

Do You Know the Voice?

#0743

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—May 14, 1982

I suppose most of this audience have heard the president of the United States from time to time. How many of you have ever heard him speak? Yes. Can you tell when he's speaking? How do you tell? His voice.

I suppose all of you have had the experience of having somebody call you on the long-distance and say, "Do you know who this is?"

And sometimes you don't know, and sometimes you do. Am I correct? If it's somebody you know really well and have heard real often, you have no question about it, right?

My subject tonight is "Do You Know the Voice?" "Do You Know the Voice?" And the text is the 10th chapter of John's Gospel, beginning with the 1st verse. Oh, so much depends on knowing and recognizing the voice.

Jesus says:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice" John 10:1–4.

I was reading a number of years ago about a tourist traveling over there in the Holy Land before it had gotten like it is now. And he was interested in those eastern shepherds. At the time that he visited them, a number of shepherds were watering their flocks, just as Jacob found Rachel watering her father's sheep. And as the shepherds had their different flocks of sheep there, the sheep were all mixed up. The visitor wondered how the shepherds would ever get their sheep unmixed.

But presently, after all the sheep had been watered, one shepherd got up and started off in a certain direction and gave his particular call, and the sheep that belonged to him simply followed him. Another shepherd did likewise in another direction. And so, every sheep was where he belonged because he knew his shepherd's voice. That's what Christ is talking about.

The 16th verse:

“And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold...”
John 10:16.

They’d gotten mixed up. They’re where they do not belong. But Jesus knows them, and what’s He going to do?

“...Them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd” John 10:16.

The 27th verse:

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand”
John 10:27–28.

We have no idea of the love and the concern that heaven has in our redemption, dear friends. We have no idea, only faintly, the burden that rests upon the heart of Christ and His Father for our redemption.

“I know My sheep,” Jesus says, “and My sheep know Me, and they’ll hear My voice and come.”

Oh, I love to think of the Loud Cry of Revelation 18 as the Shepherd’s call, that last, final, earnest appeal:

“Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues” Revelation 18:4.

I suppose we would all agree that the longer we hear a voice the more quickly we recognize it. Is that right? And in this time when a thousand voices are calling in a thousand different directions, how vital it is for you and me to be very familiar with the Shepherd’s voice, the great Shepherd. And dear ones, the only way to be familiar with it is to hear it again and again and again and again.

How does He speak to us, and how do we recognize His voice? First of all, through His Word:

Jesus said of the Old Testament Scriptures:

“...They are they which testify of Me” John 5:39.

And from Genesis to Revelation, it’s Christ that’s speaking. That’s why the Bible is indeed the Word of God, not merely written but spoken. It’s God’s thought made audible. Through Christ, the Father has revealed Himself in life. And also, in this Word, we have the message of Jesus.

To those who have become familiar with the Bible, these words, whether written down by Moses or by John or any of the prophets in between, it’s all a

message from Christ, a message from Christ. This is why I like to encourage people to learn the joy of studying the Bible differently from other books.

You can sit down and read a biography, whether it's of George Washington, or Martin Luther, or Livingston, or anybody else, and you can sit in your chair and read. And you can read the Bible that way. There's nothing wrong with it. But oh, if you want a special blessing, kneel down by your bed or by your chair with the Bible, and ask God to speak to you through this Word.

And whether you're reading those lofty, majestic passages in Isaiah, or the histories of kings in Chronicles, or the prophecies in Daniel, or the glorious imagery of the Revelation, whether you're reading about the life of Jesus by Matthew, or Mark, or Luke, or John, in all these (and there are other books of the Bible) Jesus is speaking to you, if you will listen.

He says:

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me" John 10:27.

Oh, wouldn't it be wonderful to get so accustomed to that voice that any counterfeit, any substitute is at once detected? There's coming a day when the great enemy of God and man is going to pretend that he is Christ and appear. Someone sent us just the other day a large full-page advertisement from a New York newspaper that Christ is here on earth and he's going to appear in about two months.

Well, I don't know whether that person that they're talking about will or not. I know that Jesus is not going to appear that way. When He comes, the Bible says:

"...Every eye shall see Him..." Revelation 1:7.

But you know, it's only those who have trained themselves to recognize the voice of the Shepherd that will detect the deceiver in his disguise. No one can fool the man, or the woman, the boy, or the girl that really knows the voice of Jesus.

Do you know that voice, the voice of Jesus, speaking through His Word?

Another channel that Christ has chosen to communicate His love to us is through nature. Just this afternoon, I was so impressed with the love expressed in the beautiful song of the wood thrush, flute-like. Did you know that the thrush has a distinct and very interesting arrangement so that he can sing more than one note at the same time? I can't do that. Can you? But oh, Jesus has arranged that to tell me that He loves me. And in 10,000 ways, He's speaking in the things of nature.

I like the way it's put in this beautiful book *Desire of Ages*, page 281, concerning the Sabbath:

"The Sabbath calls our thoughts to nature, and brings us into communion with the Creator. In the song of the bird,

the sighing of the trees, and the music of the sea, we still may hear His voice who talked with Adam in Eden in the cool of the day” *Desire of Ages*, page 281.

Isn't that beautiful? Christ is speaking to us in the beautiful things of nature. Through the sights and sounds that abound over this world, marred and scarred as it is with the curse of sin, there's still much through which Christ is speaking. Can you detect, discern and enjoy the voice of Jesus speaking to you? Ah, if we'll listen, the things of nature will speak to our hearts.

Now, turn to Revelation, the 12th chapter, and the 17th verse. Here's a people in the last days that are especially to be favored with the voice of Jesus in their midst. You know this verse, don't you? Wouldn't you like to read or repeat it with me?

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” Revelation 12:17.

These people that the Devil hates, these people who constitute the remnant of God's true church, these people who keep God's commandments, they have something. Oh, what a gift. What is it? The testimony of Jesus.

What *is* a testimony? How many of you have ever been a witness in a court? May I see your hands? Did you say anything? Well, if you didn't, you weren't a witness, right? A witness is sworn in.

I remember many years ago, I was asked to be a character witness for a friend of mine in a court trial that he was in. And at the right time, I was motioned to the witness chair, and I had to hold up my hand and swear that I would tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth. And then, they asked me some questions. And if I had kept, still I wouldn't have been a what?

[Audience] A witness.

Is Jesus testifying? Where? Oh, in His remnant church. Who's He testifying to? To the remnant of the seed of the woman. And they love it. The sheep know the Shepherd's voice. The true people of God recognize the voice of Jesus. And how does He speak?

“...The testimony of Jesus is...” Revelation 19:10.

What?

“...the spirit of prophecy” Revelation 19:10.

Will you repeat that with me?

“...The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy...”
Revelation 19:10.

Again:

“...The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy...”
Revelation 19:10.

Once more:

“...The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy...”
Revelation 19:10.

Is it? Then, tell me, what is the Spirit of Prophecy?

[Audience] The testimony of Jesus.

Who’s speaking, then?

[Audience] Jesus.

Ah, dear ones, what a wonderful gift we have among us. You know, the sheep recognize the Shepherd’s voice.

I want to read you a letter from Nigeria. That’s way over in Africa. Listen to this letter. It was written just a few months ago by a businessman in Nigeria, and he addressed this letter to Ellen G. White, Washington D. C. Listen to his letter:

“I came across this book, *Steps to Christ*, through an old woman who gave it to me while I was shopping in New York City. After reading it, I decided to order some copies for my personal work in my office in Nigeria. I want to give it to every unsaved soul. I would like to order a thousand copies per month, and I will pay you in advance for the first six months. Please phone me at my hotel” [Unknown source].

Somebody gave this businessman from Nigeria when he was in New York City one copy of *Steps to Christ*, and he read it. What did he hear? He heard the Shepherd’s voice. He heard the Shepherd’s voice.

He says, “I want a thousand copies a month to share with friends and with visitors at my place of business.”

Oh, dear ones, let us not stop to stone the Devil’s dogs as they bark. Let’s be on with our work, sharing this glorious gift with those around us. Remember, the true sheep will recognize the Shepherd’s voice. If some poor soul doesn’t want to recognize it, let’s pray for them, help them if we can, but let us never, never be diverted from our mission to communicate this wonderful gift, this wonderful gift.

I'm so glad that our colporteurs are planning and already entering into sharing these precious things with the people around. God will bless every effort to get these truths to souls. That's why we have a sanitarium, that's why we have a restaurant, that's why we have the school. That's why we have all these different mediums and methods. They came out of these books. And if we're doing something that didn't come out of the books, I hope somebody will tell us so we can quit it, and keep busy doing what comes out of the books because it'll keep us busy, dear friend, won't it? Keep us busy.

I want to read to you what I think is one of the most beautiful passages in this little book *Steps to Christ*, that so impressed that businessman in Nigeria. This is page 100. Just let me share this beautiful passage with you and see if you, with me, hear the Shepherd's voice:

"Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears, before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. He who numbers the hairs of your head is not indifferent to the wants of His children. 'the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.' His heart of love is touched by our sorrows, and even by our utterances of them. Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds, He rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice. There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel" *Steps to Christ*, page 100.

Does a distraught world need that assurance now?

"No calamity can befall the least of His children, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escape the lips, of which our heavenly Father is unobservant, or in which He takes no immediate interest" *Ibid.*

And then, listen to this sentence that closes this paragraph. This is one of my favorite, favorite quotations. Listen:

"The relations between God and each souls are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul upon the earth to share His watchcare, not another soul for whom He gave His beloved Son" *Ibid.*

That reaches *me*, dear friends. And so, when I hear the thrush singing, that's Jesus thinking about *me*, that He had that bird sing for *me*. Now, you all can enjoy it, too. When the sun shines, it's shining for *me*, the Sun of Righteousness. You can have all of it you can take, but it's all for me, too.

And so, as I read the Bible, it's for me. As I listen to the voice of Jesus speaking through *Desire of Ages*, *Steps to Christ*, *Ministry of Healing*, it's for me. I thank God for His wonderful love. What do you say?

“My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine;
For Thee all the follies of sin I resign;
My gracious Redeemer, my Savior art Thou;
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, 'tis now.
Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal #321, first stanza.

Now, I'll tell you how to miss all the joy and blessing of this. I got a letter today in the mail from a man a long way from here. He sent me something that he'd written; He wanted my comments, suggestions, criticism. But the poor fellow, he's filled with doubts of some things that are in the Bible because he can't explain them satisfactorily. And so, he's distressed.

Listen, if you want to be miserable, start looking at all the things in the Bible that you *can't* understand.

You say, “Well, aren't we supposed to understand it all?”

Not in this life, dear friend. There's enough there to keep you busy all through eternity.

I was holding a week of prayer in one of our academies. In one of the meetings, a young man student came to me with some questions that he couldn't understand. He happened to have an algebra textbook in his hands. It was near the beginning of the session, semester.

I turned over to about page 417 and picked out a problem, and I said, “Will you please explain that one to me?”

He said, “No, I can't.”

I said, “Why not?”

“Well,” he said, “we're only over to about page 34.”

I said, “That's your problem with the Bible. Only the Bible is not arranged page 1, 2, 3. The simple things aren't all on the first page and the complex ones on the back.”

But I said, “If you deal with the Bible the way you do with the algebra if you'll start working with what *is* clear and keep working on problem after problem, the problems on page 417 will be just as clear as the ones on 34.”

Did I tell him the truth? This is the key, dear friends. If you want to be confused, listen to all the voices of doubt and unbelief and criticism and faultfinding and all the rest.

Somebody says, “Do you want me to be gullible?”

No, friends. That’s why I don’t want you to listen to those discordant voices. You’ll have to be gullible if you listen to them very long. No, I want you to open your ears to the voice of the Shepherd. I want you to listen to Jesus speaking in the Bible, in the things of nature that He’s made, and in these volumes of the Spirit of Prophecy.

And the more you read, and the more you listen, the more your soul says, “Thank God, I’ve found the Shepherd. He’s found me, and I don’t want to go wandering off where the wolves are or where the hirelings are. I want to listen to the One who so loved me that He gave His life for *me*. He must think I’m important. He must think I’m valuable. I don’t want to disappoint Him. I want to make Him happy. I’m comfortable in His love. Even though I don’t understand everything, I still love Him, and I know He loves me.”

That’s my faith, that’s my hope, and that’s my joy tonight, dear friends. Is it yours? May God bless you every one.

Now, listen. We’ve been having a wonderful time here from week to week for several weeks with testimonies, and I know there are a number here tonight that have never had the opportunity for the last six weeks to speak. If you haven’t spoken for six weeks and you have some word of cheer, some word of hope, some word of response, or some word of request tonight, come right up. We’re going to give you a few minutes just now.

[Testimony meeting followed]

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