

Balaam's Donkey (Numbers 22-24)

- Balak, the Moabite King, saw the Israelites near his land and was afraid. He sent for a man named, Balaam to come and curse God's people
- God told Balaam not to curse the Israelites so Balaam sent Balak's officials away.
- Balak sent more officials with a second request. Even though God had already spoken, Balaam asked God again, hoping God would change His mind so Balaam could get rich.
- God was displeased with Balaam's request, because He had already spoken. He let Balaam go with the officials but sent an angel to thwart Balaam.
- Balaam's donkey stopped Balaam from being killed by the angel. God allowed the donkey to speak in order to get Balaam's attention
- God sent Balaam to Balak, but instead of cursing the Israelites, God had Balaam bless them – 3 times.

Truths from the story

- There is no indication that Balaam is actually a follower of God. He was a pagan sorcerer – something God's Word forbids. But God will use whomever and whatever He wants to accomplish His will.
 - It was common to call on whatever god the people worshipped when someone practiced divination or sorcery
- God does not change His mind. When He has spoken clearly, our response should be obedience.
- Just as God spoke to Balaam and the Israelites, He still speaks to us today.

We can hear God's voice clearly by practicing three biblical principles

- 1) **Seek to hear God**
- 2) **Understand God's Word**
- 3) **Spend time listening**

SEEK TO HEAR FROM GOD

- Many people don't actually care enough about hearing from God to truly seek Him
 - People often ask for God's blessing – their own version of a blessing - they throw up quick prescriptive prayers and they often justify sin and wrong choices.
 - When God has already spoken, we don't need to keep going back to God.
- To seek God means to bring big decisions before Him and spend whatever time it takes to determine His guidance as well as listening to Him in order to make wise decisions throughout each day.
- God's voice is powerful beyond understanding. With His voice He:
 - Spoke creation into existence. What we see, He said (Genesis 1)
 - Healed the blind, turned water into wine, resurrected the dead and stopped a storm
- Is God the voice you seek to hear most?

UNDERSTAND GOD'S WORD

- Unlike Balaam and Balak, we actually have God's written Word to guide us.
- Scripture is the key to hearing from God. If you want to hear from God, open your Bible!
- God's Word is the ultimate authority on how we are to live our lives (Hebrews 1:1-2)
- The Bible is living and active (Hebrews 4:12)
- The goal of the Bible isn't just Bible knowledge. Knowledge puffs up.
- The goal is learning to recognize and respond to God's voice so you can grow in intimacy with Him.

SPEND TIME LISTENING TO GOD

- The Bible is our map, but the Holy Spirit is our guide.
- While God usually speaks through His Word, sometimes he speaks in unique ways.
- Unique ways God has spoken throughout history - Burning Bush to Moses, Star to the Wiseman, Plagues to Pharaoh, Illness to Hezekiah, Handwriting on the wall to Belshazzar
- Most people speak far more to God than listen for his direction. I need to hear what God has to say far more than God needs to hear what I have to say.
- Never having silence in your life limits our chance to hear from God.
- Often God speaks quietly (1 Kings 19). When someone speaks in a whisper, we have to get close to hear
- How do we practically put listening for God's voice into practice?



- o When you have a decision to make, start with what God's word already says. If it is clear, you have your answer!
- o When scripture isn't clear when seeking an answer:
 - Pray and listen for what God is telling you
 - Seek wise counsel from spiritually mature people
 - See if God is speaking in your circumstances. Sometimes God speaks through hard things.

"Pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pain: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world." C. S. Lewis

- o Know that God will not contradict his Word through any of these other means of listening to Him.

Group Questions

- 1) How do you typically try to hear from God?
- 2) If you are honest, do you typically try to get God to agree with you, or are you truly seeking God's will?
- 3) How has God spoken clearly to you in the past?
- 4) How do you use God's Word to hear God's voice?
- 5) Who do you have in your life that you know will give you godly counsel?

Overtime Podcast

<https://bit.ly/RLOvertime>



Series Resources

<https://realliferesources.org/current-series/5-questions>

