

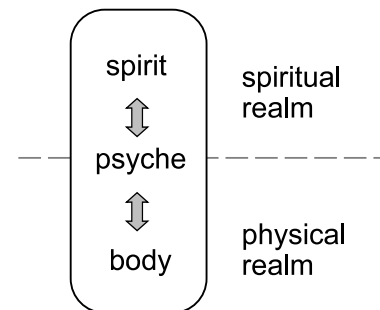
Knowing God's Voice

- Jn 10:3-5 “The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.”
 - v 16, “I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.”
 - v 27, “My sheep listen to my voice.”
 - Was Jesus referring to his disciples recognizing his voice while he was with them on earth, or was he talking about something else?
- God wants you to hear and know his voice!

The human spirit

- We are three-part beings
- 1 Th 5:23 “May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- Lk 8:54-55, “But he took her by the hand and said, ‘My child, get up!’ Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up.”
 - What connection was there between her spirit and her physical life and death?
- Each person has their own spirit, regardless of their spiritual condition
- For most people, their psyche prevails over their spirit; psyche is dominant, result of sin
- God is spiritual being, communicates with you spirit-to-spirit
- The problem: we’re not good listeners and don’t recognize him speaking to us
- A **key step** in learning to hear God speak is realizing that he does
 - expression of his love for you
 - correction or rebuke
 - guidance or direction
 - a call to a life of faith
 - give you revelation
- question: Why do you think God would speak to you about these things?
- God wants you to know his voice

Human Being



Where thoughts come from

Thoughts generated by your mind

- Important characteristic: sequential
- Content: based on things you know
- Duration: usually short-lived
- Results: variable
- Many of our thoughts originate with our psyches, especially our minds

Thoughts generated by your spirit

- Important characteristics
 - usually spontaneous, not sequential
 - these spontaneous thoughts take form of a mental function: thought, idea, single word, feeling, impression, hunch, mental image
- Key: spontaneous, compared to what your mind is thinking about
- Why we might fail to recognize what comes from our spirit:
 - never been taught about our human spirits
 - thoughts from our spirits generally are quiet, gentle thoughts
 - too busy to get quiet inside and listen to our spirit

Thoughts from other people

- Every person has a spirit, regardless of their spiritual condition
- I suggest: we interact spiritually, sense each other spiritually; know things about them “intuitively”
- Is it then possible someone’s spirit can cause you to think or feel a certain way?

Thoughts generated by God

- God speaks to you spirit-to-spirit
- Jn 16:13, “But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.”
 - Who is this Spirit of truth?
 - Which member of the Trinity speaks to us — Father, Son, or Holy Spirit?
 - Explain how this verse (Jn 16:13) confirms that God speaks to us
- Characteristics of thoughts
 - usually spontaneous

- same form as thoughts from your own spirit
- light & gentle
- warm; loving & familiar
- positive
- may be firm, authoritative
- Content
 - God speaking to you personally
 - loving, instructive, encouraging, comforting, correcting, guiding
 - accepts testing
 - superior to your own thoughts
 - Isa 55:9, “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”
 - fresh idea, creative, revelation
 - often unusual content
 - consistent with his nature & scripture
- Duration
 - impression remains; often becomes stronger with prayer & meditation
- Results
 - faith, confidence, peace
 - often causes reactions:
 - excitement, conviction, faith, awe, peace, confidence in what God said
 - physical reaction
- Speculation: at first, thoughts from God almost *always* unrelated to current thought pattern
- God normally will not intrude where he is not wanted; he won't force you to listen and obey

Thoughts generated by Satan (or demons)

- If God communicates with us, can Satan also communicate with us?
- Characteristics
 - either spontaneous or sequential; sequential thoughts seem to be your own
 - same form as thoughts from your own spirit
 - usually speaks in first-person
 - dominating, blocks out other thoughts
 - may be urgent
- Content
 - usually negative, destructive, fearful, accusing, promotes pride
 - violates God's nature or scripture
 - rejects testing or accountability

- Duration
 - usually short-lived
- Results
 - usually fear, compulsion, bondage, anxiety, confusion, depression, anger, selfish determination
- What is Satan's purpose in speaking to you?
- Mt 16:23, "Jesus turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men.'"
- Acts 5:3, "Then Peter said, 'Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit . . .'"
 - Where did the idea come from to lie about the price of the land?

- It can be difficult to identify source of our thoughts/feelings
- You cannot assume that every spontaneous thought/image is from God
- Recommended activity
 - at least twice a week, set aside 15 minutes to meditate on God's nature, his love for you
 - don't pray during that time, just meditate
 - be prepared to write down any significant spontaneous thoughts
 - put the date on that paper & keep it