Experiencing

God

Lake Erie Church

February 2023

**Listening**

February 12, 2023

(John 10:1-10 RSV)

Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber; but he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens; the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers. This figure Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. So Jesus again said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not heed them. I am the door; if any one enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

**Introduction:**

We are taking these few weeks to explore what it means to Experience God.

We’ve elevated our pursuit of God from just knowing him, singing about him to a deeper more meaningful relationship with our Heavenly Father.

Today I’m going to suggest to you that we experience God through learning to listen to Him.

The many ways God speaks:

* God speaks in a still small voice
* God speaks through mental impressions
* God speaks in dreams and visions
* God speaks through the Bible
* God speaks through songs and music
* God speaks through preaching/teaching like this
* God speaks through godly friends and people we trust
* God speaks life circumstances we go through
* God speaks through nature

The more important point to note is not so much HOW God speaks but ARE YOU LISTENING?

* Before we can love God with all our hearts and souls and strength, we must learn how to listen for Him
* Learning to hear God’s voice—his word and his whisper—is the single most important thing you will ever learn to do!

**God Speaks To Us Through His W\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

* The easiest way for you to hear God speak is to read your Bible.
* Two ways to read the Bible
  + Read the Bible with our heads to understand what is being said O\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
    - What is this actually saying, what does it mean?
  + Read the Bible with our hearts in order to E\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ G\_\_\_\_ in the pages.
    - What is God saying to me?

**God Speaks To Us P\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

* The word prophetically means “*to speak in a way that correctly tells what will happen in the future*”
* When someone claims to speak prophetically, how can we know if it is from God?

1. Is there clear direction or does it confuse you?
2. Is it something God has already been saying to you in other ways?
3. Does it align with God’s Word?
4. Have you prayed about what you were told?
5. Does it lead you closer to Jesus or to some act or decision that takes you further away from Jesus?

* God has not stopped speaking prophetically.
  + Paul at Ephesus

(Acts 20:22-23)

And now, behold, bound by the Spirit, I am on my way to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit solemnly testifies to me in every city, saying that chains and afflictions await me.

**God Speaks To Us Through The L\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Of Jesus**

* There are 3 distinct accounts of people who after the Resurrection encountered Jesus and did not know at the time who He was…
  + Mary at the tomb
  + Peter at the seashore
  + Two travelers on the Emmaus Road.
* The story opens up a model for how Jesus is constantly communicating with us…
  + C\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
  + E\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
  + S\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
  + P\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
  + I\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Conclusion**:

It is possible that you and I encounter Jesus from time to time mysteriously and don’t recognize Him?

It’s interesting that children find it very easy to hear God. What happens when we grow up and our life experiences build layers of doubt, self-deception and disappointment. Over time we lose the wonder of God and we become desensitized to the whisper of God.

Hearing God is not a technique we learn but a grace we are given.

God’s voice is fresh and not historically tied to past experiences…just because that was how God spoke in the past does not mean that is how He is speaking now? We must keep our relationship to Him fresh every day so that our spirits are open and receptive His voice.

What is He saying to you today?

God I’m a sinner

I'm sorry for my sins

I believe Jesus died for my sins

I believe Jesus will forgive my sins

I choose Jesus