

So, with these basic elements as a background, here are specific suggestions on how to listen to God:

1. Take Time

Find some place and time where you can be alone, quiet and undisturbed. Most people have found that the early morning is the best time. Have with you some paper and pen or pencil.

2. Relax

Sit in a comfortable position. Consciously relax all your muscles. Be loose. There is no hurry. There needs to be no strain during these minutes. God cannot get through to us if we are tense and anxious about later responsibilities.

3. Tune In

Open your heart to God. Either silently or aloud, just say to God in a natural way that you would like to find His plan for your life - you want His answer to the problem or situation that you are facing just now. Be definite and specific in your request.

4. Listen

Just be still, quiet, relaxed and open. Let your mind go "loose." Let God do the talking. Thought, ideas, and impressions will begin to come into your mind and heart. Be alert and aware and open to every one.

5. Write!

Here is the important key to the whole process. Write down everything that comes into your mind. **Everything**. Writing is simply a means of recording so that you can remember later. **Don't** sort out or edit your thoughts at this point.

Don't say to yourself:

This thought isn't important;
This is just an ordinary thought;
This can't be guidance;
This isn't nice;
This can't be from God;
This is just me thinking... etc.

Write down Everything that passes through your mind:

Names of people;
Things to do;
Things to say;
Things that are wrong and need to be made right.

Write down everything:

Good thoughts - bad thoughts;
Comfortable thoughts - uncomfortable thoughts;
"Holy" thoughts - "unholy" thoughts;
Sensible thoughts - "crazy" thoughts.

Be honest! Write down everything! A thought comes quickly, and it escapes even more quickly unless it is captured and put down.

6. Test

When the flow of thoughts slows down, stop. Take a good look at what you have written. Not every thought we have comes from God. So we need to test our thoughts. Here is where the written record helps us to be able to look at them.

- a) Are these thoughts completely honest, pure, unselfish and loving?
- b) Are these thoughts in line with our duties - to our family - to our community?
- c) Are these thoughts in line with our understanding of the teachings found in our spiritual literature?

7. Check

When in doubt and when it is important, what does another person who is living two-way prayer think about this thought or action? More light comes in through two windows than one. Someone else who also wants God's plan for our lives may help us to see more clearly.

Talk over together what you have written. Many people do this. They tell each other what guidance has come. This is the secret of unity. There are always three sides to every question - your side, my side, and the right side. Guidance shows us which is the right side - not who is right, but what is right.

8. Obey

Carry out thoughts that have come. You will only be sure of guidance as you go through with it. A rudder will not guide a boat until the boat is moving. As you obey, very often the results will convince you that you are on the right track.

9. Blocks

What if I don't seem to get any definite thoughts? God's guidance is as freely available as the air we breathe. If I am not receiving thoughts when I listen, the fault is not God's.

Usually it is because there is something I will not do:

:: something wrong in my life that I will not face and make right;
:: a habit or indulgence I will not give up;