

## Four Keys to Intimacy, Mark Virkler interview

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**Host:** I am holding Four Keys to Hearing God's Voice. It comes with a workbook, and I'm told that after spending time with you, 100% of the people involved hear God's voice.

**Mark:** It's a money-back guarantee. If it doesn't work, we give you the money back on the book. Or if you take it as a college course, we give you the money back on the course. It's very simple, very easy and the Lord has helped us make it simple, make it easy so we can hear the voice of God. It took me ten years. I was a Christian 10 years, listening for the voice of God and couldn't hear it. 'Cause inside my head there's no voice, there's just thoughts. And so I didn't know why I couldn't hear a voice, 'cause Jesus said, "My sheep hear My voice."

I thought, 'I'm a sheep. I've asked You into my heart, but there is no voice in my head.' And I asked people what His voice sounded like, they said, "Well, you know that you know." And I said, "No, I don't know that I know!" And no one could simply say to me, "God's voice sounds like spontaneous thoughts that light upon your mind while your eyes are fixed on Jesus." No one could spit that sentence out.

Finally, I took a year, I had a thought come to me, "Take a year of your life to hear God's voice."

**Host:** You took a year??

**Mark:** His impact on my life.

**Host:** Very interesting. Okay, Four Keys. What are the Four Keys to hearing God's voice?

**Mark:** Alright, the four keys. They're all found in several places in the Bible, Habakkuk chapter 2 is one place. He goes to a quiet place. So key number one is to quiet yourself down. He keeps watch to see, which means he's taking the eyes of his heart, and he's making visions somehow. And he keeps watch to see what God will speak to him, so you recognize God's voice as spontaneous thoughts. And Key number 4 is, God said "Inscribe the vision" - so, write it down.

So, we have Stillness, Vision, Spontaneity and Journaling. Those are the four keys.

**Host:** Okay, let's start with Stillness. We are in a crazy, busy culture, and we have to learn how to be quiet. You've got a great chart here, showing the problems. For example, thoughts of things to do. I'm trying to get quiet and hear from God and all I can think about is my "to-do" list.

**Mark:** Okay, so that's pretty easy. What you want to do is just simply take those thoughts and write them down, all right? Because it's probably the right side of your brain communicating to the left side, because on the right side you have intuition, on the left side you have reason. Reason forgets 90% of what you know, intuition forgets nothing. So, as you quiet yourself down

in prayer, you tend to shift hemispheres to the right side. Intuition pops up and says, "You forgot this and this." If I push it down, and say, "Go away!" it says, "You're not listening!" So, if I write them down, I'll say, "Those are good ideas, I'll take care of those." And now I can go beyond that thought to the next level of thought within me. That deals with the first thing.

**Host:** Put it out of the way...

**Mark:** Put them out of the way by writing them down.

**Host:** Now I'm having thoughts of sin consciousness. I mean, how can I come to God? Why would God speak to me?

**Mark:** Exactly! You know, and so the best way to handle that is, of course - repent. If you've committed sin, you just repent. And the same sin a hundred times? You can repent a hundred times, He'll forgive you a hundred times. Now you may not forgive yourself a hundred times...He'll forgive you. And when I began to hear His voice, I was usually beating on myself and saying, "God, don't You want to hit me?" He'd say, "Not really." "But, don't You want to hit me?" "Mark, your sin is covered by the Blood - let it go!"

And He told me to "put on a robe of righteousness," just like a woman does on her wedding gown, on her wedding day - you put on a robe of white, which is Christ's righteousness. And you stand there complete in Christ's righteousness - not your own. You're seeing yourself as a miserable sinner, you're not even seeing yourself Biblically correctly, 'cause correctly you are clothed with Christ - righteousness and radiant divine Glory. And so God will clean that up, your ungodly pictures. As you hear His voice, He'll say, "That's the wrong picture. Here's the picture you need."

**Host:** Okay. My mind is still flitting about. I'm covered in white, but my mind's going everywhere.

**Mark:** Alright, well - you know the best way I know to quiet myself down is to fix my eyes on Jesus, alright? Which is really the second key. You know, Habakkuk kept watch to see. So, if I will picture what I know to be true, Jesus is Emmanuel - God with me. He's right here, next to me. He's next to every single person. He says He is.

You can think it, or you can see it. If you see it, well, we say a picture is worth a thousand words. Okay? So, it has 1,000 times more impact if you see it. You've actually shifted hemispheres internally again, because thinking is left brain and seeing in imagination, or picturing, is right brain. So, if I want to get away from thoughts racing around, I can shift hemispheres internally, mechanically. I simply fix my eyes on Jesus, picturing Him here with me. And that drops me out of this reasoning mode, brings me over to a visionary mode - which is where intuition kicks in, the voice of God kicks in. So I shift internally by using pictures.

**Host:** That's quite a science behind these exercises.

**Mark:** Well, you know, you can understand a science or you don't have to understand the science. It's, I like to understand things, you know. But David used imagery all the time in the Psalms. You know, "Your steadfast love." He said, "Yeah, though I walk through the Valley of the

Shadow of Death, I'll fear no evil. Thy rod and thy staff comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me." He's picturing all the time.

And when I used to pray, I didn't picture. I just stayed in the left side of the brain, the thought. Because my culture said it's all about thinking. And Jesus said, "No...it's all about picturing." 'Cause "without a parable He taught them not." So, Jesus taught them in parables, picture stories all the time. He's living internally in a different place than I lived, 'cause He wasn't a Westerner. And so I had to learn how to step out of the Western culture, get at least to the Middle East, which is where Jesus was and embrace some of these things that my culture had dropped and said weren't relative and weren't to be used.

**Host:** It's not just about what's going on in your mind, it's getting in touch with your heart. And you've seen that that can be a problem, too, in hearing God's voice.

**Mark:** Um, hmmm...

**Host:** How do you get in touch with your heart?

**Mark:** Alright - you can just simply... Your heart is flowing all the time. The Bible says, "out of your innermost being shall flow rivers of Living Water." This He spoke of the Spirit. So, if I want to tune to the Holy Spirit within me, which I do in prayer, that verse says, "I tune to flow." "Out of your innermost being shall flow." So, we have flowing thoughts all the time. And the easiest way I know to get beyond my mind is to tune to flowing thoughts.

You wake up in the morning, there's flowing thoughts there, there's a song going through your mind. It's flow. I didn't used to have a theology for "flow". You know, I read the verse and memorized that verse. But I never owned it and said, "Hey, Mark. When you tune to flowing thoughts and flowing pictures, you tune into your heart and your spirit." So, I encourage people to tune into flowing thoughts.

**Host:** And, finally, a barrier can be just the need for additional time to commune with your mind that is poised and still.

**Mark:** Okay. So, you woke up late, didn't have time for morning devotions, driving on the road cranky and mean, you know? And you say, "My whole day is ruined because I didn't have my devotions on time." Well, you can hear God's voice in the car. You can hear God's voice when you're taking a shower and people do it all the time, because these are automatic activities that do not require your brain to be fully engaged. And so you're in the posture for prayer, because the posture for prayer is, "Be still and know that I am God."

So, I'm taking a shower, my mind is still, you know. I'm driving the car, my mind is basically still. Those are great times for God - that spontaneous flow thoughts to just light upon my mind. Might be a better time than when I'm at the altar praying, because at the altar my mind might not be still. I might be saying, "God! I'm dying! Please come to me!" And that's not stillness, 'cause my mouth is going, my mind is going. I'm charged emotionally. So, we tend to hear God's voice in the shower than we can at the altar, where you're seeking His face.

**Host:** I want to tell you that, as recently as this week, before coming here, I was rebuking myself for discounting a thought.

**Mark:** Yeah.

**Host:** That I realized after the fact was God going before me and giving me wisdom, so that I would be prepared for something.

**Mark:** Exactly.

**Host:** And I just brushed it off as something out of my own head...

**Mark:** Because we have not been trained to honor spontaneous flow in thoughts. I went to school, I went to college - so did you. No one said, "Hey, tune to flow and honor the flow." They said, "Tune to analysis and honor reason and logic." So, I had to change. I had to dethrone the god of rationalism and say, "Hey. Christianity is heart to heart, it's not head to head." And when God speaks, it comes as a flowing thought, out of my inner most being shall flow.

**Host:** Deep calls unto deep.

**Mark:** Deep calls unto deep and the verse for prophet is Nabah. And it means to bubble up. So, those thoughts that "bubble up" - that's the prophetic flow within you. But most of us don't have a theology for "bubbling thoughts". So, it's a powerful message of encouragement saying, "Mark, I know you feel awkward using vision and flow and journaling. But stick with it. It'll take you to a good place to be." Now, that's wonderful counsel, from the wonderful Counselor.

**Host:** Something that I have heard about, actually I was encouraging someone just a couple of weeks ago about journaling with the expectation that it's two way. That's one of your Keys.

**Mark:** It is. That was key number 4 - God said to Habakkuk "record the vision." Inscribe the vision. So God said, "I'm going to give you a vision, I'm going to speak to you" and if you go read Habakkuk - sure enough, God is speaking while he is writing. So it's two-way dialogue captured on paper. He starts out in chapter one complaining to God because he doesn't like what he sees in life, and then he quiets himself down and God gives him a vision, and he begins to write it out.

So, we teach people to do that. You know, write down, "Good morning, Lord! I love you. What do you want to say to me?" And then fix your eyes on Jesus, tune to flow, quiet yourself down and write the flow of thoughts that come back. And let God do most of the talking, because He's the smarter one of the two and He'll give you tremendous counsel. Five minutes of Him talking, you got it on paper. David did it, the Psalms are full of two-way journaling. The whole book of Revelation is two-way journaling, John writing out what God...

So, the Bible is full of this, and we encourage people to do this a lot. I was afraid He'd want to kill me or give me leprosy, because I was a sinner - a habitual sinner. And I found out He didn't want to kill me, He just wanted to hug me and love me. And I found He was laughing all the time, too, when I went to journal. He was laughing hilariously and having a good time, He was having a lot more fun than I was having! He said, "Mark, lighten up! It's okay, I've got it all under control." Until my whole view of Christianity changed, my whole view of God changed, my experience changed. This was THE transforming experience in my Christian life.

**Host:** Sure, you could enjoy being in your own skin a whole lot more, knowing that God's delighting in you!

**Mark:** Absolutely! Absolutely.

**Host:** I'm sure you would say, David said it didn't he, "how precious are Your thoughts towards me, how vast the sum of them." I think there's a lot of hearing potential that you've ignited here.

**Mark:** I hope so, 'cause my passion is that everyone of your listeners would learn to hear God's voice, every single day of their life.

**Host:** Pastor Mark, before we close, would you pray for those of us who are excited now and hoping that we could have this experience that you're enjoying with God.

**Mark:** I would be glad to do that. Father, just thank You that Your sheep DO hear your voice. Father, I thank you that You died on Calvary so that You could restore a relationship with us, we could have fellowship with You. And so Father, right now I pray for every listener, that the anointing that You have given to me to hear Your voice would be released into their hearts and their minds, the faith that You've given to me would be released into their hearts and their minds. And I release it to you right now, In Jesus' Name that with ease and simplicity you, too, will pick up those spontaneous thoughts and pictures that come from Almighty God. And Father, we thank you for that miracle of voice in our lives. In Jesus' Name, amen.

**Host:** Mark Virkler, thank you.

**Mark:** You're welcome.