



# Ten Ways God Talks to Us

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With social pressures obliterating the lines between right vs. wrong, worldly temptations lurking around every corner, and a society that is losing its core identity, how do you discern between what is of the world and of God? How do you know God's will for your life? These questions are more than a mystery for many people, especially in these uncertain times. But should they?

A source of this confusion paradoxically comes from God's love for us. Because God offers you and me His unconditional love, He doesn't coerce us into having a relationship with Him. He gives you complete freedom to exercise your own free will. Rather than force you to obey and follow Him, He gives you the choice to do so. He loves you unconditionally and freely gives you not only eternal salvation, but blessings while on earth simply by accepting Him as your Lord and His son as your savior. So it is with hearing His voice and intent for your life. It is there for you to receive, if you listen for it.

Some people pray to God to give them signs. Some say "Dear Lord, just tell me what to do – put it on a billboard or something and then I'll know for sure." But think about this. If it is on a billboard, or comes to you in the mail, or in any other physical form, how do you know it's not of this world's making? And even if you knew it was from God, what makes you think you would listen and heed His advice?

If you study the reasons people don't communicate well, you realize that our communication shortfalls apply whether we are talking with family, co-workers or friends. Our judging nature, busyness, selfishness, worldly distractions and countless other factors prevent us from having clear and meaningful conversations. It is no different with our communication with God. While we might wish for a direct physical conversation with God or a billboard with our personalized message on it, the truth is that we would mess it up.

But in God's infinite wisdom, he gave us a better way to communicate with Him and understand His will than through our limited worldly means. There are ten ways that God talks to us and if you practice them, you can hear Him as clear as if you are on the front row of a concert of angels in Heaven.

**1. Holy Spirit** – God puts part of Himself in each of us who choose to accept Him as our Savior. In Romans 8:26-27, 1Corinthians 2:10-12 and John 14:25, God tells us that the Holy Spirit that dwells within us reveals His wisdom to us and acts like a great Counselor to us. Engage the Holy Spirit within you by taking your thoughts off the world and your selfish desires, and instead reflect on Him.

**2. His Word** – God reveals His thoughts to us in scripture. In 2Timothy 3:16-17, Hebrews 4:12 and John 1:1, God tells us that scripture is God-breathed and is for the purpose of teaching, rebuking, correcting and training us. Read your bible regularly and seek not to merely build your bible knowledge, but your understanding of God's thinking.

**3. Prayer** - God makes Himself known to us through prayer. It is through prayer that we petition God and find clarity in what is otherwise vague to us. God explains in Ephesians 6:18, Mathew 6:5-13, Mathew 7:7-11, and Luke 11:1-4, 9-13 that it is through prayer that we are to seek His will and find answers to our questions. Pray regularly giving God praise, repenting for your sins, and sharing with Him your thoughts and petitions.

**4. Motives** – God not only knows our actions, but our hearts. He knows your motives and when they are selfish or sinful, He doesn't fulfill them. As He says in Proverbs 19:21 and Mathew 23:27, it is not what is on the outside, but on the inside that defines a person. Check your aspirations and motivations. If they are not in alignment with God's Word, change them and a significant barrier to communicating with Him will be lifted.

**5. Relationship** – God wants a relationship with His children. He doesn't want you mindlessly following rituals, putting a check in the box for church attendance and keeping Him at arm's length until you need Him. He wants you to be with Him in good times and bad. He wants you to love Him, obey Him and depend on Him. As He says in John 14:21 and Hebrews 11:6, have faith in Him, believe in Him and earnestly seek Him.



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**6. Others** – God works through people. It is people that do His work and spread His message. As He says in Proverbs 12:15 and 24:6, wise men listen to the advice of others. Share your thoughts and feelings with other believers. Be part of a small bible study group. Seek wise counsel from preachers, teachers and other Christians who are also pursuing God's truth.

**7. Talents & Passions** – Your talents, experiences, passions and griefs tell a great deal about what God has in store for you. As He said in Mathew 25:14-30 and 1Corinthians 12:4-11, you were given certain abilities that He expects you to use. Understand what it is that drives you. Assess your skills and talents. Consider how you can apply the lessons learned from your formative experiences. Put your God given abilities, passions and knowledge to work.

**8. Action** – God expects us to take action. As He says in James 2:17, faith without action is dead. We can't sit around waiting for a sign. It is through action that God works in our lives. It is by trusting in Him and applying ourselves that we experience Him. It is by acting upon the guidance that we receive from the Word, prayer, the Holy Spirit, our relationships and our abilities that God reveals Himself to us. Get engaged in doing God's work.

**9. Circumstances** – Your circumstances provide insight into where God is working and wanting you to work. When doors start opening that are aligned to His will, go through them. As he explains in Matthew 25:34-40, we run into people and situations regularly that represent opportunities to do His will. While there may not be signs on billboards, there are situations and people that give us clear direction when we slow down and recognize them.

**10. Adversity** – God works through adversity. Most angel encounters are during adverse situations, particularly following a death. In Matthew 5:11-12, Romans 5:3-4, James 1:2-4 and 1Peter 1:6-7, God tells us that we learn and grow the most through adversity. It is through suffering that we reach our peak potential. While few people look forward to adversity, know that when you are in it, you are growing. Replace your worrying with rejoicing knowing that when you come through it, you will be better for it.

God gives us plenty of ability and opportunity to hear Him and to take responsibility for what we've heard. Listen to Him through these means, act on what you hear and you will experience the peace and joy of His will and love.

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