

“Hearing God Speak”

By Tim Chester

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Let me tell you about an amazing experience I had just this morning. Actually “amazing” doesn’t really do it justice. It was out of this world.

This morning God spoke to me.

I know that sounds weird, but I’m sure that’s what happened. The God who made the universe actually spoke to me. I could hear what He was saying just as clearly as you can understand what you’re reading now.

The words He spoke felt like words of life to me.

It was like they resounded deep in my heart.

- There were words of instruction that helped me know Him more and understand his ways.
- There were words of challenge that called me to follow Him better and love Him more.
- There were words of comfort that spoke to my needs and gave me hope. It was like medicine to my soul. It was like a rousing speech before battle. It was like a love song sung to my heart.

But there’s more. Just as God spoke to me, so I spoke to Him. I spoke to Him as someone might speak to their friend. It was like a conversation. He talked to me and I talked to Him. I was able to express my deep appreciation for the words He’d spoken to me. I told Him how I planned to respond. I told Him about my needs and my hopes. I asked for his help, not just for me, but for people I know. I lamented the sorry mess we’ve made of his beautiful world and asked Him to have mercy on specific situations that are weighing heavily on my heart.

I spoke to the God of the universe and He heard me. He listened to what I was saying. And He promised to respond. I don’t know whether He’ll do what I ask. He might have other plans, better plans. But I’m confident He heard me and that He’ll respond in whatever way He thinks best.

What’s more, what happened to me this morning was not a freaky, one-off experience. This happens to me most mornings.

What I did this morning was read my Bible and pray. I just read my Bible and prayed. But there is nothing “just” about just reading your Bible. It really is all that I’ve described. It really is the most amazing, out-of-this-world experience. Every time you read your Bible God really is speaking to you—medicine to the soul, a rousing speech before battle, a love song sung to your heart.

The Holy Spirit spoke through the human authors of the Bible. He ensured that what they wrote truly was the word of God. Their words were God-breathed. So the Bible is the reliable, accurate, sufficient word from God. God has spoken.

But the Holy Spirit is also at work whenever the Bible is read or heard.

He takes the words that were recorded long ago and makes them live afresh. The letter of Hebrews, quoting from the Old Testament, says, “as the Holy Spirit says” (3v7). God has not only spoken in the Bible (past tense). He also speaks through the Bible (present tense).

God speaks to you every time you read the Bible. Personally. Intimately.

I read my Bible regularly because I have to. Not “have to” in the sense that someone might criticise me if I don’t or that God will get miffed with me. But “have to” in the same way I have to eat food every day. This is how I live.

Without God’s word in my life, I too readily get preoccupied with myself, my fears, my insecurities, my reputation. Without God’s word I’m so much more vulnerable to temptation. I need God’s word to realign my heart day by day towards Jesus. I need that medicine for the soul, that battle speech, that love song. And I need it every day.

This is [an article](#) I wrote for [Open Up the Bible](#), a great new campaign and website from The Good Book Company.