

POD Teaching SESSION 5

How to Hear God's Voice Module B

Key # 1 Learning to recognize God's voice as spontaneous thoughts which light upon your mind

Learning Objectives:

- **KEY # 1 Learning to recognize GOD's voice as spontaneous thoughts which light upon your mind.**
- **Understanding Logos and Rhema as God's spoken words to us.**
- **Understanding how God's thoughts are received.**

Qualities that characterize God's thoughts that are interjected into our hearts.

The good news is that God's people are able to recognize His voice, just as He promised by putting into practice the concepts and precepts mentioned below:

Key #1: Recognize God's voice as spontaneous thoughts which light upon your mind. Our father longs to share himself with us in every way possible. Jesus wants to be *our Way, our Truth and our Life* (John 14:6). He shows us the way to walk through His *Logos*, the Word: "Thy word is...a light to my path (Psalm 119:105). He guides us through the counsel of our spiritual overseers (Proverbs 11:14). Even hard circumstances are used to direct our way (example of this is Jonah). Jesus becomes our truth and Life by illuminating Scripture to us, by leading us into truth, and by guiding us with peace or pressure in our spirits. We may receive guidance through dreams and visions (Acts 16:9) or by the prophetic word.

One way Jesus becomes our life is by speaking His words directly into our hearts. Jesus says in John 6:63, "*the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life*". We have all experienced the breath of life as God's

words have come clearly into our hearts, giving direction for the way before us, encouraging us or strengthening our hearts in time of need.

There are two Greek words in the New Testament that are translated “word”; *logos* and *rhema*. If you use the word *logos*, you are emphasizing the content of the message. Use of the word *rhema* demonstrates an emphasis on the way in which the message was received, specifically, through a spoken word from God.

Both *logos* and *rhema*:

The Scriptures can be *logos* if I approach them simply for content. When you or I receive them as revelation from God, they can be called *rhema*. When God speaks a Scripture to me, it comes as *rhema*. If God bids me ‘note the content of the Scripture’, then I am receiving it as *logos*. The Scriptures originally came as *rhema* to the writers (2 Peter 1:21). Since they had content, they were also *logos*. The Scriptures are quickened to us by the Spirit and thus become a *rhema* to us in the same way that they were given to the original writers. As we ponder the *rhema*, the word becomes *logos*, since we shift from emphasizing its manner of coming to us to its content.

We need both *logos* and *rhema*!

The content of the Bible (*logos*) is necessary because it gives us an absolute standard against which to measure all truth. It is our safeguard to keep us from error, and our instruction manual for life.

Rhema is also necessary because it emphasizes the way the Bible was initially given; THROUGH INDIVIDUALS ACTIVELY INTERACTING WITH GOD! God always has and always will divinely communicate with His children. Men and women throughout the Bible model a way of life which involves ongoing contact with the God who created them. If the Bible tells us anything from Genesis to Revelation, it teaches us that God desires to actively communicate with His children, and that we should expect to hear His voice and see His visions as we walk with him throughout our lives.

Before I found God, I lived life the best way I knew out of my own resources and understanding. Now that I have found Him, I live out of His spoken word and vision within my heart. We do nothing on our own initiative, only that which we hear and see the Father doing (John 5:19, 20, 30). We see Jesus' word here and know He is the perfect example, modeling _____ of living which we are to imitate.

Below are more details on the differences between *logos* and *rhema*.

	Logos	Rhema	Distinctions between both
Used in New Test	331 Times	70 Times	
Dictionary of New Testament Theology Volume three by Colin Brown	Literal Definition "Collect, count, say, intellectual, rational, reasonable, spiritual."	"That which is stated intentionally; a word, an utterance, a matter, event"	Whereas <i>logos</i> can often designate the Christian proclamation as a whole in the NT, <i>rhema</i> usually relates to individual words and utterances
Vine's Expository Dictionary of NT words. Vine	Literal Definition "The expression of thought. Not the mere name of an object (a)	"Denotes that which is spoken; what is uttered in speech"	"The significance of <i>rhema</i> , as distinct from <i>logos</i> is exemplified in the injunction to take the

	<p>as embodying a conception or ideal; (b) a saying or a statement”</p>		<p>sword of the Spirit, which is the Word, <i>rhema</i> of God, Eph.6:17 here the reference is not to the whole Bible as such, but to the specific Scripture which the Spirit brings to our remembranc e for use in the time of a need, a prerequisite being the regular storing of the mind with Scripture.</p>
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Logos can include all aspects of communication, from the formulation of the ideas to be spoken, to the consideration of the language style, through the actual verbalization and reception by the hearer. *Rhema*, on the other hand, stands specifically for the “utterance or actual expressing”.

How *Rhema* is sensed:

Rhema, or the voice of God, is Spirit-to-spirit communication; where the Holy Spirit, in union with our spirits, speaks directly to us;

Thoughts from my mind are analytical .

Thoughts from my heart are spontaneous .

In summary, Key # 1 for hearing God's voice is recognizing that "God's voice is sensed as spontaneous thoughts which light upon your mind".

Please refer to the third document found in the Resource Guide titled "Rhema in the Bible" worksheet for personal time with God. You will find that there are 70 uses of the word "rhema" mentioned in the New Testament. Look up the verses and see what the Lord reveals to you.

The following seven observations provide Biblical Support for the Concept that some Spontaneous Thoughts are from the Spirit World.



1. All thoughts are not our thoughts. 2 Cor. 10:4,5 states "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."

Why would we have to bring our thoughts into captivity? Is it not because some of them originate in or from Satan or an evil spirit? And we are also comforted by the Holy Spirit as His thoughts become our thoughts. In fact we are presented with thoughts from the spirit world every day. We must learn to discern where the thoughts are coming from so that we will act only upon the thoughts from the Holy Spirit, avoiding the enemy's deception.

Therefore, I accept the fact that the spontaneous thoughts I experience come either from my heart, the Holy Spirit within my heart, or an evil spirit trying to impress his ideas upon me!

2. Naba – "bubbling up" the Hebrew word means "to prophesy" and literally means to "bubble up". Therefore when the prophet would tune to the prophetic flow, he would tune to that which was bubbling up within him this spontaneous flow is what he recognized as the voice of God within him.

	True Prophecy	False Prophecy
Root Hebrew Word	Naba	Ziyd
Literal Definition	Bubble up	Boil up
Expanded Meaning	His prophecy bubbles up His prophecy gushes up	He boils up his prophecy He cooks up his prophecy
Inner Poise	Fix eyes on Jesus and tune to spontaneous flow	Fix eyes on self's desires and devise a word or vision

3. Paga – “the chance encounter” the Hebrew word for intercession is *paga*, which literally means “to strike or light upon by chance” or “an accidental intersecting”. Genesis 28:11 is an example of the use of *paga* as an accidental intersecting. As Jacob was traveling, he “lighted upon” (*paga*) a certain place and spent the night there. Putting this literal definition of *paga* together with the idea of intercession, we come to a biblical example of [Spirit to spirit](#) communication that is familiar to almost every Christian.

Can you remember a time when you suddenly had the impression that you should pray for someone? You had not been thinking about them; the thought just came out of nowhere. That was *paga*! You were experiencing *rhema*! God’s voice came as a “chance idea” that intersected your mind, not flowing from the normal flesh, but simply appearing in your heart. It seems to us just a chance idea because we did not think it up ourselves. But in fact, it is an idea from God lighting upon our hearts and registering in our minds as a spontaneous idea.



From God’s perspective, His voice and words are divinely sent, and not chance at all!

4. The river of the Holy Spirit within the believer's heart:

John 7:37-39 states "On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying 'If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive, for the [Holy Spirit](#) was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified".

Jesus is now glorified and we have received the Holy Spirit! Jesus said the Holy Spirit would be like a river within us. Therefore, when we tune to the bubbling flow within us, we are tuning to the [Holy Spirit](#) within us. This is more than theology; it is actually experiencing God within us!

5. We are the temple of the Holy Spirit (Remember the Temple Blueprint as explained in Session 4:

1 Cor. 6:19 states "Or do you not know that your body is the [temple](#) of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?"

The Holy Spirit lives within us. We are not alone on the inside. And where the Holy Spirit is, there will always be evidence of His Presence!

6. The Christian's spirit is fused to the Holy Spirit:

1 Cor. 6:17 states "But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit (with him)"

Proverbs 20:27 states "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord"

We are pure gold at the core of our being because we are joined to the Almighty God. This is the essence of Spirit-to-spirit and heart-to-heart relationship. When we touch our hearts, we also touch Him!

7. We are a branch grafted into a vine.

John 15:5 states "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in Him, bears much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing."

Additional Support for the Concept that Spontaneous Thoughts are from the Voice of the Spirit World:

The experience of creative flashes:

We have all experienced difficult times in our lives and situations that may have seemed impossible to overcome. In many times in our own lives, we have experienced instantaneous flashes that produce a new or creative way to solve a problem or issue. Are all flashes from our own inner man or from outside sources? Could it be that we receive those thoughts and flashes from the One inside of us, namely God? Is it not rhema flowing from God through our hearts to accomplish His will for our lives? Do you understand the flow? God is constantly creating new works in His people and constantly revealing His plans and purposes to His people.



John 5:19-20 states “I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he SEES his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all He does. Yes, to your amazement He will show Him even greater things than these.”

The experience of destructive flashes:

Where do destructive and evil thoughts come from, when I am not thinking them up but they flash across my mind with a life of their own? You and I may be in prayer, and some perverted thought abruptly comes into my mind. Where are those thoughts coming from? Is it not the destroyer, who is bombarding me with his evil thoughts? Therefore, should we not learn where those thoughts come from and what to do with those thoughts? This is one of the enemy’s most common stumbling blocks to our freedom in Christ. Those thoughts, if not taken captive by us, will form a wedge between us and God.

Example of this pattern of thoughts and its effect on our lives:

Many years ago, I experienced a season whereby the word “G.D.” would enter my mind and I would cringe when I thought those words. Right after those words crossed my mind, I would also feel condemnation for what I thought and ultimately, who I was. I became very fearful of those thoughts and wanted to avoid those thoughts altogether. The problem was that I did not know how to stop those thoughts flowing into my mind on occasion until the Lord gave me the tools (weapons) to overcome those negative destructive flashes. I began to study Ephesians 6:10-18 which states in part *“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take a stand against the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms...”*

What the enemy intended to do was take me down but the Lord used it for training my heart in his love and power! God can take our worst encounters with sin and shame and turn them around for His Glory and our good.

Testimonies of “life after death” encounters:

We often hear about peoples “near death experiences”. People tell of seeing Jesus or hearing angels speak to them and the peace that follows. A very popular book that has been out for a couple of years is titled “Heaven is for Real”. This book details a boy’s encounter with angels and God himself enthroned in the heavenly realms. It has been told by many of those near death that they see visions of loved ones who have already died. We are to always test what we hear and see about the Spiritual realm with scripture and our spiritual advisors.

The example from nature:

God often models spiritual truths from what we see in the physical world. Even the heavens declare His Glory! We can often draw out truth from God's revelation to us from natural formations in or about the earth. Water, molten lava, oil and gas "bubble" up from the earth when exposed to the surface of the earth, so the Holy Spirit "bubbles" up in us from our innermost being and simply flows when we are ready to receive the flow!

NINE QUALITIES THAT CHARACTERIZE GOD'S THOUGHTS INTERJECTED INTO OUR HEARTS

1. God's thoughts to us will be spontaneous, not cognitive or analytical:

This means that we move from living out of our own reasoning to living intuitively or spontaneously (i.e. living more like children – Matt. 18:3). This is countercultural to our way of thinking in the Western world, so we are choosing to step out of our comfort zones and live from a biblical worldview. Jesus lived out of an inner flow of thoughts and pictures from His Father, doing nothing of His own initiative (John 5:19-20).

We have the same privilege to live out of the Holy Spirit if we see and hear Him speaking to us! Ask God to show you what these words mean to you and journal the words He gives you.

2. God's thoughts are expressed through our personalities and style of speech:

The Bible is full of books that are written by different authors in different styles, unique to each writer's personality and expressions. So the divine flow within us does not bypass or eradicate our personalities or style of speech and writing. God is united with us (1 Cor. 6:17) flowing through us. This is the true diversity that God cherishes in each of us, that God has joined Himself to us and expresses Himself through so many people and personalities! The fact is that there has never been nor ever will be someone just like you so express yourself as God's own treasure the way God has created you!

3. These thoughts come easily as God speaking to me in the first person.

You have entered into a personal relationship with God who states that we are His friends! Expect God to speak to you like any other friend would speak to you.

4. God’s thoughts are often light and gentle and are easily cut off by any exertion of self (our own thoughts, will, etc).

When God shares His thoughts with me, I do experience peace and joy in the moment with no feelings of terror associated with those thoughts. Even when God corrects you and me, the words are comforting to us because we now know the true “lover of our souls” and trust that God has our best interest in mind.

5. God’s thoughts will have an unusual content to them in that they will be wiser, more healing, more loving and more motive-oriented than our own thoughts.

Remember that the scripture states in Isaiah 55:8-9 that “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts are higher than your thoughts”.

6. God’s thoughts will cause a special reaction within you, such as a sense of excitement, conviction, faith, life, awe, and peace assuming you have taken a step of faith and believe that what you are hearing is from God.

A great place to see that relationship lived out is in the Psalms whereby King David’s many thoughts and remarks are expressed from his heart. 1 Sam. 13:13-14 states that David was, “a man after God’s own heart”. How about you, are you also seeking God’s best for your life right now? Do any of you have a story to share about God creating a new work within you and/or a new revelation to you? _____

7. When embraced, God's thoughts and ideas carry with them the power and strength to perform them, as well as a joy in doing so!

God always wants your full heart involved with Him as he expresses His love, care, guidance, power and purposes in your life like rivers of flowing water. Are you experiencing God's power and strength to carry out what God has called you to do or believe today or is your "land" parched and dry and you find yourself thirsty for life, His life?

Several times in my life, God has called me to a specific task or season. The calling came first with a question about my willingness to fully participate in the work He has called me to do. Once I chose to fully focus on walking through the season he had called me to, then he gave me the faith, joy and strength to go through the season in his strength! Phil.4:13 states "*I can do all things through Christ whom strengthens me*".

8. Discerning God's thoughts gets easier the more you train yourself to listen to God's thoughts, and you will more easily and frequently experience God speaking to you in this way.

Remember that God is working with you personally to develop your inner ears and eyes so that you grow healthy spiritually over time and you live out John 10:27 that states "*my sheep hear my voice*". Are you growing in your ability to hear God's voice and understand his thoughts in all circumstances? 1 Peter 2:2 states "*Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good*".

Do you desire deeper communion with God? Do you long for a daily walk that draws you closer with God so that you can hear his voice and obey Him with more joy and confidence than ever before?

9. Remember that God may be speaking to you at any time and you can continually receive His interjected thoughts.

Until you begin to distinguish God's thoughts from your own, you will assume they are all your thoughts and may dismiss His thoughts altogether. Your role is to learn how to separate your thoughts from God's thoughts and you will be trained on how to do just that by the Holy Spirit, who will lead you to all truth! God does impress upon people his thoughts in different ways such as picture thoughts, scriptures, dreams and visions.

Testing whether or not thoughts in our minds are coming from God

See this article in the resource guide **TESTING WHETHER FLOWING THOUGHTS ARE FROM GOD** to gain further understanding on how to test our thoughts against the scriptures and spirits. Also see "Speaking to yourself vs. listening to yourself vs. taking with God."

SORTING OUT THREE CATEGORIES OF THOUGHTS IN OUR MINDS:

Spontaneous Positive Thoughts, Thoughts that line up with the names and character of the Holy Spirit including Edifier, Comforter, Teacher, Creator, Healer and Giver of Life we assume come from the Holy Spirit. Those thoughts always point towards God and cause our hearts to turn towards God to do His will.

Spontaneous Negative Thoughts Come from Satan and his demons and thus will line up with the name and character of Satan which include Accuser, Adversary, Liar, Destroyer, Condemner, Thief and Murderer. The goal of all those thoughts is to pull us away from the Lord and His life for us.

Analytical Thoughts Come from self, from our own reasoning process and are sensed as cognitive, connected thoughts. They are limited by our own knowledge, wisdom, understanding and abilities.

We are all bombarded with the thoughts contained in all three categories mentioned above on a daily basis. We decide which thoughts we want to take captive moment by moment and we become what we have taken captive and hidden in our hearts! Remember that not all thoughts are our own thoughts but test the thoughts against the scriptures and rebuke the thoughts that are not of God and do not conform to the Scriptures.



YOU CAN RECONGNIZE GOD’S VOICE AS SPONTANEOUS THOUGHTS WHICH LIGHT UPON YOUR MIND AND THEN HEART!

The greatest revelation that just came from God as a result of this teaching is: _____

The greatest challenge I face to greater understanding of these teaching is: _____

REMEMBER: 1 Cor. 8:1 “Knowledge puffs up but love builds up”. Studying the Bible is important, but the goal is never knowledge for the sake of knowledge. Being a disciple of Jesus Christ means that we learn from Him, fellowship with Him, and obey everything He commands us. Love is the goal thru obedient holy living.

APPLICATION NEXT STEPS: As you review this session in your own personal quiet time, with your POD mates and others, ask yourself; What is God saying to me? and How am I going to respond? Begin now to look for opportunities to start sharing what you have learned with others. That is disciple making. Take advantage of the transformative power of prayer, journaling, writing out personal application/next steps, and memorizing key scriptures. Also, be sure to read the articles and one or more of the books mentioned in the resource guide at the end of each of the seven sessions.

KEY TAKE-AWAYS AND MY PERSONAL APPLICATION/NEXT STEPS:

Scripture I will commit to memorize from this session:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.