

## To the Teacher

The information below is to help you in teaching the lesson. DO NOT read this page to the students. Instead, teach the information in your own words. Be sure to finish the student's lesson as well. The Scripture references in parentheses are for additional study, to round out the information given in the lesson. Become familiar with these passages as well, to provide additional Scriptures to your students.

The idea and some information for this particular lesson has been taken from Henry T. Blackaby's book, *Experiencing God*, Chapters 5, 12, and 13. (Blackaby, Henry T. *Experiencing God*. Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994.)

## Lesson 16 – God Speaks, Part I (Teacher's Lesson)

Opening: Answer the opening question. Explain that there are many different ways to communicate. The method is not as important as the fact that we communicate with our friends and family. God has communicated with man in different ways throughout history, and even today.

### Study Notes:

#### **Hebrews 1:1-2**

In the Old Testament, how did God speak to His people? In many different ways. Some examples are a burning bush, dreams, angels, visions, and through the prophets.

In the time of the Gospels, how did God speak to His people? Through His Son.

Jesus himself was God in the flesh. When Phillip said, "show us the Father," Jesus answered "Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father" (John 14:8-9).

#### **Acts 10:19-20**

Who told Peter about the arrival of the three men? The Holy Spirit

How does God communicate with us today? Through the Holy Spirit

God doesn't necessarily speak in an audible voice, but His intention and will can still be understood. One of the reasons I believe that God doesn't often use an audible voice today is that we have His written words in the Bible. His will has been made known.

#### **1 Corinthians 2:14**

This verse speaks specifically of how unbelievers cannot understand spiritual truth without the Holy Spirit. The beginning also applies to believers. To understand the truth of the Scriptures, we should be in communication with the Holy Spirit, allowing God to direct our understanding of the Scriptures.

#### **Romans 8:26-27**

Why do we need the help of the Holy Spirit when we pray? We don't know what to pray. What advantage does the Holy Spirit have that we do not? He knows the mind of God.

What does the Holy Spirit do for us? He intercedes for us.

Praying in agreement with the will of God is important to having a correct understanding of prayer. This is the true meaning of Psalm 37:4. If we allow our desires to be shaped to delight Him, He will give us those desires.

**\*\* Special\*\* - What about new revelations from God?**

Some religions say that the Bible is not the final revelation of God and that God still reveals new things about Himself that have the same authority as the Scriptures. The answer to this is that we have everything we need about the revelation of God in the Bible. Perhaps there are new applications of God's truth to help us deal with issues that did not exist in the time of Christ (like the Internet, the media, etc.), but God's truth remains unchanged. Even Jesus, in His Sermon of the Beatitudes did not change what had previously been written in the Scriptures, but gave the correct interpretation of God's law.

**\*\* Special Two \*\* - Which Bible?**

There are many different translations of the Word of God available – some better than others. The short answer is that the translation you can read and understand is preferable to one that you don't read because you cannot understand it. However, some translations take liberties with the text that we would not agree with, for example The New World Translation. Generally, the King James Version or the New International Version are good translations. The King James Version is more of a word for word translation, while the New International Version uses a more every day language. The Living Bible uses even more flexibility in its translation, and very simple language.

*Summary:* God speaks to His people through the Bible and prayer to reveal Himself, His purposes, and His will.

Application:

Commit time daily to pray and Bible reading. Encourage students to make a firm decision to be obedient in this matter as well. Having daily time with the Lord does not immediately make us holy, but it puts us in a place where God can begin to change our hearts.

## Lesson 16 – God Speaks, Part I

### **Staying in Contact**

How do you prefer to stay in contact with friends – by letter, e-mail, telephone, or face to face?

Read Hebrews 1:1-2 and answer the following:

In the Old Testament (the past), how did God speak with His people?

In the time of the Gospels (or the last days), how does God speak with His people?

Read Acts 10:19-20 and answer the following:

Who told Peter about the arrival of the three men?

How does God communicate with us today?

The Holy Spirit is the medium through which God speaks with His people, but He still uses different methods. There are four primary methods and they all work together. This does not mean that God cannot use another method, these are just the most common.

### **The Bible**

The Bible is a book written by men, but inspired by the Spirit of God. This is the reason why the Bible is called “the Word of God” because God inspired the Bible to reveal His purposes and His ways to humans. This communication is a process with a defined sequence:

1. You read the Word of God (the Bible).
2. The Holy Spirit reveals the truth through His word.
3. You adjust your life to the truth of God.
4. You obey it.
5. God works in and through you to accomplish His purposes.

Observe that the first step is that you read the Bible. For God to communicate with you through His Word, you should be reading it on a constant basis. Then the Holy Spirit can take His Word, that is already in your heart and mind, and reveal truth to you. We should also ask that God direct our understanding, because only He can reveal spiritual truth (Read 1 Corinthians 2:14).

### **Prayer**

Praying is, simply, talking with God. It is also listening to Him. For the majority of people, it is easier to talk than to listen, but both are important in our relationship with the Father. What God reveals to us sometimes in prayer is closely related to what He reveals in His Word. One more time there is a sequence of events:

1. The Holy Spirit allows you to pray in agreement with the revealed will of God (generally, through the Bible).
2. You adjust your life to the truth.
3. You watch and wait for direction confirmed by or developed from the Bible, circumstances, y the church (other Christians).
4. You obey.
5. God works in and through you to accomplish His purposes.

What do you do if you do not know how or what to pray? Read Romans 8:26-27 and answer the following:

*Verse 26* - Why do we need the help of the Holy Spirit when we pray?

*Verse 27* – What advantage does the Holy Spirit have that we do not have?

*Verse 27* – What does the Holy Spirit do for us?

In the following lesson, we will talk about other ways that God communicates with us, but these are two important keys. If you want God to communicate with you, you have to spend daily time in prayer and Bible reading. How often do you do these things? If you commit to spend 20 minutes each day in pray and Bible reading, sign below and see how God will begin to teach you His will.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Scripture to memorize:

“Whoever belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.”

Juan 8: 47