

**Scripture Reference:** Proverbs 2:1-5

**Date:** October 19, 2014

**Title:** "Do You Really Want to Hear God?"

**Focus:** Effort in Prayer Leads to the Blessing of Encountering God / Hearing God Series (10 of 11)

God reveals that having an interactive relationship with Him is not for a holy few. It is God's expectation for all who have a relationship with Him

While some may want to debate this, the heart of the issue is, "Do we really want to hear from God?" For if we do, are we willing to do what is necessary to listen?

Proverbs 2 is a chapter that declares the blessings of hearing God and the dangers of not communicating with Him. In verses 1 through 5, Solomon declares that if you are willing to listen, YHWH can be heard. Solomon makes his argument in an "If . . . Then" format. He is saying, "*If you will do this, then you will experience that.*"

***"If you will receive my words . . ."***

Some may want to limit what Solomon is saying to his own advice to his son. However, in Proverbs Solomon writes of wisdom in a personalized manner. As one reads further Solomon makes clear that what wisdom shares, is from God.

The first thing revealed is that wisdom is not the same as knowledge. Knowledge is the acquisition of facts and figures. It is the accumulation of information. But, there is no guarantee knowledge brings a person into contact with God. Often, knowledge has the opposite affect, pushing people away from an encounter with God (1 Cor. 1:22-31).

Generally speaking, wisdom is the utilization of knowledge. It is the ability to think and act using knowledge or common sense. Biblically speaking, wisdom is being aware of God and living life in light of this is knowledge (Proverbs 1:7).

Whereas one need not do anything to gain knowledge, wisdom requires action on the part of an individual to “*receive [God’s] words.*”

a. “*treasure my commandments within you.*”

To *treasure* something means to recognize its value and give it proper care.

Is the capacity to communicate with God appreciated? Do we understand its necessity and value?

This is where knowledge (the mind) plays a part. Walk the pages of the Bible, talk with those who manifest a life of Christ-likeness. There one discovers the value and importance of prayer.

b. “*make your ear attentive to wisdom, incline your heart to understanding.*”

Though it may not make sense, decide that time with God is essential. This is an action of the will.

Having decided time with God is important, make the necessary adjustments to treasure it in your life. To have an interactive relationship with God one must alter his or her life.

Decide to look for God's prompting in daily living. Discipline yourself to listen for His voice amidst the sounds being encountered. Build the time, place and disciplines necessary to be able to hear God and understand Him.

This entails the choices and actions we take in the course of daily, momentary living.

c. *“cry for discernment, lift your voice for understanding.”*

Encountering God does not always come easy, nor does it always make sense. In these times it is necessary to linger with God and seek from Him what we are missing or lacking.

One cannot make sense of God from the world around him or her. To understand God, which to some degree is possible, one must spend time with God.

This is precisely why prayer is *interactive*. We cry out to Him and He responds. We lift to God our voices asking Him to make sense of life (James 1:5) and He answers.

d. *“seek for her as silver and search for her as for hidden treasure.”*

Prayer requires work; it involves effort (Col. 4:2-6).

“Prayer does not equip us for greater works - prayer is the greater work. Yet we think of prayer as some commonsense exercise of our higher powers that simply prepares us for God’s work.” - Oswald Chambers

Recognizing prayer as a treasure, we seek for it accordingly. We invest all that we are, all that is necessary, to lay hold of this valuable asset.

You’ll note, encountering God and living in the light of that encounter (wisdom) involves the whole of a person. It engages the mind, will, and body.

**“ . . . Then you will discern the fear of YHWH and discover the knowledge of God.”**

As disciples seek God, they encounter Him. For far too long we have taken a passive position and deceived ourselves into believing that God will speak to us even if we do not listen.

If you will invest the time, effort, heart, and focus in encountering God, you will understand Who God is and what it means to live in relationship with Him.

Accordingly, your life will take on the evidence of His character and reflect the values that are intrinsic to His rule and reign.

Encountering God and discovering Who He is, is *caught*, not *taught*.

## **The Last Eighteen Inches**

Prayer is the work of the Kingdom. By it disciples encounter God, understand His heart, and are released in His power. Prayer is the singularly most important aspect of being a disciple of Jesus.

Prayer entails more than a few minutes in the course of the day. Prayer is the Christian's life's breath. When it is valued as such, given the attention it requires, prayer leads to the manifestation of God and the advancement of His Kingdom.

Do we really want to encounter God? Are we willing to engage ourselves in what is necessary or are we content to eek out our existence with God denying the efficacy of prayer?