

Recognizing God's Voice

I. INTRODUCTION

A. In a classic *Twilight Zone* episode from 1960,

- An American on a walking trip through central Europe gets caught in a raging storm. Staggering through the blinding rain, he chances upon an imposing medieval castle.
- It is a hermitage for a brotherhood of monks. The reclusive monks reluctantly take him in.
- Later that night, the American discovers a cell with a man locked inside. An ancient wooden staff bolts the door.
- The prisoner claims he's being held captive by the "insane" head monk, Brother Jerome. He pleads for the American to release him.
- The prisoner's kindly face and gentle voice win him over. The American confronts Brother Jerome, who declares that the prisoner is actually none other than Satan, "the father of lies," held captive by the Staff of Truth, the one barrier he cannot pass.
- This incredible claim convinces the American that Jerome is indeed mad. As soon as he gets the chance, he releases the prisoner--who immediately transforms into a hideous, horned demon and vanishes in a puff of smoke!
- The stunned American is horrified at the realization of what he has done. Jerome responds sympathetically. "I'm sorry for you, my son. All your life you will remember this night and whom you have turned loose upon the world."
- **"I didn't believe you,"** the American replies. **"I saw him and didn't recognize him"**--to which Jerome solemnly observes, **"That is man's weakness . . . and Satan's strength."**

B. We have an enemy

1. Satan was defeated.

a. His chief weapon is his ability to deceive.

2. I believe most of the battles we fight would be quickly won if we could simply recognize the tactics Satan uses.

3. Many problems in the church would cease to exist if God's people would learn to recognize and distinguish God's voice from Satan's.

C. PASSAGE:

1. **John 10:1-10,14-15,27**, ¹ "I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. ² The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. ³ 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. ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵ But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." ⁶ Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them.

⁷ Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸ All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹ I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. ¹⁰ He will come in and go out, and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

¹⁴ "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me-- ¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father--and I lay down my life for the sheep....²⁷ My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me."

2. **2 Corinthians 11:13-15**, ¹³ For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴ And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. ¹⁵ It is not surprising, then, if his servants

masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.”

D. Today I am going to deal quickly with various ways to distinguish between what is of God and what is of Satan.

First though, if it is your desire to live in the truth and defeat the enemy in your life repeat this prayer.

Prayer for Discernment

“Dear God, in Jesus’ name I ask that you would open the eyes of my heart to Your truth right now. Please reveal, remove and bind any lie from Satan or any of your enemies that I have believed or listened to. I ask for Your spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of You to rule in my heart today. I submit my mind and self to Your hands right now. In Jesus’ name I pray theses things. Amen”

II. THE VOICE OF GOD

A. Consistent Traits

1. God will never **contradict** His word.
2. God does not **confuse**, He **clarifies**.
3. God does not **condemn**, He **convicts**
4. God does not **drive**, He **leads**
5. God does not **bring bondage**, He **liberates**
6. God does not **tear down** people, He **builds them up**
7. God is not **impulsive**, He is **persistent**
8. God does not **will**, He **woos**

III. THE ANGEL OF LIGHT

(The reason we have difficulty sometimes distinguishing between the voice of God and the voice of the enemy is not because we can’t recognize God’s voice. John 10 makes it clear that if we know God, we know His voice. The problem is that the enemy tries to mimic the voice of God and get us to think it is God’s voice we hear when it is not.)

A. Consistent Traits

1. Satan will try to **twist** God’s word.
2. Satan will try to **confuse** and **distract**
3. Satan will **accuse** and **condemn**.
4. Satan will try to **drive** you.
5. Satan will try to **enslave** you.
6. Satan will **insult** and **humiliate**
7. Satan will try to create **dissention**
8. Satan will try to **overwhelm**

IV. EXAMPLES

A. God’s Voice vs. Satan’s Voice

1. Conviction vs. False or Lingering Guilt.

2. **Divine Calling vs. Obligation or Driven Service.**
3. **Divine Restlessness vs. Dissatisfaction.**
4. **Concern vs. Worry or Anxiety.**
5. **Dependency on God vs. Hopelessness**
6. **Awareness of Evil or Danger vs. Fear**
7. **Divine Impression vs. Satanic Compulsion**
8. **Discipline vs. Judgementalism.**

B. Godly Attitudes vs. Satanic Deception

1. **Humility vs. Condescension**
2. **Boldness vs. Self Righteousness**
3. **Holiness vs. Legalism**
4. **Meekness vs. Cowardice**
5. **Grace vs. Victimization**
6. **Unworthiness vs. Worthlessness**
7. **Surrender vs. Bondage**
8. **Freedom vs. Shallowness or Moral Compromise**
9. **Passion vs. Perfectionism**
10. **Kindness vs. Compromise**
11. **Patience vs. Apathy**

C. Divine Encounters vs. Satanic Counterfeits

1. **Regeneration vs. Mental or Emotional Appeasement**
2. **Genuine Peace vs. False Peace**
 - a. **Genuine Peace** is an inner calm and knowledge that God is in control and you are His.
 - b. **False Peace** is a seemingly inner peace that is present though the person has un-confessed sin or is presently living in disobedience.
3. **Joy vs. Emotional Frenzy**
4. **Holiness vs. Religion**
5. **The Presence of God vs. Emotionalism**

V. CONCLUSION

A. Has God revealed anything to you that you have ignored?

1. **If you are not open** to the possibility that you could be deceived, it may be a clear sign that something is wrong.
2. **Admitting this is not casting away your confidence in God**; it is merely casting away your confidence in yourself. - **And if you can't do that, than you are a prime target for deception.**

B. Business with God:

1. **Ask God to show you any areas of deception in your life.**
2. **Ask Him to remove any walls you may have put up that would keep you from seeing those areas.**
3. **Repent and renounce anything that He shows you.**
4. **Be willing to obey all that He says.**