

TURN THE TV OFF DEVOTIONAL

By: Pastor Samuel Aj Williams

Day 1: Turn Down the Volume

Devotional

We live in a world that never stops talking. From the moment we wake up, we're bombarded with notifications, news alerts, social media updates, and endless chatter. It's like trying to have a conversation at a rock concert - nearly impossible. Yet in all this noise, God is speaking. He's not shouting over the chaos; He's waiting for us to create space to hear Him. Think about how children instinctively knew to turn off the TV when thunder rolled in. They understood that when something bigger was happening, everything else needed to be quieted. The same principle applies to our spiritual lives. When we sense God wanting to communicate with us, we don't need Him to compete with the noise - we need to turn down the volume on everything else. This isn't about waiting for dramatic moments or unmistakable signs. It's about recognizing that God's voice often comes as a gentle whisper that requires our full attention. The question isn't whether God is talking; it's whether we're willing to create the quiet space necessary to hear Him. Today, consider what 'volume' you need to turn down in your life to better hear from God.

Bible Verse

'Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.' - Psalm 46:10

Reflection Question

What specific distractions or 'noise' in your daily routine might be preventing you from hearing God's voice more clearly?

Quote

Turn the TV off. God is speaking.

Prayer

Lord, help me recognize when You're speaking and give me the wisdom to quiet everything else around me. Teach me to create sacred space in my busy life where I can hear Your gentle whisper. Amen.

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Day 2: The Center of God's Voice

Devotional

Have you ever tried to tune into a radio station that wasn't quite clear? The static and interference made it hard to understand what was being said. But when you found the right frequency, everything became crystal clear. God's voice works similarly - it's not random or scattered, but has a clear center: Jesus Christ. Throughout history, God has spoken in many ways - through prophets, dreams, and creation itself. But the writer of Hebrews tells us that in these last days, God has spoken to us through His Son. Jesus is the ultimate revelation of who God is and what He wants to communicate to us. When we're trying to discern if we're hearing from God, we must ask: does this align with what Jesus taught and demonstrated? Does it reflect His character of love, truth, and righteousness? Jesus said His sheep know His voice, and they follow Him because they recognize it. The more we study Jesus' words and ways, the more familiar we become with the 'frequency' of God's voice. This doesn't mean God only speaks through Bible verses, but it does mean that everything He says will be consistent with the character and teachings of Christ. When we anchor ourselves to Jesus, we're not chasing random spiritual moments - we're staying connected to the source of all divine communication.

Bible Verse

'Long ago God spoke many times and in many ways to our ancestors through the prophets. And now in these final days, he has spoken to us through his Son. God promised everything to the Son as an inheritance, and through the Son he created the universe.' - Hebrews 1:1-2

Reflection Question

How does knowing that Jesus is the center of God's voice change the way you approach listening for divine guidance in your daily decisions?

Quote

God's voice is not random. God's voice is not scattered. God's voice has a center, and that center is Jesus Christ.

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for being the clear revelation of the Father's heart. Help me anchor my understanding of God's voice in who You are and what You've taught. May I recognize Your voice because I know You intimately. Amen.

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Day 3: Moving Closer, Not Louder

Devotional

We often think that if God really wants to get our attention, He'll speak louder. We wait for the burning bush, the audible voice, or the dramatic sign. But what if the issue isn't that God needs to speak louder, but that we need to move closer? Imagine trying to hear someone whisper from across a crowded room versus sitting right next to them. The volume doesn't change, but your ability to hear clearly does. God's voice doesn't have to be loud to be authoritative. It doesn't have to shake the ground for your life to shake into place. Sometimes the most powerful moments with God happen in the quietest spaces. Stillness isn't inactivity - it's surrender. It's the conscious decision to stop talking, stop rushing, and stop filling every moment with activity long enough to listen. When we draw near to God, He draws near to us. This proximity isn't just physical; it's relational and spiritual. The closer we are to God through prayer, worship, and time in His Word, the more clearly we can hear His gentle guidance. Instead of asking God to speak louder, perhaps we should ask ourselves: Am I close enough to hear Him? Am I still enough to receive what He wants to say?

Bible Verse

'Long ago God spoke many times and in many ways to our ancestors through the prophets. And now in these final days, he has spoken to us through his Son. God promised everything to the Son as an inheritance, and through the Son he created the universe. The Son radiates God's own glory and expresses the very character of God, and he sustains everything by the mighty power of his command. When he had cleansed us from our sins, he sat down in the place of honor at the right hand of the majestic God in heaven.' - Hebrews 1:1-4

Reflection Question: What practical steps can you take this week to 'move closer' to God and create more stillness in your relationship with Him?

Quote: *Some of us don't need God to speak louder, but we need. We need not him, but we need to move closer.*

Prayer: Father, instead of asking You to speak louder, help me draw closer to You. Teach me the discipline of stillness and surrender. May I find You in the quiet moments and trust Your gentle guidance. Amen.

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Day 4: Filtering Through Scripture

Devotional

Have you ever been convinced you heard God say something, only to realize later it was just your own desires talking? Our hearts can be incredibly convincing. We carry emotions, preferences, fears, and memories that can sound like divine direction if we're not careful. This is why Scripture is so crucial - it's not just one way God speaks; it's the measuring standard of how God speaks. Think of the Bible as a filter that helps us discern between our voice and God's voice. When we sense God leading us in a direction, we must ask: Does this align with His Word? Does it contradict any biblical principles? God will never lead you into something His Word warns against. He will never contradict His own character as revealed in Scripture. This doesn't mean God only speaks through Bible verses, but it does mean that everything He says will be consistent with His written Word. The danger comes when we rely solely on feelings or impressions without the anchor of Scripture. Emotions can be powerful and convincing, but they're not always reliable guides. When we filter our spiritual impressions through the truth of God's Word, we protect ourselves from deception and ensure we're truly hearing from Him. The Bible isn't a limitation on how God speaks - it's the foundation that makes His voice clear and trustworthy.

Bible Verse: *'For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires.'* - Hebrews 4:12

Reflection Question: Can you think of a time when your emotions or desires might have influenced what you thought was God's voice, and how could Scripture have provided better clarity?

Quote: *The soul carries emotions. The soul carries preferences, fears, memories and desires. And if we don't have scripture at our hand in our face as our filter to differentiate and discern what the Spirit is saying, we will mistake what we want for what God said.*

Prayer: Lord, give me wisdom to discern between my voice and Yours. Help me use Your Word as the filter for all spiritual impressions. May Your truth be the foundation that makes Your voice clear and trustworthy. Amen.

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Day 5: Servants Hear Clearly

Devotional

There's a profound difference between being a spectator and being a servant. Spectators watch from the sidelines, commenting and critiquing but never fully engaging. Servants, on the other hand, are actively involved, ready to respond, and positioned to receive instruction. God speaks most clearly to servants, not spectators. When we approach God with a servant's heart - ready to obey whatever He says - we position ourselves to hear Him more clearly. It's like the difference between a casual observer at a job site and an employee waiting for their next assignment. The employee is tuned in, ready to act, while the observer is just watching. Here's a powerful principle: God often speaks next after we obey what He last said. If we're still sitting on previous instructions, wondering if we really heard correctly, we might miss the next thing He wants to tell us. Obedience sharpens our spiritual hearing. When we act on what God has already revealed, we demonstrate that we're trustworthy with more revelation. This doesn't mean we earn God's voice through good behavior, but rather that our willingness to respond creates the right posture for ongoing communication. If what we're calling God's voice produces constant fear, instability, or confusion, something else is talking. God's voice may be firm, but it's never frantic. It may be corrective, but it's never full of fear. As we close this devotional series, remember: the question isn't whether God is talking. The question is, when He speaks, will we turn everything else down so we can hear Him?

Bible Verse: *'But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.'* - James 1:22

Reflection Question: What is one thing God has already spoken to you about that you haven't fully obeyed, and how might addressing this open your ears to hear Him more clearly?

Quote: *God speaks most clearly to servants, not spectators.*

Prayer: God, help me be a servant, not just a spectator. Give me the courage to obey what You've already spoken so I can hear what You want to say next. May my heart be ready to respond to Your voice with faith and action. Amen.

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Summary

Pastor Samuel Williams delivers a powerful message about recognizing God's voice amidst life's distractions and storms. Drawing from Hebrews 1:1-2, he emphasizes that God has always spoken and continues to speak through His Son Jesus Christ. The pastor uses the familiar Southern tradition of turning off the TV during thunderstorms as a metaphor for quieting distractions to hear God's voice. He explains that God speaks primarily through Scripture and requires stillness, obedience, and proximity to hear Him clearly. The message challenges believers to move beyond waiting for dramatic, audible voices and instead learn to discern God's gentle whispers through His Word and Spirit.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, as we gather together in this sacred space, we lift up the name of Jesus who has all power. You are our waymaker, seated in majesty, holier than we could ever imagine. Lord, as we come before You today, we ask that You quiet our hearts and minds so we can be open to what You want to speak to us. Help us to set aside our distractions, our worries, and our preconceived notions. Open our spirits to receive what You have for us in this time together. We pray that You would speak to each person here in the way they need to hear from You. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Ice Breaker

Growing up, what was one house rule in your family that everyone just knew without it being explained - something that was just understood?

Key Verses

1. Hebrews 1:1-2
2. 1 Kings 19:12
3. Psalm 46:10
4. John 1:1

Questions

1. Pastor Williams talks about turning off the TV when storms come. What are some 'TVs' or distractions in your life that make it hard to hear God's voice?
2. The sermon mentions that God speaks through His Son Jesus and Scripture. How has God spoken to you through His Word recently?

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3. Why do you think we sometimes expect God's voice to be dramatic or audible rather than gentle and through Scripture?
4. The pastor says 'God often speaks next after we obey what He last said.' Can you think of a time when obedience to God's previous instruction led to clearer direction?
5. What's the difference between hearing God through our emotions/feelings versus hearing Him through Scripture and the Spirit?
6. How can we cultivate more stillness in our lives to better hear from God?
7. The sermon mentions that God's voice may be firm but never frantic. How can we distinguish between God's voice and voices of fear or confusion?
8. What practical steps can we take this week to 'turn off the TV' and create space to hear from God?

Life Application

This week, commit to spending 10 minutes after your prayer time in complete stillness, listening for God's voice. Additionally, choose one area of your life where you know God has already spoken through His Word but you haven't fully obeyed, and take a concrete step toward obedience. Keep a journal of how God speaks to you through Scripture during your daily reading.

Key Takeaways

1. God has always spoken and continues to speak primarily through His Son Jesus Christ and Scripture
2. We often miss God's voice because we expect it to be dramatic rather than gentle and through His Word
3. Hearing God requires stillness and proximity, not hurry and distance
4. Scripture serves as our filter to distinguish God's voice from our own emotions and desires
5. Obedience to what God has already said opens our ears to hear what He wants to say next

Ending Prayer

Father God, we thank You for speaking to us today through Your Word and Your Spirit. As we leave this time together, help us to carry the truth that You are always speaking into our

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daily lives. Give us the discipline to turn off the distractions and create quiet spaces where we can hear Your gentle whisper. Help us to be obedient to what You have already spoken so that our ears may be open to what You want to say next. May we anchor our souls in You, knowing that even in the storms of life, You are present and speaking. Keep us close to Your Word and sensitive to Your Spirit. We love You and thank You for being the God who speaks. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.