

RECOGNIZING GOD'S VOICE

God's truth is consistent. He is not going to tell you one thing in the Bible and then tell you something different in an impression. God will not disagree or argue with Himself. When you get an idea in your mind, how do you know if it's from God? How do you know it's not your own desire or even a lie from Satan? Don't believe everything you hear just because someone says it is a message from God; test it first to see if it really is. The answer is clear in 1 John 4:1 – I must test it to find out. It is imperative that you make sure it is God. There are seven biblical ways to test an impression and find out whether it is from God or not. These seven tests form a filter and you need to make sure that the idea you are testing passes all seven of them. When it does, you can have absolute confidence that the idea is from God.

1. Does it agree with the Bible?

Luke 21:33 Proverbs 12:19 Galatians 1:8

2. Does it make me more like Christ?

Philippians 2:5 Philippians 4:8 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 James 3:14-17

These verses give seven things to test if an idea that comes into your mind is from God:

- Is it **pure**? If any thought is impure, God didn't give it to you.
- Is it **peace-loving**? If the idea is from God, it will promote harmony and reconciliation, not conflict.
- Is it **considerate**? Any idea that would hurt or harm someone, even though it may benefit you, is not from God because he cares about the effect it might have on others.
- Is it **submissive**? If you get an idea from God, you must be open to having it tested by other people, asking them what they think about it. If you are hesitant and don't feel like letting other people test the idea, then it didn't come from God because it isn't leading you to submit to others' feedback.
- Is it full of **mercy**? An impression from God will make you more gracious and forgiving. It won't make you judgmental or critical.
- Is it **impartial and sincere**? When you get an idea that's from God, you don't use it to manipulate people to get your own way.

Any idea that encourages these seven qualities in your life is an idea that will make you more like Christ.

3. Are there other people who can confirm what I believe God is saying to me?

Proverbs 11:9 Proverbs 11:14 Ephesians 3:10

4. Is it consistent with how God shaped me?

Ephesians 2:10 Romans 12:6

5. Does it concern your responsibility?

John 21:21-22 Romans 14:10, 13 Acts 20:24 2 Timothy 4:7-8 2 Timothy 1:6 2 Corinthians 10:12

6. Is it convicting or is it condemning?

Romans 8:1 Revelation 3:19

7. Do I sense God's peace about it?

1 Corinthians 14:33 Philippians 4:6-7 Proverbs 22:17