**Not Alone Part Three – Hearing God’s Voice**

**One study found that 93% of what we communicate is nonverbal—it comes through how our body talks to others with our eyes, face, tone of voice, and gestures. To put all this body talk into a little square screen on a phone or computer, while looking at other little video squares, takes a ton of energy and intentionality.**

**We’re losing our sense of being human as we become digital beings.** **We were not created to be digital beings. We were created by God for human connection and relationships.**

What do we do when human connection is not possible? **We turn to God to experience divine connection**.

**Sometimes, God will use crisis, trials and troubles to refine our faith, strengthen our trust, and deepen our relationship with Him. How does this happen?**

Jesus said that after he ascended into heaven that He would send the Holy Spirit to us. Not only will He be with us, through the person of the Holy Spirit, but God would be in us. God’s Spirit lives in us. 1 John 4:4, “because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.”

**How does God live in us? By inviting Him in!** The best way to describe this experience to you is through the words of a 8 year old boy. This is what he said, “All you have to do is these four things… 1. Believe Jesus is the Son of God. 2. Trust Him. 3. Ask him to forgive all your sins. 4. Invite him into your heart. That is all you have to do…

This is what God wants to do in your life. He wants you to have a life changing experience with Him. **He doesn’t want you have religion, He wants you to have a relationship with Him.** Sure, we all experience human loneliness, we will eventually have that need met, **but there is a divine loneliness that we all experience when we are missing God in our lives.** That loneliness, only God can fill. If we are to listen to our loneliness, perhaps what we are really starving for is a relationship with God. **The loneliness you feel may actually be your soul desiring a life-giving relationship with God.**

**Having a relationship with God is far different than having religion.**

**For some of us, our relationship with God is very similar to how our relationship is currently with people… from afar and socially distant.**

**Revelation 3:20, Jesus said,** “**20**Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.”

This is a picture of what it means to invite God into your life. Jesus says, **“Here I am! I am here and I am waiting for you to open the door of your heart. When you do, I will come in and eat with you.** What does that mean? The “eating” (*deipneō*) refers to the main meal of the day, which was a significant occasion for having intimate fellowship with the closest of friends. It is through the Holy Spirit that Christ comes to have fellowship with us. This is what that means. God is at the door of our hearts and is waiting for us to open our hearts and let Him in.

This is the thing, you need to hear His voice. Jesus said, **“If anyone hears my voice and opens the door.”** How do you hear God’s voice? God speaks in many different ways. First, He speaks

1. **God speaks through our emotions.**

God sometimes comes to us through our emotions. Our emotions are gauges not guides. We feel emotions in our bodies first before our minds do. What we need to do is pay attention to our emotions. When we have feelings that bring life, joy, and peace, then we know that God is present. However, when we are experiencing inner turmoil, lack of peace, uneasy, feeling in your gut that something is not right, then perhaps God is trying to get your attention that there may be something wrong. We can’t believe all of our feelings because some of what we feel comes from our sinful nature.

**2. God speaks through the Bible.** The Bible is the ultimate source of wisdom about how we should live, and as followers of Jesus we are to read and search the Scriptures, meditate on them, and commit them to memory. **Ephesians 6:17** calls God’s Word, the “sword of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit will use God’s word to speak to us to reveal God’s will for our lives; He will also bring specific Scriptures to mind at times when we need them most **John 14:26,** **26**But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

Knowledge of God’s Word can help us to discern whether or not our desires come from the Holy Spirit. We must test our inclinations against Scripture—the Holy Spirit will never prod us to do anything contrary to God’s Word. **If what we think or believe conflicts with the Bible, then it is not from the Holy Spirit and should be ignored.**

**3. God speaks through other people.** God often uses people, especially those close to us and those in authority over our lives to speak the mind and heart of God to us. He can use a boss, a parent, a pastor, or even a friend to speak to us. For example, listening to my message this morning, should not be about listening to my message. It should not be about how entertaining I am, or how deep I am, or how engaging I am, or how funny I am, and hopefully I am all those things! LOL It’s not about listening to me, but listening to what the Holy Spirit is saying to you through me. That’s why you should be praying, “God, what are you saying to me today. God help me to hear what your spirit is saying to me through my pastor.” If you listen, God will speak to you. I don’t care what the topic is, or what the series is, if you come with an open heart, and pray, God speak to me today, God will speak to you today. There will not be one service you walk out of and say, I did not hear from God. You need to be attentive and attuned. Write down things that touches your heart, write down thoughts that speak to you.

The Holy Spirit will also speak through those that you **trust in your life.** Proverb 15:22, “Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed.” I can’t tell you how many times people have gotten themselves into trouble because they did not heed wise counsel. They eventually have to learn through the **school of hard knocks.**

**4. God speaks deep within us.** **1 Kings 19:11,** “**11**The Lord said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.” Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake.**12**After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. **13**When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.

**If we are going to hear His whisper, we need to slow down enough and get out of the busyness and here his gentle whisper.**

**John 10:27** Jesus says, “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. Not only do they listen, **they follow.** You may not be ready to hear God’s voice, because you may not be ready to follow Jesus! When you are ready to follow Jesus, then you will be ready to hear his voice. Do you know what I have learned after following Jesus over all these years. The problem is not with God speaking. God is speaking. **It’s whether or not I want to hear what he has to say.** Truth it, I get distracted, or I am in a hurry, but perhaps the greatest hindrance about me hearing the voice of God is that **I don’t really want to hear what He has to say.** God’s thoughts are not our thoughts. His ways are not our ways.

**Hebrews 13:5,** “Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you.”

**YOU: If you listen to your loneliness, what is your loneliness saying? Are you in need of human connection or divine connection? I believe that most of us are starving for divine connection.** This is the beautiful thing, you don’t have to wait for Church to restart to experience divine connection. You can experience right now, where you are. If you listen to your loneliness, what you may hear is a knock. God knocking on the door of your heart. If you open that door, God says, I will eat with you and you with me. Where do we eat? Usually at home. God says, yes, I will visit you at home.

Today, God is speaking, and He is saying, **“Have you opened the door of your heart? I am knocking, but are you listening?** I want you to experience a real relationship with me that involves knowing God and having a relationship with God.