

Shore Elim, Sunday 24th August 2014 –

**Message Series: ‘Praying Like Jesus’** (Matthew 6:9-13)

**Part 3: ‘Listen before You Pray’ (Part 2)**

**Introduction**

1. **Through the Spirit of Truth - John chapter 14-16**

* Jesus said we would hear and know His voice – John 10
* Being led by the Holy Spirit is the fruit of being His son or daughter – Romans 8:13-16
* He knows the mind of ‘Our Father’ – Romans 8:26-27
* We see all through the Book of Acts how the Holy Spirit spoke to people and led and guided them

He speaks to us through a variety of language –

1. **The Word of God** – this is our bench mark, plumb line, that which we measure everything against

* **Jesus** – ‘It is written…’ (E.g. Matthew 4:1-11)
* **The Early Church** – Acts 1:15-20 / 2:14-36 / 4:8-12 / 4:23-26 / 13:32-37 / 15:1-21

1. **The whispers of His voice** – internal leadings, promptings

* **Jesus** – would perceive in His spirit – Mark 2:8 / Luke 5:22 – Jesus perceived their thoughts
* **The Early Church** – Acts 10:19-21 / 13:1-3 (possibly through one of the prophets present) / 16:6-8 / 20:22-23 /

1. **An audible voice**

* **Jesus – at His baptism /** Matthew 3:16-17
* **The Early Church – the Apostle Paul /** Acts 9:1-9

1. **Visions** – internal and open

* Jesus – John 1:43-51
* The Early Church – Acts 9:10-19 / Peter – a trance & open vision Acts 10:9-21; cf. 11:12 – ‘The Spirit told me…’ / Stephen saw an open heaven – Acts 7:54-56

1. **Dreams**

* **Jesus –** no specific examples in the Gospel accounts of Jesus having dreams, but there are examples of God speaking to people in dreams, e.g. to Joseph – Matthew 1:20, 2:13 / The wise men – Matthew 2:12
* **The Early Church –** Acts 2:14-21

1. **Angels**

* **Jesus** – Following His temptation in Matthew 4:1-11
* **The Early Church –** Acts 5:19, 8:26, 10:3ff, 12:7ff, 27:23

1. **Spiritual Gifts** – 1 Corinthians chapter 12-14

**Prophecy** –

* **Jesus** – The Last Days: Matthew 24 / Personal to Peter – Mark 14:27-31
* **The Early Church** – Acts 21:10-14, the prophecy confirmed what Paul already knew in his heart: cf.20:22-23

**Words of Knowledge** –

* **Jesus** – the woman at the well, John 4 / would perceive in His spirit – Mark 2:8 / Luke 5:22 – Jesus perceived their thoughts
* **The Early Church** – Peter in Acts 5 with Ananias and Sapphira

**Key to these are –**

* Cultivating a listening ear – Isaiah 50:4
* Loving the family of God and loving lost people - 1 Corinthians 13 / In the Gospels Jesus performed miracles because He was moved with compassion – Matthew 14:14 – led to healing the sick / Matthew 15:32 – led to multiplying food / Mark 1:40-42 – led to healing the leper
* Having faith – Romans 12:3-13
* Desiring to build others up in their faith and life – 1 Corinthians 12-14
* Desire to reveal the heart of the Father like Jesus did – John 14 / Ephesians 5:1
* Desire to manifest the person and presence of the Holy Spirit – 1 Corinthians 12

In cultivating listening prayer we can know the Father’s heart and make wise decisions and choices, and pray according to his will.

The purpose in listening prayer is to – hear and see what the Father is doing (John 5:19-20) in our life and the life of others, and be led by Him through life

**How will we know that it is ‘Our Father’ speaking?**

**His voice will be consistent with…**

* The Word of truth – The Bible / the Holy Spirit who inspired the Word of truth will, as the Spirit of truth, never contradict it (Himself) – Isaiah 8:19-20 / 1 Corinthians 4:6
* The Person of truth – Jesus Christ / His life, person and ministry – John 14:6 / 1 John 2:6
* The God of truth – the character and attributes of ‘Our Father’ – Ephesians 5:1 / 2 Peter 1:3-4

**Line up these three and you will plough a straight line**

* Also – the counsel of others – ‘Our Father’ is in the context of community.
* The operation of gifts in the NT is always in the context of community –providing accountability, checks and balances – ‘in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word is established’ – Matthew 18:16 / Prophecy – judged by two to three: 1 Corinthians 14:29-33
* Don’t make life defining choices and decisions on ‘one word’ of prophecy from someone
* It is where there is power in prayer – Matthew 18:20