, can any of you do a funny voice or impression? Let’s hear it.
2. Name some of the voices you hear in your world today & describe how they influence people.
3. Read Is 30:21a & Ps 32:8. What did you think about Cpt. Mafella’s story? What does it say about God & His voice?
4. Read Jn 10:14-15, 27-28. God can communicate in any number of ways. Has God ever spoken to you? What happened?
5. Read Jn 16:24 & Jer 33:3. Do you want to hear God’s voice? How could His voice help you escape the evil lies & traps in life?
6. Lk 11:28 & Rom 12:2. What might be keeping you from hearing God’s voice? What needs to change?