

FREQUENCY

Tuning in to the Voice That Matters

A Four-Week
Student Discipleship Journal

LeaderTreks[®]
YOUTH MINISTRY

A Four-Week Student Discipleship Journal



This book belongs to:

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Frequency: A Four-Week Student Discipleship Journal
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ISBN: 978-1-939031-43-3

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Published by LeaderTreks25W560 Geneva Road, Suite 30
Carol Stream, IL 60188
www.leadertreks.com
877-502-0699



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STARTING NOW

God is constantly communicating with us, but in a world full of noise and distraction, it's easy to miss what he's saying. Sometimes, God speaks in predictable ways, like through Scripture, other believers, and the Holy Spirit. Other times, he uses the unexpected to get his message across. He even speaks through silence. In the coming weeks, you'll explore the many ways God speaks. You'll learn how to listen to God's voice—how to tune in to his frequency. You'll wrestle with what to do when you *don't* hear his voice, and what to do when you *do* hear his voice. When God speaks, he calls. God is speaking to all people and he's calling you to a lifelong adventure. Are you willing to listen to what he says and let him change your life?

HOW IT WORKS

This book has four weeks of journal pages to help you learn how God speaks to his followers in both surprising and everyday ways. You'll see that God is inviting you to start a lifelong conversation—all you have to do is listen. Each week takes you through seven days of questions to get you thinking, Bible studies to shift your perspective, and challenges to stretch you out of your comfort zone. Then, on the seventh day of the week, you'll get a break to recharge for the next week. It'll help you get into a rhythm of learning, growing, and putting that knowledge into action.



Throughout this journal, you'll also find the *MARKS OF A DISCIPLE*. These are things that Christ-followers are committed to and have in common, like connecting with God through prayer, applying his Word to our lives, serving without personal agendas, managing God's gifts, and many other things.

Remember, you'll get out of this book what you put into it. The challenges you'll encounter won't always be easy—they're designed to stretch you! Take a risk and use this journal to run hard toward God. When we make ourselves available to him, he'll transform us and use us in ways that will blow our minds!



**WEEK ONE
DISTRACTED**

INTRO

Have you ever been in a conversation with someone, but couldn't remember what they said at the end? On the flip side, maybe you've poured your heart out to someone, only to realize that they've clearly checked out. At some point, we've all tuned out while someone else was talking.

The definition of listening is “to take notice of and act on what someone says.”¹ Being a good listener requires action on your part, intentionally setting aside distractions and focusing on the person speaking. It takes practice and can be surprisingly hard even with someone we want to hear from!

Listening to God can be especially difficult because we usually don't audibly hear him talking. It can be easier to let distractions pull us away from noticing when he speaks. And sometimes he communicates with us in surprising and unexpected ways. Let's take a deeper look this week at the obstacles and expectations in our own lives that may keep us from hearing the voice of God.

DAY ONE: THE ART OF LISTENING

Sometimes, we can live life going through the motions. But we were created for so much more. Aren't you curious what? The amazing truth in God's Word is that if you can get this listening thing down and tune out competing voices, you can be connected to Jesus and experience closeness with him. If you can put aside your expectations of how you think God should communicate, then you're free to pay attention to how he is currently speaking. The big question is: are you going to ignore your distractions and practice the art of listening so you can experience his best for you?

Journal questions:

As we jump into the week, take some time to reflect on these journal questions:

Think about a friend who is extra good at listening. What makes them such a great listener?

What usually distracts you from listening well to others?

What are some ways you expect to hear God speak?

Name a way that God has spoken to you in the past.

What are some obstacles that keep you from listening well to God?

DAY TWO: FIRST THINGS FIRST

If Jesus came to visit you, what would you do? Maybe you would show him the coolest things about where you live. Maybe you would make sure he had the best food and the nicest room. Maybe you would have conversations or ask his advice. In today's passage, Jesus visited Mary and Martha, and we see how each sister reacted. Mary spent time with Jesus, while Martha focused on being a great hostess. Martha was distracted by serving. Serving is a good thing. But even good things can distract us from hearing God's voice. It can take time and effort to identify these things and put them away. How can you intentionally set aside the things that distract you in order to hear God's voice?

Use the **5P method** to prayerfully study **Luke 10:38–42**. *This title, 5P Method, is simply a way to help you remember this Bible study technique so you can use it to learn from other passages later.*

Purpose

Why do you think the author wrote this? Why is it important enough to be in the Bible? In a sentence or two, write what you think the overall theme or topic is.

Primary Verse

Which verse seems to contain the most important thought in the passage? Which one stands out most to you? Write it out.

Promises

Make a list of any promises you find in this passage.

Problems

If you find anything you don't understand—even if it's just a word—write it down as a question. Then ask someone for the answer or look it up yourself.

Practical Application

What do you need to change or work on so that what you have read is real in your life? Be specific—your application should tell who, what, and when.

It usually requires some kind of sacrifice to show we're serious about something. Anyone who is the best at what they do—athlete, businessperson, musician—makes sacrifices to succeed at what they love. The things we give up can be tangible, like food or social media, or they can be more abstract, like time or desires. We can all probably agree that sacrifice can be uncomfortable, scary, and even painful at times. If we're serious, though, about seeking to listen to God's voice in both expected and unexpected ways, then it's going to take sacrifice. It requires practice, giving up distractions of all kinds, and commitment. But the reward of hearing God speak is absolutely worth it!

Practice being a good listener in conversations today. Sacrifice your desire to talk about yourself and instead ask questions to show you're interested in what the other person has to say. Then record your experience below.

How easy or hard was it to focus on the other person more than yourself?

Did you hear anything unexpected as you practiced listening?

What else can you sacrifice as you practice listening to God?

"We often miss hearing God's voice simply because we aren't paying attention."

– Rick Warren²

With countless books, television shows, movies, websites, and social media platforms, there is certainly no shortage of entertainment and distraction. It seems that we are constantly bombarded with all kinds of messages. Amidst this information overload, it can be difficult to hear God's voice. But he is consistently calling to us through the noise. Sometimes God speaks in ways we expect, like through his Word or other people, but he also speaks in unexpected ways or at unexpected times. If we're not actively seeking out God's voice amidst the competing voices in culture and media, we're likely to miss it.



Disciples of Christ choose God over the distractions of life. (Luke 10:42)

Consider the quote above as you answer the following questions:

Why can it be hard to listen to God?

What things distract you most from hearing God's voice?

What steps can you take to minimize those distractions?

How can you practice paying more attention to God's voice?

Who can help and encourage you as you seek to hear God more clearly?

Throughout history, God has spoken to people in a large variety of ways. We expect to hear God through Scripture or through other people in the church. However, God often speaks in unexpected ways. There are many examples of God using surprising methods to get people's attention. He spoke to Moses in a burning bush (Ex. 3), communicated with Joseph through dreams (Gen. 37–41), and even shocked Balaam with a talking donkey (Num. 22). God is not limited by our expectations. Sometimes his voice is loud or straightforward, sometimes it's soft or subtle. His voice isn't one-dimensional, so we need to make sure we're paying attention and ready to hear him however he speaks.

Study **Zephaniah 3:15–17** carefully by using the **OPA method** for Bible Study: Observation, Principles, and Application. *Helpful tip: the more effort you put in to making observations, the easier the principles and application will be to see.*

Observation:

Compile all the facts found in this passage. Try to make 10–15 observations about what you read.



Principles:

Draw a few principles from the observations you made. What is God trying to teach you in this passage?



Application:

How will you apply these principles to your life? Be specific—a good application will tell who, what, and when.



DAY SIX: FOLLOWING THE LEADER

We need to pay attention to God's directions as we follow him or we could end up going the wrong way. The wrong way often includes hard consequences that can be avoided if we become active listeners. To be an active listener to God, we have to practice quieting the other "voices" in our lives. You've spent time this week thinking about what distracts you from hearing God's voice and come up with steps to practice good listening. Now it's time to take action!

Challenge:

Go somewhere where you can think without distractions. Maybe it's a quiet room in your house, your church, or somewhere outside. Turn off electronics and extra noise. Better yet, don't even bring your phone with you. Ask God to let you hear his voice and tell him you're willing to listen. Then be still and listen for what he says.

Afterwards, reflect on your experience with the questions below:

What was easy about your experience? What was challenging?

Even without normal distractions, how hard was it to focus on listening to God?

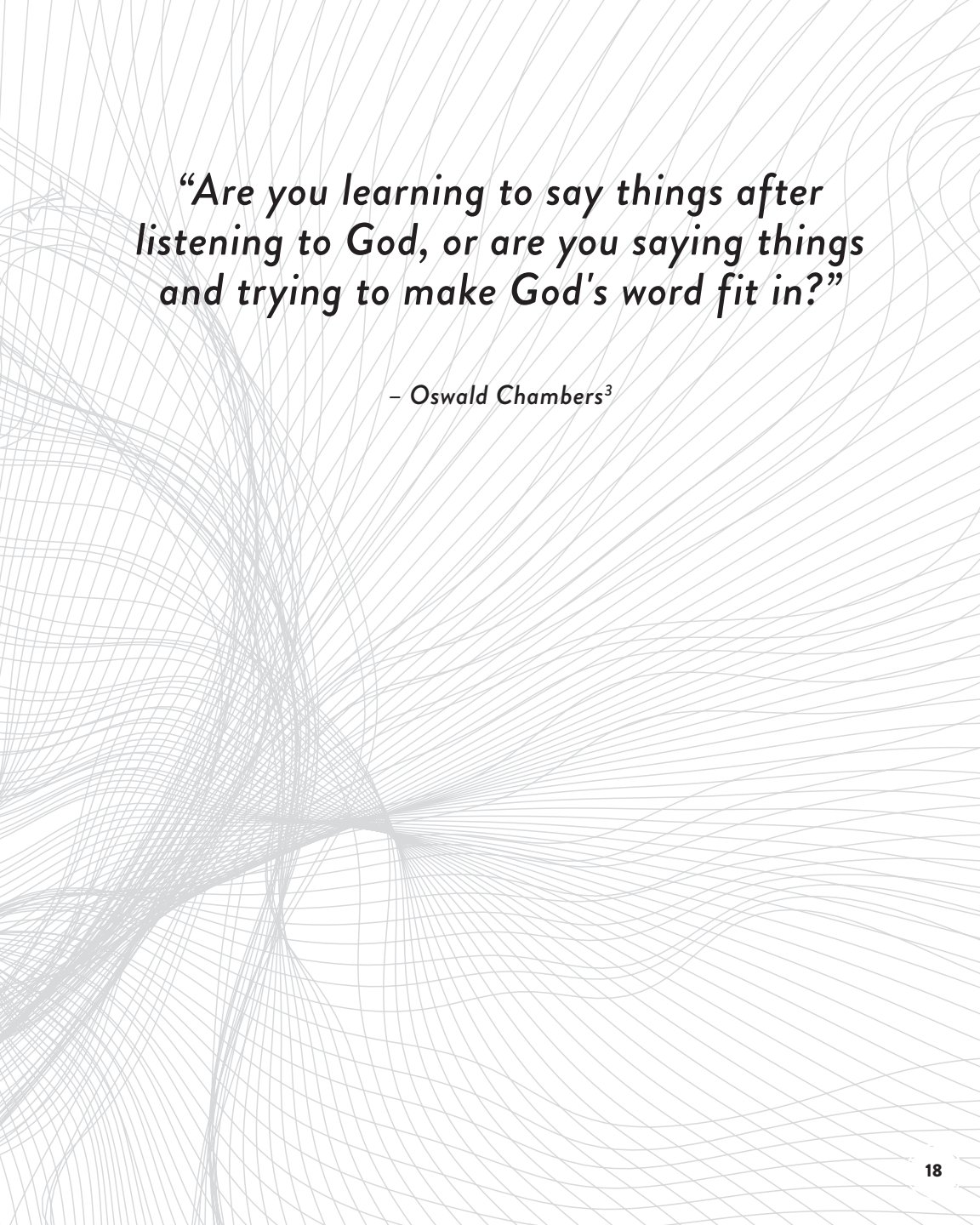
What do you think God was trying to speak to you? Does it line up with Scripture?

DAY SEVEN: SABBATH

Have you ever heard of someone refer to Sunday as the Sabbath? That means it's our day of rest. So today that's your challenge. Rest! Reflect on what you've learned so far, the challenges you did, or Bible verses that stuck out to you. Spend some time praying and talking with God. Recharge your batteries and refresh your mind. Then come back tomorrow ready to go deeper.

“And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done.”

Genesis 2:2



“Are you learning to say things after listening to God, or are you saying things and trying to make God's word fit in?”

– Oswald Chambers³