

## How God Speaks To Us

1. God can speak through circumstances. God spoke to Jonah first with His voice, but Jonah didn't heed God's voice. So God spoke to Jonah through circumstances—first, being swallowed by a great fish, and second when a vine grew up to shade Jonah, and then the vine withered (Jonah 1–4). We need to examine our circumstances and ask if we are hearing the Lord through these circumstances. Ask yourself two questions: What's happening in my life right now? What is the Lord telling me through these circumstances?
2. God can speak through wise counsel. This is shown all through Proverbs. When we seek godly counsel we can hear the voice of God. This counsel always complements Scripture. When we seek wise, godly mentors in the Lord, we don't ask them to hear from God for us, but to prayerfully confirm that what we've heard from the Lord is correct.
3. God can speak through peace. I mentioned Colossians 3:15 in an earlier chapter—that God's peace can rule in our hearts. The word rule doesn't simply mean to merely exist. It means to reign or to be a deciding factor. If we don't have peace about a decision, then it isn't from the Lord. Don't move forward unless you have peace.
4. God can speak through people. This pattern is shown all throughout the Bible. God brings wise and godly people into the lives of others and speaks through them.
5. God can speak through dreams and visions. This pattern is shown in the lives of Joseph, Solomon, Jacob, Peter, John, and Paul. This method is available to us today too (see Acts 2:17 where Peter quotes Joel 2:28).
6. God can speak through our thoughts. Amos 4:13 says that God makes known His ways to us through our thoughts. In Matthew 1:19–21, while Joseph thought about things, God spoke to him. We need to be careful here because not every thought in our minds comes from the Lord. Thoughts can also be placed in our minds from the Devil. And we can simply think up things on our own. So every time we get a thought, we need to judge if it is from God. Does it align with Scripture? Does it in any way contradict the character of God?
7. God can speak through natural manifestations. Romans 1:18–20 states clearly that God can make Himself known by nature. The voice of God can be revealed through mountains, water, trees, meadows, landscapes, and more. In John 12:27–30, God spoke from heaven, but when God spoke in this incident, some people who stood nearby thought they were hearing thunder. There's the possibility that this could happen today. Sometimes if we hear thunder, or see floods or hurricanes or high winds or volcanoes, it may actually be the voice of God.
8. God can speak through supernatural manifestations. God spoke to Moses through a burning bush (Ex. 3:1–4). He spoke to Gideon through a fleece (Judg. 6:37–40). He spoke to Saul on the Damascus road through a bright light (Acts 9:1–5). He even spoke to Balaam through a donkey (Num. 22:1–35).
9. God can speak through the Bible. Scripture is always the voice of God in the general sense that God inspired the words of Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16). God can also speak specifically to us through the Bible, by drawing a particular passage to our attention, because the Word of God is living and active (Heb. 4:12).
10. God can speak through a whisper. We discussed in an earlier chapter how God can speak through a still small voice. He spoke this way to Elijah (1 Kings 19:12).

Again, the point here is that if we are going to hear God's voice, then we need to listen to Him. We need to tune in to the frequency of heaven and hear the voice of God. Note the warning held out in Jeremiah 7:13: "While you have been sinning, I have been trying to talk to you, but you refuse to listen" (CEV). Essentially, God is saying to the Israelites that they did any number of wicked things, and He was speaking and speaking to them repeatedly about it, but they did not listen to Him.

I love the promise held out for us in Romans 10:17: "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." If you've ever met a person of great faith, then you've met a person of great hearing who knows how to listen to the Word of God.