**SEASON 1, EPISODE 2: SPIRITUAL HEARING**

Thank you for joining us today for the One Mission—One Movement Podcast. We believe that God has one mission on his mind (to reach the lost) and one movement on this planet (the Church of Jesus Christ). As experienced church leaders, Wayman and Steve discuss topics related to Pursuing God’s Presence, Contending for Mission, and Growing the Church.

At some time or another, many of us have wondered: Can I really hear God’s voice? Well, in this episode, Wayman and Steve continue to Pursue God’s presence by addressing that very question.

Remember, we’ll be dropping new episodes every other Monday, so be sure to rate, review, and subscribe for all the updates. And once again, thanks for joining us.

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**INTRO:**

**Steve:** In the last episode, we covered SPIRITUAL HUNGER. In this episode, we want to cover SPIRITUAL HEARING. Wayman, why do you think SPIRITUAL HEARING is so important?

**Wayman:** Well, hearing from God directly impacts our relationship with God, and I’m so glad that God is still speaking today. Now, He rarely speaks in an audible voice, but He will whisper to the inner sanctuary of your heart and mind through the presence of the Holy Spirit. Jesus Himself said in John 10:17, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.” So, the optimum question is not, “Is God speaking?” but “Are we hearing Him?”

**Steve:** Exactly. There is a story told of Franklin Roosevelt, who often endured long receiving lines at the White House.

Example: FDR complained that no one really paid any attention to what was said. One day, during a reception, he decided to try an experiment. To each person who came down the line and shook his hand, he murmured, "I murdered my grandmother this morning." The guests responded with phrases like, "Marvelous!” “How lovely.” “Keep up the good work.” “We are proud of you.” “God bless you, sir." It was not till the end of the line, while greeting the ambassador from Bolivia, that his words were actually heard. Nonplussed, the ambassador leaned over and whispered, "I'm sure she had it coming."

God has to wonder sometimes, “Is anyone out there really listening to me?” So there are certainly a few challenges that come along with spiritual hearing.

**CONVERSATION:**

**Wayman:** Well, I think there are really two challenges:

***(1) Discerning the voice of God***

***(2) Obeying the voice of God.***

God will whisper and say, “Share your faith with your neighbor.” We will question, “Is that God speaking to me or me speaking to me?” Or, we will be out to eat, and God will whisper, “Give that waitress a $100 tip.” Is that God or me?

First of all, we know the difference by whether it appeals to our flesh or spirit. If it appeals to the flesh, it’s usually us. If it appeals to the spirit, it’s usually God. Sharing your faith with your neighbor is not something your flesh would speak to you about doing. Giving a waitress a $100 tip is not something your flesh would do. Returning your tithe to God is not something your flesh would do.

**Steve**: Psalm 143:8 says, *“Let me hear of your unfailing love each morning, for I am trusting you. Show me where to walk, for I give myself to you.”* ***Hearing from God is above all a matter of intimacy.*** We often ask, “Is God leading me to do this? Is this the direction I should go?” and we are uncertain about the answer. What we forget is that, ***first, there must be intimacy and friendship, then there will be instruction and direction.***

So I ask myself, “Spiritually speaking, who do I wake up with every morning and who do you lay down beside every night? Who do I eat meals with? Who do I engage in conversation with the most?” The more I pray sincerely, the more I meditate on God’s Word, the more “in tune” I am with what He is saying, the more we’re on the same frequency, so to speak.

**Wayman:** Absolutely. So again, there are two challenges here. You’ve addressed the first: *discerning* the voice of God. But what about *obeying* the voice of God. I like to call this part the “C’mon God” syndrome. God speaks and says, “Share your faith with your neighbor” or “give the waitress $100 tip,” and our response is “C’mon God...” So for many of us, the challenge isn’t really about hearing God’s voice as it is about actually OBEYING God’s voice.

**Steve:** Yes, that’s always the real obstacle: obeying God’s voice. How many times in the Bible does the Lord say, ’If only you would obey My voice… if only you would do what I’m telling you to do.” The greatest achievement of Jesus was that he succeeded where Israel had failed. Like His earthly ancestor, David, Jesus was a man after God’s own heart, a man who would do anything and everything that God asked Him to do. He wasn’t merely a hearer of the word, but a doer.

**Wayman:** And Steve, for that very reason,I’ve often wondered if “spiritual hearing” is even more important than “spiritual seeing.” Remember, the Scripture doesn’t say, “Who has eyes to see, let him see.” No, it says, *“He who has ears to hear, let him hear”* (Matt. 11:15). That’s why that “name it and claim it” theology doesn’t really work—because ***we get what God says and not what we see.*** You can lay your hand on a new car that you see and claim it all you want to, but you won’t get what you see—you get what God says. And in the same way, you can claim a certain job that you want, but you won’t get what you see—you get what God says.

**Steve:** Think about the story of Abraham and the sacrifice of Isaac.

Example: God commands Abraham to present Isaac—the son he loves more dearly than life and his only true heir—as a burnt offering to the Lord. Abraham prepares everything and takes Isaac to the designated spot, Mt. Moriah. As the two of them climb the mountain, Isaac asks, “Where is the animal for the sacrifice?” Abraham replies, “The Lord will provide.” The Hebrew here means literally, “The Lord will make it seen.” And that’s what happens. Just as Abraham, with fear and trembling, puts the knife to his son’s throat, they hear a ram caught in the nearby bushes.

Our trust in and obedience to God’s promises and commands literally make the unseen provision appear. ***First, you hear, then obey, and only then do you see.***

**Wayman:** All through Scripture, ***the revelation of a thing comes before the manifestation of a thing.*** God will reveal something in word and then manifest something in deed. The word will come before the work.

The word “revelation” in the Greek happens to be the word “*apakalupsis*,” which is connected to our English word “apocalyptic.” Think about that. Have you ever considered the idea that God’s revelation is really apocalyptic? The “*apakalupsis”*or apocalyptic nature of God’s Word rolls back the curtain of what was hidden and affords us a glimpse into God’s divine plan for our day and time.

Steve, I want to ask you a question and would love to hear your response to this: What would happen if we decided to spend a few more minutes on the mountain-top?

**Steve:** Like Moses, I believe we would truly begin to hear God’s voice and see His glory. Think of all the time Moses spent on the mountain top with God. Think of the intimacy of that relationship and how God was willing to open up to Moses, so to speak, and reveal His thoughts and plans to him.

Example: Sometimes a bride will wear a lace veil, and only when the couple has opened their hearts to each other and promised to love and cherish each other, will the veil be lifted for the kiss. It’s a moment of transparency, a moment of revelation, a moment of intimacy.In the same way, through Jesus Christ, the veil has been lifted for us to experience that same kind of intimacy that Moses enjoyed. We get to experience a certain measure of God’s glory, and in the process, He greets us with a holy kiss.

**APPLICATION:**

**Wayman:** Now, as we close out every session, we want to reinforce the notion that ***“when your mission is clear, your decisions are simple.”*** So, Steve, if we know that Spiritual Hearing will require obedience and intimacy, what simple decision needs to be made to spend a few more minutes on that mountaintop?

**Steve:** Well, if our mission is to introduce others to Jesus, then we will decide each day to spend time alone with Him and get to know Him better. Because if Jesus remains a stranger to us, how can we effectively introduce him to others? If we call him, “Lord, Lord,” but won’t listen and obey him, others will find our claims to truly know him unconvincing. If he remains irrelevant to how we live, how can he be relevant to others? So setting that daily appointment to spend time in the Word and engage in prayer is going to be crucial for spiritual hearing.

**Together:** Until next time, we are One Mission—One Movement, all to Him.

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