

The Silent Voice

Have you ever wondered about that still small voice that guides you through life? Have you ever experienced a call to do something that seemed to come out of nowhere? I love to listen for this voice. You may identify the voice as one from your spiritual guide. For me it is the voice of God. Before you become concerned about me hearing voices, let's consider how we experience the silent voice.

As I prepared a presentation for a women's retreat, I first selected the topic: A Personal Walk with God, then asked God to speak to me. I asked him to tell me what activities I should offer in this presentation to inspire women to initiate or enhance their own unique walk in life. The response directed me to start with a song titled, Speak Lord, by Marianne Uszler. The song begins with the refrain and the words are, "Speak, Lord, I love to listen to your voice..." I do love to listen to the silent voice.

Very often I will call out and ask, 'tell me what to do?', 'what am I supposed to do?', 'how should I do this?' And then I wait for an answer. Now, it might seem strange to listen for something that is silent, right? I can appreciate your skepticism. When someone claims to hear the voice of God we often jump to the conclusions that they are hallucinating. I would like to point out some of the ways we hear the silent voice.

We start by being open to receiving messages through all of our senses. We need to let go of the idea that all communication is audible requiring only our sense of hearing. Think for a moment about someone who is hard of hearing or deaf. They communicate by using their other senses to receive messages. They use their eyes, their sense of smell, and their sense of touch. Here is an example, imagine you cannot hear the timer on your oven go off. How then would you know when the cookies were done? You would become more aware of the way they smell as they are baking and then check them to see if they have raised or browned enough. You might even use your sense of touch to see if they were cooked all the way through by touching the tops of them for firmness.

Why then do we think we need to rely on our hearing to interpret the silent voice of our spiritual guide, of God? The answer is we don't. Every day you are receiving messages through the people you meet,

the changes in nature, the timing of life. I experience these messages all of the time and you do, too, whether you realize it or not.

During the retreat the silent voice was heard by many. Stories were shared allowing us to experience a connection we may have missed had we not opened ourselves to the silent voice among us during our time together.

The snowy days of winter allow the silent voice to be heard more clearly as the world becomes quieter. So when you realize that you remembered you were out of milk a block from the grocery store on your way home (the night before the snow storm) don't be too quick to praise your good memory. Instead, take the time to praise the silent voice.

Questions to ponder:

- What senses do I access to receive messages?
- When do I hear the silent voice?
- How do I respond to the silent voice?

May God's Peace be with You,
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Speak Lord by Marianne Uszler

Refrain:

Speak, Lord, I love to listen to your voice.
See, Lord, here I am.

Verse 1:

My heart is silent, Lord. My soul is still,
waiting upon your voice. Tell me your will.
Empty, I place myself before your face.
Touch me now in the silence of faith.

Verse 2:

Your word is life, O Lord, through all my days,
like a radiant light guiding my way.
Your law stands firm, O Lord, strong as a rock.
It endures through the night and the storm.