

# The Potter's Christian Life Center

SERMON NOTES  
with Pastor Greg Formey



## The Problem Of Hearing From God

**James 1:19-25**

Sunday, July 3, 2016

We have all noticed that the quality of reception on a mobile phone varies widely from, carrier to carrier, location to location, and phone to phone. The same is true with us. Our God is always communicating, but we are not always able to hear Him. We will identify nine barriers and how to avoid them.

### ACTIVE BARRIERS TO HEARING

But if you really want to hear from God — and what believer doesn't? — you have to understand what is keeping you from hearing from Him.

- Speaking when we should be listening

We sometimes get emotional and hasty when trying times come. This is a sure way to miss God's direction and instruction. James is cautioning us not to be cynical or to fall into error of complaining about your situation. Instead, stop speaking and start listening, and you will get direction in your trial.

#### **James 1:19-20**

**<sup>19</sup>Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. <sup>20</sup>Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires.**

Sometimes we don't give God a chance to talk to us. We've made up our minds. We want to do what we want to do, not what God wants us to do. Our hearts are hardened, and we're unwilling to listen.

- Impurity of heart

#### **James 1:21a**

**So get rid of all the filth and evil in your lives,**

Perhaps you can't hear the Word of God for you because your ears are clogged up with "filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness"-plain old sin. If I'm filling my ears with the music and the scenes, gossip, and junk of the world, I can't hear properly. I need to get rid of that stuff before I can really be tuned in to God's frequency.

- Resisting God's correction

**<sup>21b</sup>and humbly accept the word God has planted in your hearts, for it has the power to save your souls.**

Many people do not hear from the Lord when they read the Word of God because they lack a spirit of meekness before Him.

- **Pride**

If you think you don't need God in your life and want to handle things yourself, you're probably not listening for God to speak. Pride keeps you from being open to the possibility that God might want to say something to you.

- **Wanting to do things my way**

**James 1:22**

**But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves.**

Perhaps I can't hear the Word of the Lord because my mind is made up. James tells us we are to receive the Word with meekness, the implication being, "Lord, I'm in this trial or temptation or difficulty, and I need direction from You. I need Your Word to direct me, or I'm not going to do well. Therefore, I come to You not with my own agenda or plan, but meekly. Whatever You say, that's what I'll do."

## **PASSIVE BARRIERS TO HEARING**

**Confusion** - We can't hear from the Lord because we are mixed up.

**James 1:23-24**

**<sup>23</sup>For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. <sup>24</sup>You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. James clearly warns us not to think that seeing our reflection properly means we are doers of the Word.**

So many times our tendency is to think that just because we're reading the Word, we're obeying it. But I deceive myself after having seen in God's word what needs to be taken care of, and then do not do it. In the same way, knowing we should pray is not praying. Neither does knowing we should worship make us worshippers.

**Fear** - Some cannot hear God speak because they are afraid to hear Him speak. Maybe you think that hearing God's voice makes you some kind of religious fanatic.

**Bitterness** - When you hold on to hurt, resentment, or a grudge, then you're not going to be able to hear God, because your heart is hardened. It has grown cold and made you defensive, even to God's love.

**Unforgiveness** - Some of you have been hurt badly, whether it happened this week or years ago, and you are still holding on to it. You must let it go, not for their sake, but for yours. The resentment is killing you! Resentment is a self-inflicted wound that allows people from your past to continue to hurt you today. You need to let it go, not because they deserve forgiveness but because you need to get on with your life.