

Faculty Work Comprehensive List

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Voice of God

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Voice of God

Abstract

"As David so clearly describes, the voice of the Lord isn't always a whisper that can only be heard when we're sitting quietly still."

Posting about hearing God's call from *In All Things* - an online hub committed to the claim that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ has implications for the entire world.

<http://inallthings.org/the-voice-of-god/>

Keywords

In All Things, God, voice, listening

Disciplines

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Comments

In All Things is a publication of the [Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service at Dordt College](#).

The Voice of God

 inallthings.org/the-voice-of-god/

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Erin Olson

I have often wished that God would speak to me directly—that I could pick up the phone and call Him, He'd answer, and tell me everything I needed to hear. Sometimes the words I was hoping to hear from the Lord were words of comfort and encouragement, telling me everything was going to be okay. Sometimes the words I was hoping to hear were words of motivation, telling me to go out and do whatever it is I had been procrastinating on or hesitant to do. Sometimes the words I was hoping to hear were words of joy and celebration, letting me know that I had done a good job and He was proud of me. When people tell me that God was “telling” them to do something, to follow some certain path, or sometimes telling them not to do something, I'll admit I feel envious that God so clearly speaks to them. “Why doesn't God speak like that to me?” I ask myself. But I know, God is still speaking to me and to all of us.

In Psalm 29, David begins by asking us to ascribe to God “glory and strength” and he calls us to “worship Him in the splendor of his holiness”. In verses 3-9, he then goes on to talk about the “voice of the Lord” and describes God's voice as “powerful” and “majestic” and says it “breaks the cedars”, “flashes of lightning”, and “shakes the desert”. When I compare these action verbs used to describe the voice of God to the way the Lord presents Himself to Elijah in 1 Kings 19, I get a better understanding of the complex ways the Lord speaks to us today. While David describes the Lord's voice as thunderous and very powerful, when God showed himself to Elijah it wasn't in the wind, the earthquake, or the fire, but God was in the gentle whisper.

When we are trying to listen for God's voice should we be listening for that gentle whisper Elijah experienced or for the thunderous shaking and flashing David talks about in Psalm 29? I think God can and does use both means of communicating with us. My life is very rarely quiet and I don't do well with being still—I'm guessing I'm not alone in this struggle. I know the importance of peace and quiet of still and rest and I haven't made that as much of a priority as I should, but the realities of my day-to-day life make it very difficult. I know God often uses our times of quiet devotion to speak to us, but I don't think that's the only way we can hear His voice. As David so clearly describes, the voice of the Lord isn't always a whisper that can only be heard when we're sitting quietly still. Sometimes the Lord's voice comes booming in loudly like thunder.

This week I was speaking with an elderly woman in our community who spent much of her life serving as a nurse in different parts of Africa. When someone asked her how she knew she was being called to serve in that way, she went on to explain how she was sitting in church and her pastor was preaching from Isaiah that says “Who will go for us? Whom shall I send?” (Isaiah 6:8) and she knew she must go. But then she said, “For me, it was really clear, but I always hesitate to tell people how clearly God spoke to me because I don't want them to think that's the only way God can call. While his message to me was clear, that's not how it works for everyone.” Listening for and hearing God's voice seems to mean being open to the variety of ways in which He can and does speak to us. Sometimes it's the gentle whisper or the “still small voice” (1 Kings 19), but we should also be prepared for the powerful and thunderous voice of our Heavenly Father which is still capable of breaking cedars and shaking the desert.