

How Does God Speak to Men Today?

Intro:

1. Question assumes that God **does** communicate today in meaningful, relevant way.
2. But *how do we answer the question?* To what authority will we appeal? Shall we naively accept the claim made by anyone, regardless of credential or credibility, that God (or H.S. or Jesus or Mary, etc.) has spoken to them?
3. The very question demands a standard, a reference or higher authority to which we must appeal to answer such vital questions. Much is at stake!

1. Subjective Revelation

- A. People confuse their own inclinations and urges with the will of God. **Illus:** Recent parole hearing for rapist. One said, "God told me it is time for him to be released." Rape counselor countered, "I've prayed, too and the Lord didn't give **me** that message!"
- B. Claims of God's direct communication today are often:
 1. Arbitrary and contradictory – People on opposite ends of doctrinal, religious spectrums are all claiming heavenly messages.
 2. Sensational – Some are claiming direct transport into heaven, actually walking and talking with Jesus.
 3. Anti-Biblical – People invoke the H.S. to neutralize some direct teaching of the Bible that condemns their belief/practice.
- C. Such claims inadvertently create chaos, uncertainty and are leading people into a type of mysticism where spiritual reality is based upon feeling and intuition rather than evidence and reason. *Religious humanism:* man is standard rather than God.

2. Objective Revelation

- A. What does the Bible say about itself? Does it claim to be the absolute final word or does it leave room for progressive revelation?
- B. A watershed in heavenly revelation: Heb 1:1-4. This, along with the parable of the wicked vinedressers in Mt 21 indicates the culmination of God's plans and purposes in Christ – including revelation.

C. The terms, conditions and essence of the new covenant inhere in Christ: He taught things given Him by God; He died to inaugurate the covenant; He presently reigns on His heavenly throne as *“head over all things to the church”* (Eph 1:22) and He appointed and gave credentials to ambassadors, spokesmen to complete the revelation of His will:

1. Three crucial passages: Jn 14:25-26; 15:26-27; 16:12-15.
2. Jesus handpicked His representatives according to qualifications which cannot be duplicated today; He gave them credentials by the H.S. which men do not possess today; He gave them a mission which is given to no man/body today.
3. *It is a serious matter to claim to be speaking for God!* Those who tried to set aside God’s legitimate spokesmen in the OT were harshly punished (Num 16).

3. The Living Word of God

- A. Completeness – There is a finality to the written revelation; there is nothing more to be said concerning our spiritual well-being – Jude 3: *“once for all ...”*.
- B. Sufficiency – What has been said results in fellowship, maturity, preparation for judgment, hope, joy, assurance – *“everything pertaining to life and godliness”* (2 Pet 1:3-4). We can know what Paul knew – Eph 3:3-5.
- C. Endurance – Some think the Bible is dry, dusty and dead, out of touch with the times. But it is a living seed (1 Pet 1:22-25), a living and active sword which reveals our true selves (Heb 4:12).

Conclusion:

1. The power of the written word: See the Declaration of Independence in D.C.
2. Paul gives a stern warning against tampering with the gospel – Gal 1:6-9.
3. If you are looking for something to trust, to put your faith and hope in, to ground your eternal life upon – look to the unchanging, steadfast, eternal word of God. It is God’s message to **you** concerning the things that matter most in this life.