

God Speaking

by David Wang

God desires to communicate with us, but we often respond with blame-shifting and excuses, and it's essential to see God, experience God, get right with God, and confess our sins to have a rightful response to Him.

Duration: 34:53

Scripture: Exodus 14

Topics: "Gods Voice", "Relational Theology"

Description

This sermon delves into the concept of God asking questions to humanity throughout the Bible, highlighting the relational aspect of these inquiries and the importance of responding to God with humility and surrender. It emphasizes the need to see, experience, get right with, hear, and respond to God in order to have a genuine relationship with Him, drawing examples from biblical figures like Isaiah and Moses.

Transcript

We were catching up at Pastor Alex's study, talking about what we have been doing during the past few years, and he was asking me what was the fun, what was the greatest fun, and I must admit that for the last few years, joining Dr. Jack Hayford in conducting a postgraduate program inside China, almost twice a year together with Dr. Jack Hayford, we'll be teaching a class of 75, 80, and these are urban Christian church leaders. They are sophisticated, they are the intelligentsia, they are the professors, they are the teachers, they are the radio broadcasters, they are the journalists, they are the lawyers, and they are the, I mean, they are the cream of the crop of the Chinese society of today, and they are coming together, and we are studying under the leadership of Dr. Jack Hayford, and I remember during a private lunch, there was this medical professor asking Dr. Jack, now that you have been in full-time Christian ministry for over 60 years, what do you discover to be the strangest thing about God? Strangest thing about God and typical of Dr. Jack Hayford, and very quietly, and yet very profoundly, Dr. Hayford said that he is still in talking terms with me. Did you hear it? That God is still in talking terms with me.

As I pondered upon that reply, I discovered something that I would consider to be the phenomenon, the mystery, the unexpected nature of God, that throughout the Bible, God will actually ask us, man, questions. God, the omnipotent, God, the omniscient, God, the omnipresent, that he will actually ask us, the mere finite human creature, that he will actually ask us questions. Not only that, from the way we reply, God, I guess I have to add another omni to the nature of God.

Omnipotent, yes. Omnipresent, yes. Omniscient, yes.

But with us human, God is also omnifrustrated. Absolutely, totally omnifrustrated. I mean, from the very beginning of time, Genesis chapter 3, in the cool of the evening, remember, that God would come into the garden, and as he would come, okay, Adam and Eve, they actually confessed, we heard your, not noises, we heard your voice.

That means as God would approach the garden, God would actually beckon, calling out, Adam, Adam, Eve, and Eve, that God would actually earnestly and eagerly call out their names. God was desperate. God was eager.

God was desirous. It's not just us. And he walks with me, and he talks with me, and he tells me I am his own, and the joy we, we, we, we, we, we, we, we, we, God and I, we share together the joy of our communion, the joy of our relation, the joy of fulfilling the purpose of creation and the purpose of being, you and I being created.

And that is to have this warm and intimate relationship with God. But then, on that evening, Adam and Eve, they hid themselves. And God, omnipotent, God, omnipresent, God, omniscient, that he would actually ask, where are you? Where are you, Adam? Where are you, Eve? Somehow, somehow in his creation of us, he did not key in the right, the right data that we would answer him properly.

And from the very first question, we were afraid of you. We were, you, you caused us fear. And God asked Adam, did you eat? Ah, ah, ah, hold it.

Hold it. Hold it. It was the woman you created for me.

That became the pattern of our replying God. And God said, woman, did you, hold it, hold it, hold it, it was the snake you created. Don't laugh, don't laugh.

That became the gene of our response to God. Cain, Cain, where is your brother? And Cain said, what are you talking about? Am I my brother's keeper? You remember? That became the pattern of the way we relate with God. By the way, by the way, only potent, only present, only seen.

God never asks us a question for an informational reply. God always asks a question of us for a relational reconciliation. God asks in order to invite.

God asks in order to cultivate. God asks in order to, hear me, beg us to the joy of the purpose of creation. His joy, my joy.

By the time we actually just got to the book of Exodus, that's it. By the time we get to Exodus, God was ready to throw in his towel. He said, Moses, Exodus 14, Moses, my people.

Now the Chinese translation actually say, my children, my children. They do not follow my commandments. And they do not abide by my laws.

And God, in his only frustration, remember, he actually asked Moses, how long do I have to wait? Remember that? How long? How long do I have to wait? Throughout the ancient of times. The author of the book of Hebrews said, from the beginning of time to now, God has never stopped sending his messengers and sending his prophets to us. Why? To ask.

To reveal. The original language said to reveal. And that is to open up his arms.

That was the verb, the verb meaning of to reveal. To open up his arms. To you.

To me. God opened his arms to us. But we rejected him.

But we slighted him. But we became such an expert of talking back to God. Oh yes, by the time we get to Malachi, the last book of the Old Testament, just four short chapters, the book of Malachi.

Four chapters. Eight questions. Eight invitations, if you will.

Eight cultivation, if you will. Eight begging, if you will. Eight times.

God said, my people, don't you know I love you? And God's people, again the Chinese translation said God's children. God's children, they said, how did you love me? God said, I love you. And we said, how? And God said, why are you doing this? Why are you bringing to me the deformed, the unworthy sacrifices? Remember that? The pigeon that is lame, the lamb that is sick.

Why would you even bring those things to me as sacrifices? God was hurt. God was trying to say, please, please, please. And how do we reply? Why are you so petty? We call God petty.

Why are you so petty about these things? And when God said, you have stolen from me. Now, can God be any stronger? You have stolen from me. And we said, where did we steal from you? By then, God became silent.

400 years. So wounded. So rejected.

So hurting. So grieved. For 400 years, God was silent.

But that was not the nature of God. But that was not the persona of God. But that was not the Godness of God.

He wanted to communicate with us. He wanted to relate with us. He wanted to just be intimate with us.

And therefore, John the Apostle, in his writing, he said, In the beginning was the Word. And the Word was with God. And the Word was God.

And the Word became flesh. Everything else has failed. All the prophets.

All the messengers. All the angels. They have all failed.

And the Son became flesh. Dwelling amongst us to reveal. Again, reveal.

Opening the arm. Fully. The grace of God.

John 1.14. And the truth of God. But then, even the Logos. Even the Son of God.

When He asked questions, He didn't get any better treatment than His Father. Remember, Jesus also asked questions. Remember? He asked His disciples, How come that you just witnessed yesterday the feeding of 5,000 and yet you are so lacking in faith? Remember that? Ye men of little faith.

Is that right? That He would actually have to ask them? Can't you? He was desperate. Jesus was desperate. And then He had to ask His disciples.

The handpick tree. Can't you just stay alert with me for but just one hour? Remember that? Remember that question? Can't you hear the frustration? Can't you hear the desperation? Can't you hear the loneliness? Can't you just wait with me for but one hour? He had to ask His favorite favor. Do you love me? Do you love me, Peter? Do you love me more than this fish and this bread? Do you love me? Remember that? Oh yeah, Peter answered Him once, once, once.

Peter answered Him correctly. And that was when Jesus asked, what do people think of me? What do you think of me? And then suddenly, purely by luck, folks, purely by luck, Peter said, Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. Wow.

Correct answer for once, but by luck. Because the very next sentence, I forbid you to get to Jerusalem. Get thee behind me, Satan.

As I studied the Word of God, I discovered perhaps through the entire Bible, there was just one man on one occasion that he replied to God correctly. He didn't just give God an answer, a reply, a response. He actually gave God the relations.

The second year after the death of King Uzziah, chapter 6 of the book of Isaiah, remember? And this young, noble man, he said, Lord, remember? He actually got down on his knees, and it had taken upon him the posture of a slave. In that time, Isaiah was a noble man, a young nobility. And he had learned.

That's how a slave responds when he heard a bell rang by the master. He would run into the tent, and he would get down on his knees, and he would actually prostrate before the master, and he would say, Lord, here am I. Send me. And as I studied that passage, I discovered Isaiah, not only he had replied to God with a genuine servant's posture, but for the next 60 years, 60 years, Isaiah followed up on that reply.

He became the prophet to the unregenerated, to the rebellion, remember? To the people of hardened heart, to the people of stiff neck, to the people of their faces like flintstone, remember? But for 40 to 60 years, Isaiah kept his promise. Send me. Now, how did Isaiah get to this kind of a right answer? I discovered there were prerequisites.

There were prerequisites for us to hear God and for us to reply to God correctly. We all want to hear from God. How do I hear God's voice? How do I hear God's voice? But perhaps just as importantly, how do I reply when I hear God's voice? There are four prerequisites in the case of Isaiah.

Isaiah, the year after the death of King Uzziah, he said, I saw God. Remember? I didn't hear God. I didn't just learn about God, but I have actually seen God.

Folks, I tell you the truth. Anytime, anytime when we actually get to see God, you will find God in that position and that position only. And which is, Isaiah said, I saw God high, exalted, and seated on the throne.

Praise God. That is our God. He is high above all other gods.

He is exalted by our worship, by our praise, by our thanksgiving, by our acknowledgement. He is exalted and he is on the throne. The kings and the princes, they came together and they said, this king, this king,

this king, let us come together and let us change and find his anointing.

Remember? Psalms, chapter 2. And God, the Bible said, he was trembling, he was, no. The Bible said, God seated on high on his throne and he laughed. Scorns, actually the original text.

Our God, see him now, see him now. He is high, he is exalted, and he is on his throne. Praise God.

And then, the second prerequisite, not just seeing God, Isaiah experienced, personally, a close encounter with the first kind. He experienced the three DNAs of God. He experienced God's glory.

Remember? That his garment filled the glory of God. Then, Isaiah experienced, I mean, even the seraphim, the seraphim, the handpicked, handpicked gods of honor to serve before the presence of Lord God Yahweh. Those were the handpicked.

And even those seraphim, two ways they covered their face. Two ways they covered their shame. Two wings flying and they were shouting and echoing one another.

What were they shouting? Holy, holy, holy. God's glory. God's holiness.

And Isaiah, the threshold, the post, I mean, the post and the threshold, they connected themselves to the foundation of the temple. And they were shaken as the temple was filled with smoke. The might of God.

The glory, the holy, and mighty endeavors of God. Moses, Moses, a personal friend of God. Face to face, remember? Forty days and forty nights on Mount Sinai.

He begged to see God, remember? I want to see you. I want to see you. God said, nobody can see me and be alive.

No. I want to see you. I want to see you.

God said, okay. Moses, on this rock, on this rock, there was a cleft. And you hid yourself in that cleft.

And you put your face against the wall. And then I would go behind, remember? God would just pass Moses. And even by that passing, the glory, the holiness, the might of God, they imprinted upon Moses.

That when he came down from the mountain, the people were fearful. That's what the Bible said. And they said, Moses, Moses, please cover your face with a handkerchief because we dare not see God.

But he's inviting us now to see God fully revealed. He's now inviting us to experience God, his grace, his truth. And the third prerequisite of a rightful response to God is confession.

You cannot, you cannot get any closer to God without coming to the point, woe is unto me. I'm damned, doomed, doomed. Woe, cursed is unto me for I am a man of unclean lips.

Oh, by the way, unclean lips. And I live among a people of unclean lips. I check, I check.

Talking back, that was it. It wasn't just a foul language now and then. It wasn't just cursing an enemy here and now.

It was our habit of talking back to God. That is our unclean lips. Praise God.

Praise God. As I study the Word of God, that's all that is required of us. I put it in a very simple formula.

I confess, he resolves in any and all situations. I confess, he resolves. It isn't my job to find a solution for the predicament that I got myself into.

I couldn't, I couldn't find a way out. No way. We have a tendency of digging, digging and digging deeper and deeper and deeper into our predicaments.

All I can do is I confess, he resolves. Woe is unto me and the angelic beings, they took the charcoal from God's altar and bring it over and cleanse his lips. And only then Isaiah heard, kick-started in Genesis 3, where are you? Where are you? You can go.

Whom can we send? On the seventh day of the Chinese New Year, Dr. Tai is one of my students, I went to a city in China. They call it the Jerusalem of China. That city had the highest percentage of Christians, over 20%.

And I was invited by the church eldership and leaders to go and to conduct a special send-off for the business marketplace Christians. And the theme of the day was, here am I. I thought, okay, business people, maybe I'll have 50, you know, since I'm going to send them out. And with that kind of a theme, they would be expected to be sent out.

So maybe I can expect maybe 100. But by the time I got there, the event was held in a church built on the mountaintop. And the sitting capacity of the little house church, is 3,700.

House church. Quite a big house. Packed.

Packed to full capacity. But instead, instead of just going into that response, here am I. We have said it before. Folks, you have said it.

I have said it. But did we really mean it? Instead of just hitting onto that note, I talked to these business community leaders about the prerequisites before you can say, here am I. Send me. And the prerequisites, folks, is the same this morning.

Right here. See God. Experience God.

Get right with God. Then hear God. Would you bow your head with me? The same invitation.

I'm not asking you to say, here am I. Send me. People, I want you to join hands with your family members. Join hands with one another.

Examine your relationship with God. Get close to Him. Say unto Him, I want to see you.

I want to experience you. I want to get right with you. And I want to hear your question.

Folks, if this is your desire, if this is your prayer, would you stand up to your feet? I want to pray for you. Okay, okay. There's no way I'm going to get you to come out to the front.

Tell you what, would you do this with me? Just do this. I mean, this is universal. This is a sign of surrendering.

This is a sign of invitation. This is a sign of offering ourselves as a living sacrifice, which is holy, which is acceptable, which is the right thing to do, the Bible says. And would you just repeat after me, sentence by sentence, repeat after me.

Our Heavenly Father, we stand before You, not by our own right, but by the grace of Your Son Jesus. And only by His grace, we stand before You. We want to see You.

We want to experience You. We want to get right with You. We want to hear from You.

And we want to respond to You.

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