



Hearing God Through Circumstances

Announcements

- **Dream Team** – Sunday, July 8th , 5:00 pm at LCC, GCC and SSC.
Help get your small group serving together by encouraging those in your group to attend *Dream Team Orientation*.

Warm-up

Have you ever been part of a childhood prank? What was it?

Pranks are often the result of circumstances where children feel they can get away with normally unacceptable behavior. In today's discussion we will be learning how to tell if God is using circumstances to talk to us.

Word & Application

What has been the toughest decision you have ever made? What role did circumstances play in your decision? Do you think God was using the circumstances to speak to you? Why or why not?

Our discussion today will be based on **3 Keys to Properly Understanding Circumstance:**

1) Circumstances are conformational, not directional

We should never make decisions based solely on circumstances. The Holy Spirit must lead us.

Read Luke 15:11-16. What do you think caused the Prodigal Son to seize the opportunity to leave?

The Prodigal Son had the opportunity to receive his inheritance prior to his father's death and he took it because he was directed by his feelings.

What problems arise if you are led by your feelings instead of being led by the Holy Spirit?

Read Jeremiah 17:9. If we are led by our feelings instead of by the Holy Spirit and God's Word, then we will often find ourselves deceived. Not every opportunity before you is God's will for your life.

2) God can use circumstances to get our attention or redirect us.

Read Jonah 1:1-4. Why did God send the storm?

The storm wasn't God's first choice for communicating with Jonah (v. 2). God first tried to communicate with Jonah by speaking directly to him. It was after Jonah disobeyed that God had to send the storm.

What does this story communicate about God's character and how he wants to relate to us?

God is a loving father who wants to communicate with us. He will use the necessary means to get our attention in order to speak to us.

3) God can use circumstances to save us from future destruction

Read James 1:2-4. What do these scriptures tell us about how we should respond in difficult circumstances?

How has God used difficult circumstances to speak to you?

Trials don't mature you. It is drawing close to God in your trials (**Read James 4:8**), which matures you. This happens through engaging in the Bible, prayer and godly relationships.

If you truly know God through his word, prayer and relationships then you will know when to speak to your circumstances or when God is using circumstances to speak to you.

Throughout the *God Whisper* series we have learned how God speaks to us through the Bible, the Holy Spirit, godly counsel, dreams and visions and circumstances.

How has this series impacted your relationship with God?

Prayer

Ask God to help those in your small group to be able to hear God through their circumstances. Take time to ask everybody in your group what specific prayer requests they have and also what prayers they have had answered recently.