The Power of a Whisper

Hearing God.

Having the Guts to Respond.

By Bill Hybels
Lesson 1 - Hearing Our Communicating God

Opening Scripture – “While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.” Acts 13:2-3

The Big Idea – How do we learn to hear from God?

**Preparation:** Read Chapters 1, 4 and 10 of The Power of a Whisper and answer the following review questions:

Questions to consider –
1. What stood out to you about Gerry Couchman’s kidney-donation story?

2. How do you determine when a whisper is really from God?

3. Review the first filters of which Bill Hybels spoke. Have you used any of these filters in understanding God’s promptings? Explain.

4. Isaiah 30:21 says, “Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, ‘This is the way; walk in it.’” What does a promise like that mean to you?
Lesson 2

Opening Scripture – “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.” Proverbs 3:5-6

The Big Idea – The God who is always accessible will direct your path.

**Preparation:** Read Chapters 3 and 6 of The Power of a Whisper and answer the following review questions:

Questions to consider –

1. What does a person stand to gain by learning to slow down and thoroughly test every whisper they receive?

2. From chapter 3 in the reading and from the video we just watched, Bill Hybels talks about the three lens of whispers – assurance, admonition, and action. Has God prompted you in any of these three ways? Explain.

3. During the normal course of your day, what distractions, assumptions, or fears keep you from engaging God with greater frequency, persistence, and passion?

4. What do you need to do in your life that will help you to hear God better?

Before our next meeting, pay attention to the whispers you receive and what you were doing when you received them.
Lesson 3

Opening Scripture – “Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, ‘Come with me by yourselves to quiet place and get some rest.’” Mark 6:31 (also Matthew 14:23; Mark 6:45-46; Luke 4:42; Luke 5:16; and Luke 6:12)

The Big Idea – Making room in our lives for the presence of Christ

Preparation: Read Chapters 2, 5 and 8 of The Power of a Whisper and answer the following review questions:

Questions to consider –

1. Have you heard any of the ways or disciplines that people use to practice the presence of God in their lives?

2. Are there any ways or disciplines that you have tried in your journey with God? How did it go for you?

3. Did you receive any whispers from God since the last meeting? What were they, and what were you doing when you received them?

4. From the grid of spiritual disciplines, which ones appeal to you most in this season of your life, and why?
**Inward Disciplines**  |  **Outward Disciplines**  |  **Corporate Disciplines**
---|---|---
**Meditation:**  
The ability to hear God’s voice and obey his word  | **Simplicity:**  
Recentering ourselves on the reality that all we have is from God and then making our resources available to those who need them  | **Confession:**  
Claiming Christ’s redemption by admitting to God and to others one’s sin  
**Prayer:**  
Communicating with God so that you can be aligned with his will  
**Solitude:**  
The experience of inner fulfillment whether alone or in a crowd (as opposed to loneliness, which is inner emptiness)  
**Worship:**  
To know, to feel and to experience the resurrected Christ in the midst of a gathered community  
**Fasting:**  
Abstaining from food or other necessities for spiritual purposes  
**Submission:**  
The ability to lay down the terrible burden of always needing to get one’s own way  
**Guidance:**  
The ability to receive knowledge of the direct, active and immediate leading of the Holy Spirit  
**Study:**  
Renewing the mind so that old, destructive habits are replaced with new, life-giving ones  
**Service:**  
The practice of radical self-denial in favor of meeting another’s need  
**Celebration:**  
Embodying a joyful spirit of festivity in daily life because of all that Jesus Christ has done for humankind
Lesson 4

Opening Scripture – “He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” Micah 6:8

The Big Idea – Hearing God’s whispers and the sacrifice of doing them

**Preparation:** Read Chapters 7 and 9 of The Power of a Whisper and answer the following review questions:

Questions to consider –
1. What reality about our world at large troubles you most these days?

2. For many people, even the most disruptive whispers began with a simple, straightforward task such as, “Read a book...” “Watch a film or documentary...” or “Ask a question...” When have you known a seemingly innocuous activity to catalyze a meaningful pursuit in your life?

3. When have you been “discomforted” or disrupted in some significant way by a whisper or a prompting from God? Describe the experience, including whether or not you chose to obey the whisper received.

4. Sometimes obeying God’s whispers requires sacrifices of personal comforts. What comforts would be difficult for you to give up in order to obey God’s whispers? What scriptural promise of God could help you to overcome a practical concern you might face as you seek to obey God’s whispers?
Lesson 5

Opening Scripture – “Learn to do right. Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.” Isaiah 1:17

The Big Idea – Despite the sacrifices involved, there is no greater satisfaction to be found than to joyfully engage in a God-guided whisper-led journey.

**Preparation:** Answer the following questions:

Questions to consider –
1. In each of the following God-ordained priorities, describe what each priority would look like in your every-day life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>What it looks like in everyday life</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Learn to do what is right.</td>
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<td>b. Seek justice</td>
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<td>c. Encourage the oppressed</td>
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<td>d. Defend the cause of the fatherless</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. Plead the case of the widow</td>
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2. What do you do to practice God’s priorities in your daily life?
3. In order to be open to God’s whispers or promptings today, are there any things that need to change in my life? What tasks need to fall away? Are there any that need to be added?

4. Is God showing you anyone who is being oppressed who needs your encouragement? If so, how will you encourage them? If not, are you willing to ask God to open your eyes to who that might be?

Assignment –
1. Now, do it!