

Government in the House Part 6 By Pastor Tony Higginson

Main text

1John 1:1-4 *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched —this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete.*

Why are the dimensions of seeing, hearing, touching and proclaiming powerful?

1. That which you can see, you can pursue and lay hold of.
2. That which you can hear, you can authenticate.
3. That which you touch, can be appreciated and valued.
4. That which you proclaim, you open the door for others to enter.

Introduction:

We are by nature people who rely, walk and function on sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell, for this is how we were created. For every natural sense there are spiritual senses, so much so that we have been talking about seeing, hearing and touching God.

Psalms 34:8 *Taste and see that the LORD is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him.*

God wants you to spiritually taste His goodness and spiritually and supernaturally see His goodness as these two are linked together. When you taste, your eyes are opened to see, just like when you hear things, your eyes, mind and intellect begins to open and see. Man seeks ways to find this experience by creating for himself false idols, whether that be materialism, substances and pleasures, none of these things in themselves can bring peace, hope and internal satisfaction, hence why you and I must taste and see that the Lord is good.

This is what happens when man creates for himself an idol.

Deuteronomy 4:28 *There you will worship man-made gods of wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or eat or smell.*

Psalms 115:2-8 *Why do the nations say, "Where is their God?" Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him. But their idols are silver and gold, made by the hands of men. They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but they cannot see; they have ears, but cannot hear, noses, but they cannot smell; they have hands, but cannot feel, feet, but they cannot walk; nor can they utter a sound with their throats. Those who make them will be like them.*

There was a time when Peter's spiritual senses were dull towards God.

Matthew 15:13-18 *He replied, "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots. Leave them; they are blind guides. If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit." Peter said, "Explain the parable to us." "Are you still so dull?" Jesus asked them. "Don't you see that*

whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean.'

Main Text:

Acts 10:9-20 *About noon the following day as they were on their journey and approaching the city, Peter went up on the roof to pray. He became hungry and wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. He saw heaven opened and something like a large sheet being let down to earth by its four corners. It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles of the earth and birds of the air. Then a voice told him, "Get up, Peter. Kill and eat." "Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied. "I have never eaten anything impure or unclean." The voice spoke to him a second time, "Do not call anything impure that God has made clean." This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven. While Peter was wondering about the meaning of the vision, the men sent by Cornelius found out where Simon's house was and stopped at the gate. They called out, asking if Simon who was known as Peter was staying there. While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Simon, three men are looking for you. So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them."*

Background

Here we have two characters - Cornelius and Peter - two completely separate characters. Cornelius was according to **Acts 10:1-2** *At Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion in what was known as the Italian Regiment. He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly.*

Cornelius a Gentile, Peter a Jew. Both were believers, both were part of God's move. Peter had a history of not understanding what he heard and what he saw, so much so that Matthew says of Peter that he was dull in hearing and seeing.

Dimensions of Peter's encounter:

V9 Prayer was involved - Peter was on the roof: You have got to find your roof-top, a place where God can begin showing you the dimensions of perspectives of your life and Kingdom thoughts.

V10 Peter felt hungry: God was using the natural and the spiritual together to convey his message.

V11 The seeing dimension: He saw heaven open: He is seeing by the spirit in the spirit, for without sight God cannot show him or teach him a very important purpose principle. 'Peter we are about to go global for we are opening branches worldwide and I want you and eleven others to be my CEO's.'

V13 Then a voice told him arise and eat: Now he not only has sight, but audio has been brought onto the scene as Peter is having his 3D HD surround sound Imax experience.

V13 Out of the voice comes a command: Hearing is only one dimension, but learning to take instruction is why God speaks. The reason why God wants you to enter this dimension is because He is issuing new commands for His assignment.

V13 Peter 'Arise kill and eat': Now the dimension of touching and tasting comes on line.

V14 Dialogue - a vocal sparring takes place which is disobedience: When God speaks how long will you spar and dialogue with Him?

V15 A voice spoke a second time: Why does the voice come a second time? Normally because of two things, lack of understanding, or you are found vocal sparring with God.

V15 The voice will expose the religion and wrong entrenched thinking patterns in your mind. Everyone of us have old religious, unrighteous thinking patterns. All it needs is a voice to expose them.

Peter was religious as his only reference point was what Moses taught. Your last reference point cannot be what your last pastor taught you, or your Christian TV preacher, as many of them need a fresh encounter. When God opens the heavens like this, speaking and allowing you to touch it, it is so a new assignment can come upon you.

V20 Confirmation comes when obedience has been embraced: Some of you may be waiting for God to do some stuff and He has spoken but you have not obeyed and because of this He will not confirm.

The story's progression:

*He said to them: "You are well aware that it is against our law for a Jew to associate with a Gentile or visit him. But God has shown me that I should not call any man impure or unclean. So when I was sent for, I came without raising any objection. May I ask why you sent for me?" Cornelius answered: "Four days ago I was in my house praying at this hour, at three in the afternoon. Suddenly a man in shining clothes stood before me and said, 'Cornelius, God has heard your prayer and remembered your gifts to the poor. Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter. He is a guest in the home of Simon the tanner, who lives by the sea.' So I sent for you immediately, and it was good of you to come. Now we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us." Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favouritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached— how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. "**We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem.** They killed him by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.*

1. When God speaks it is so you can keep moving with what He is doing.
2. When God speaks it's because that which is being spoken can also be shared with others, so they can

see and know what you see and know.

3. When God speaks it is to bring you up to date with the current thoughts of what heaven is speaking and doing.

4. When God speaks, He makes sense of the past, present and future.

If you can spiritually hear, you will begin to spiritually see.

Matthew 16:9-12 *When they went across the lake, the disciples forgot to take bread. "Be careful," Jesus said to them. "Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees. They discussed this among themselves and said, "It is because we didn't bring any bread. Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked, "You of little faith, why are you talking among yourselves about having no bread? Do you still not understand? Don't you remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? How is it you don't understand that I was not talking to you about bread? But be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Then they understood that he was not telling them to guard against the yeast used in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.*

There are times when you see, but do not understand, simply because your heart is hard. The Pharisees were the point in question.

Mark 4:33-34 *With many similar parables Jesus spoke the word to them, as much as they could understand. He did not say anything to them without using a parable. But when he was alone with his own disciples, he explained everything.*

There are times when, because of a hard heart, you are prevented from seeing, hearing and touching God.

1Samuel 6:6-9 *Why do you harden your hearts as the Egyptians and Pharaoh did? When he treated them harshly, did they not send the Israelites out so they could go on their way? "Now then, get a new cart ready, with two cows that have calved and have never been yoked. Hitch the cows to the cart, but take their calves away and pen them up. Take the ark of the LORD and put it on the cart, and in a chest beside it put the gold objects you are sending back to him as a guilt offering. Send it on its way, but keep watching it. If it goes up to its own territory, toward Beth Shemesh, then the LORD has brought this great disaster on us. But if it does not, then we will know that it was not his hand that struck us and that it happened to us by chance.*

A lack of understanding causes that which was sown into you to be stolen from you.

Matthew 13:19 *When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. This is why people do not see hear or touch that which has been sown.*

Conclusion. In our series we have seen the importance of seeing, hearing, touching and tasting, all of which are key dynamics empowering us to make a better proclamation. Many believers today struggle in proclaiming and testifying as to what Christ is doing, because many believers are found to be spiritually ignorant as to the ways and workings of God. This series though, hasn't dealt with the hows of seeing, hearing, touching, it has however stressed the importance of possessing these dimensions. If you and I were to

pray declaring that which God 'has' and 'is' speaking, then our eyes and ears will begin opening to the realm of the spirit. Prayer is not reciting religious mantra, but is instead declaring that which God 'has' previously spoken and written as well as that which God 'is' currently speaking and 'intends' to happen, for to do this is to pray prophetically. Meditate on these scriptures given in this series, as each will open for you the dimensions of which we have spoken of. Many will not include sermon notes on their website, as they want you to purchase them. We however have made them available for you as a key resource for your development. All I ask is that you use them to great effect. If given away or shared with others, please refer to their origin as this is righteous behaviour.