

WHOSE VOICE AM I HEARING?

-- Revd Canon Dele Agbelusi

Have you ever wondered how to recognize the voice of God in your life? Many people find themselves searching for guidance and clarity in a world full of noise and distractions. Understanding what the Bible says about God's voice can help you navigate your spiritual journey with confidence. There is no exclusive club meant for "super Christians" who are the only ones that hear and discern God's voice always. Sometimes, distinguishing our own ideas from God's leading is difficult. And what if our urges are actually coming from the enemy of our souls and not from God?

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God, is it you, my thoughts, or Satan disguised as your messenger? How do we "take every thought captive" (2 Corinthians 10:5) when we aren't sure where the thoughts are coming from?

There is a story of a Native American and his friend who were walking together in downtown New York City, near Times Square in Manhattan. It was during the noon lunch hour and the streets were filled with people. Cars were honking their horns, taxicabs were squealing around corners, sirens were wailing, and the sounds of the city were almost deafening.

Suddenly, the Native American said, "I hear a cricket." His friend said, "What? You must be crazy. You couldn't possibly hear a cricket in all of this noise!"

"No, I'm sure of it," the Native American said. "I heard a cricket." The Native American listened carefully for a moment, and then walked across the street to a big cement planter where some shrubs were growing. He looked into the bushes, beneath the branches, and sure enough, he located a small cricket. His friend was utterly amazed. "That's incredible," said his friend. "You must have super-human ears!"

"No," said the Native American. "My ears are no different from yours. It all depends on what you're listening for." "But that can't be" said the friend. "I could never hear a cricket in this noise." "Yes, it's true," came the reply. "It depends on what is really important to you. Here, let me show you."

He reached into his pocket, pulled out a few coins, and discreetly dropped them on the sidewalk. And then, with the noise of the crowded street still blaring in their ears, they noticed every head within twenty feet turn and look to see if the money that tinkled on the pavement was theirs.

“See what I mean?” asked the Native American. “It all depends on what’s important to you.”

What’s important to you? What do you listen for? Some people say that there is no God, and that He never speaks to us anymore. But perhaps they can’t see or hear Him because they aren’t listening for him. They are living for themselves, not for God.

If you are in tune with God, you will be able to notice Him at work in your life and in the world around you. You will be able to hear Him when he speaks.

What you pay attention to, will literally JUMP at you even through the clutter of this insanely noisy world we live in. The things that constantly attract your attention don’t happen by accident. That happens because that is where your attention is focussed. Getting into your subconscious and rewiring old patterns takes deep inner work, and this requires investing time.

There are several ways the Holy Spirit speaks to us, and we must learn to discern them: The primary way God speaks to us is through **an internal witness**—an inner knowing. Romans 8:16 says, *“The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are the children of God.”* We may not feel a physical sensation, but our spirit alerts us when something is right or wrong.

God may speak through **an inner voice**—often described as a soft whisper or our conscience. Proverbs 20:27 states, *“The spirit of a man is the lamp of the LORD, searching all the inner depths of his heart.”* This voice warns us when we are doing something wrong or urges us to take action.

Occasionally, the Holy Spirit speaks directly with authority. This is a clear, undeniable word from within. In Acts 13:2, we read, *“As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’”* When the Holy Spirit speaks this way, there is no question that it is God. **God’s voice will always align with His Word. If something goes against God’s Word, it is not from God.**

How can we learn to hear God’s Voice more clearly?

1. **Meditate on the Word of God** – The Bible is called “God’s Word” for a reason—it is the primary way God speaks to us. It is also the way we learn about God’s character and His dealings with people throughout history. The more familiar we are with God’s Word, the easier it becomes to recognize His voice. His Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path (Psalm 119:105).
2. **Pray:** If we are confused about whether or not we are hearing God, it is good to pray for wisdom (James 1:5). (It’s good to pray for wisdom even when we don’t think we’re confused!) We should ask God to make His will known to us clearly.
3. **Follow the Holy Spirit’s Leading**
The Holy Spirit wills to fill us (Ephesians 5:18) and produce His fruit in us (Galatians 5:22–25). No matter what decisions we’re making day to day, we can’t

go wrong when we exhibit love, joy, peace, etc., to the glory of God. When we have a random thought pop into our heads, we must learn to “test the spirits” (1 John 4:1). Will following this inclination lead to more Christ-likeness? Will dwelling on this thought produce more of the fruit of the Spirit in me? The Holy Spirit will never lead us to gratify the sinful desires of the flesh (Galatians 5:16); He will always lead us toward sanctification (1 Peter 1:2). Life on earth is a spiritual battle. The enemy is eager to supply diversions to distract us from God’s will (1 Peter 5:8).

4. **Be Quiet and Listen** – Take time to seek God and listen for His guidance. The world is full of distractions, but when we quiet our hearts, we can hear His voice clearly.
5. **Be Obedient** – Obeying the voice of God sharpens our ability to hear Him. The more we respond to His leading, the clearer His voice becomes in our lives.

God wants each of His children to hear His voice and be led by His Spirit. This isn’t meant for a select few, but for everyone who is born again. We must grow in spiritual maturity so we can walk in God’s perfect will.

Jesus said, “For this people’s heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them, but blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear” (Matthew 13:15-16).

Connect Groups:
Celebratory lunch
- John Truscott

As everyone ought to be aware by now the Connect Groups are hosting a bring-and-share lunch for everyone on **Sunday 21st September**. This will be one of Christ Church’s irregular Sunday lunches but this time with a specific theme.

We shall meet in the Hall after coffee following the morning service for a short introduction to each of the seven Connect Groups, and for one or two testimonies of why people value their membership of their particular group.

This will be followed by a bring-and-share lunch with some of the food provided by church – so come whether you are bringing dishes with you or not.

This will be a great opportunity for members of the seven groups to meet with those from the other groups, and for those not yet in a group to hear of their value.

We see it as something of a celebration of Connect Groups whose purpose is:

To help each other grow as disciples of Jesus Christ through:

- applying the Bible to our daily lives (several groups take a Sunday sermon and think through its practical application);
- growing in love and service for each other, supporting each other in prayer and encouragement (so offering a real sense of belonging to the group);
- and, so, ‘connecting’ with Jesus Christ and ‘connecting’ with each other.

Come to lunch on Sunday 21st September whether you are a member of a group or not and join in the celebration! The invitation is for everyone.

If you are not yet a member of a group and would like to join one or find out more, speak to me or any Group Co-ordinator at any time. For a list of groups and their Co-ordinators, pick up the bright blue A4 sheet in the foyer.

Sermons at Christ Church *Sin and Forgiveness*

7th September sees the start of a new series of sermons at Christ Church which will run through to mid-November. The topics which our preaching team will be sharing over these several weeks will be as follows:

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| Sept 7 | Genesis 3:1-24 | The Fall | How it all begins – disobeying God |
| Sept 14 | Romans 5:15-19 | The Second Adam | Redeeming what was lost |
| Sept 21 | Genesis 4:1-16 | Cain and Abel | The mastery of sin |
| Sept 28 | Romans 7:7-25 | The Power of Sin | Victory over the powers |
| Oct 5 | Exodus 20:1-21 (Mark 12:28-34 The summary of the Law) | The ten commandments | Defining sin: the transgression of boundaries |
| Oct 12 | Joshua 6:24-7:26 | Jericho, Achan & defeat at Ai | The seriousness of & penalty for sin |
| Oct 19 | Hebrews 9:11-28 | The cost of forgiveness | The precious blood of Jesus |
| Oct 26 | Judges 2:6-3:6 | Introducing the Judges | Idolatry and disobedience |
| Nov 2 | 1 Corinthians 10:14-22 (Mark 12:13-17 Paying taxes to Caesar) | Fleeing Idolatry | Worshipping Jesus |
| Nov 9 | Remembrance Sunday: the Sin of not remembering | | |
| Nov 16 | 2 Samuel 11:1-27 | David, Bathsheba and Uriah | Lust, greed, abuse of power, cover up – a combination of transgressions creates havoc |
| Nov 23 | 1 John 1:8-10* | Sin & Forgiveness | Thank you, Jesus |

* "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us."

Caring for Creation



The next meeting of the Christ Church Caring for Creation group is scheduled for **15th September at 8.00pm**. As ever, anyone is welcome to come and join in the discussions. A Zoom link will be given in the Church's e-news-sheet in advance of the meeting.



SEASON OF CREATION

The theme of this year's **Season of Creation** (1 September to 4 October) is '**Peace with Creation**', or to



PEACE WITH CREATION
SEASON OF CREATION 2025

put it another way, 'shalom with creation' (Isaiah 32:14-18). Even if life gets busy, the Caring for Creation group is exploring individually and collectively what that looks like for us and our lives. Can we encourage you to do the same? If you are interested, there are lots of resources to help at <https://seasonofcreation.org/> and from where you can download the 2025 Celebration Guide.

A date for your diaries: On **5th October** we invite you to join us after church for shared soup and bread (and potentially cheese too!) and to watch and discuss the Peter Harris talk that some of you will have heard Susie talking excitedly about in August (it excited Debbie and Felicity too!). More details to follow.

A Rocha Blogs and Field Notes Podcasts

There have been no further A Rocha blogs or Field Notes Podcasts posted during August, since **>imprint<** no.137 was published. The latest, at the time of producing this September **>imprint<** are still those posted on 3rd July, namely the blog entitled '**Trees, the tree and the Tree**', by Stuart Blanch and the podcast, episode 53, entitled '**Aotearoa New Zealand's women in creation care**', with **Rev. Jacynthia Murphy** and **Rev. Silvia Purdie**.

However it's likely that a new blog and podcast will be posted around 4th September, shortly after this edition of **>imprint<** is published. So do keep an eye out for updates by using the following links or QR codes.



Go to <https://blog.arocha.org/> /*blue QR* to read any **A Rocha blogs** and <https://arocha.org/en/field-notes-podcast/> /*dark green QR* (or from wherever you get your podcasts), to listen to any of the archive of **Field Notes Podcasts**.



***Brown toilet rolls start conversations... or not?** – Susie Ryan*

The Ryan Family swapped from using white/bleached to brown/friendly toilet rolls over a year ago. Despite many visitors of all ages to our home who make use of our downstairs cloak room and upstairs bathroom no one has ever commented or asked us

about our brown toilet rolls – not even my own teenage kids. To be fair it may not be everyone's choice of conversation but I've taken it to mean that folk don't mind what colour your toilet roll is and to me it is an easy small win in the fight against chemicals and plastics with less pollution and waste and more care and love towards restoring God's creation – plus they are very 'low dust' which pleases my husband no end.

'It is communities living in poverty who are experiencing the impacts of the plastics crisis first and hardest as plastic pollution blights their health, livelihoods and neighbourhoods.' [Journeying towards an ambitious plastics treaty – Tearfund](#)

Toilet Roll

It's white because someone, somewhere, decided it looked nice. So they bleached it, added chemicals, and called it progress. We thought that was unnecessary. So our paper is brown, as nature intended.

We're Tom and Leila, founders of Naked Paper.

[Our Story | Naked Paper – The UK's Best Eco Toilet Roll](#)

Like most people, we never thought about toilet paper - until one day, we did. Why is it white? Who decided that? And why add bleach and chemicals just to flush it away? So we made a better alternative. Unbleached, simple and a whole lot kinder to the planet. Because toilet paper doesn't need to be white. But it does need to be better.

It's brown because it's greener

Sustainability isn't just part of what we do. It's everything we do.

Our beautiful, natural colour isn't just a choice - it's the result of skipping unnecessary bleaching and processing. We wanted every part of our paper to be carefully considered. So, from our fossil fuel free factory to the eco-friendly ink on our boxes, every choice is deliberate. No bleach. No plastic. No shortcuts. Just smarter, greener decisions that add up to something much bigger.

'Creation groans with the weight of plastic pollution, and people living in poverty are suffering the worst consequences.' From rivers clogged with plastic to breathing in fumes from burning waste, God cares deeply for his creation. And he calls upon us to help restore it. The scale of the crisis is huge but so is the power of the church and the power of each one of us making small changes.

[Your church can help to tackle the plastics crisis – Tearfund](#)

(that's <https://www.tearfund.org/get-involved/resource-pack/plastics-resources>)

So, can we start a conversation about a small change? Could today be the day you start using brown toilet rolls? Is there a reason why Christ Church couldn't start using brown toilet rolls in our building?

To find out more about brown toilet rolls, delivered straight to your door, speak with Susie R or Google 'naked paper toilet roll' or click on the link:

<https://uk.nakedpaper.com/products/unbleached-bamboo-toilet-paper>

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editor@ccstalbens.org.uk