

**DISCERNING GOD'S VOICE**  
**SEPTEMBER 19, 2021**

**INTRODUCTION:**

**1 SAMUEL 3** tells the story of Samuel's first encounter with hearing the voice of God. Eventually, Eli instructed Samuel about hearing God's voice and responding to it. Like Samuel, many struggle with knowing God's voice and discerning where our thoughts and impressions are coming from. Are they from God, ourselves or the devil? Learning the difference is vitally important. Why? Because it could make the difference between life and death. **PROVERBS 16:25** Just because we discerned His voice once, doesn't mean we'll always be accurate the next time. For example: **MATTHEW 16:16-17, 22-23** First, Jesus said Peter heard God's voice. Second, He said Peter was listening to Satan's voice. Not knowing God's Word made Peter vulnerable to a wrong voice or impression.

**DOES IT PASS THE TEST – 1 JOHN 4:1 (TLB)**

1. Does it contradict God's Word? **LUKE 21:33 (AMPC)** God's Word never changes. It's eternal and forever true. If someone says we don't need to be born again, it's not God. **GALATIANS 1:8 (NLT)** If an angel says he has a new message from God, don't buy it. If you tell a woman God wants her to date you and she's married, God didn't give the impression.
2. Does it promote Christ-like character? **ROMANS 8:29** God wants us to conform to the image of Jesus. **PHILIPPIANS 2:5 (NCV)** We're to think and act like Jesus. Jesus is our model or standard.  
**2 CORINTHIANS 10:5 (NCV)** Every thought is to obey Christ. **JAMES 3:14-17 (NIV)** Godly vs ungodly wisdom.
  - A. Ungodly. If it promotes bitterness, envy or selfish ambition, it's unspiritual and demonic and evil.
  - B. Godly. Has pure motives; is peace loving (builds bridges, not walls); produces harmony, not conflict; is submissive (humble, teachable, asks advice); full of mercy (more forgiving, not critical or judgmental). It takes maturity to discover the good in others.
3. Does it consider what other mature believers think? **PROVERBS 11:14 (MSG)** Humility considers the counsel of others, but pride doesn't ask for advice. We can avoid making mistakes by learning from the failures and successes of others.
4. Does it align with how God created me? **PSALMS 139:14** God made us unique individuals with certain talents, gifts and abilities. If I heard a voice or had an impression to try out for our praise team as a singer, I would know it wasn't God. I'm not to do what God created others to do.
5. Does it concern me? **JOHN 21:18-22** What is that to you? Does it pass the WITTY test? We're not to play the Holy Spirit for others. **ROMANS 14:4 (NLT)** We are to listen for ourselves, not others. If God speaks about others, consider: **1:** Pray, and give time for God to speak directly to them. **2:** God will use you to confirm what He already said. **3:** God can use us without our being conscious of it. By listening to a counselor counseling someone else, I was given direction. "God told me to tell you", can be manipulating.
6. Does it convict or condemn? The Holy Spirit convicts us, but the unholy spirit condemns us. Conviction corrects us and helps develop our character. Condemnation attacks our character, value and worth. **REVELATION 3:19 (AMPC)** Conviction is clear, specific and goes away when dealt with. Condemnation is vague and general. It never goes away. **ROMANS 8:1-2** Satan accuses and condemns. Jesus convicts and forgives. Conviction only lasts as long as it takes us to respond. Before we sin, Satan minimizes it (no big deal). After we sin, he maximizes it (how could you)?
7. Does it produce peace? **COLOSSIANS 3:15 (AMPC)** God's not the author of confusion. If confused, self is ruling not God. Satan pushes, God draws with peace and compassion. God encourages us, Satan discourages us.

**CONCLUSION:**

**JOHN 8:47 (NIV)** We must first belong to God if we want to accurately hear His voice.  
**PROVERBS 22:17-19 (TLB)** Listen, follow and pass it on.