



Saint James AME Church
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Rev. Ronald L. Slaughter, Senior Pastor

Women's Bible Study

Rev. Janelle Y. Greene, Minister to Women
First Lady Kyla Slaughter, Women's Ministry Advisor
Tuesdays at 6:30 PM

October 17, 2017
Rev. Ronda C. Littleton-Johnson, Facilitator

Subject: What's Better Than a Burning Bush? (Chapter 4)

Scriptures: John 16:13, Hebrews 1:1-3, Romans 12:2

John 16:13 (NIV)

¹³But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.

Hebrews 1:1-3 (NASB)

God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high...

Romans 12:2 (NIV)

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Overview

For the most part, we have come to understand that the New Testament portrays the world as far more than tainted: it is lost in sin, ruined, and depraved. It is hostile to God and godliness. The principles on which the world operates stand in stark contrast to divine righteousness and a godly life.

In other words, our morality is questionable; literally, our perspectives and perceptions are rife with immorality. Which is why we must be born again, and, in order to do that we must be transformed by the renewing of our minds as indicated in Romans 12:2. However, before our minds can be renewed (or changed), our false ways of thinking need to be exposed. This is not always easily accomplished for, as Jeremiah 17:9 (NASB) says, “the heart is more deceitful than all else and is desperately sick; who can understand it?” In most instances it our hearts that misguide us. How often have realized that our emotions had taken hold of a situation before our heads even come into view only to learn that we were way off base? We sometimes get stuck in the muck and mire of our former thoughts that are tied to our emotions and we wind up doing just what we said we wouldn’t do. Ephesians 4:22–23 (NASB) commands that “*in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind.*”¹ In many instances, it not our faith, but our disbelief that keeps us bound by our old ways of not believing that God is talking directly to us.

What’s it going to take for us to accept that God speaks to us to directly, to guide, nurture and comfort us. John 14:16-17 makes it clear, ¹⁶*And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—*¹⁷*the Spirit of truth*². Throughout the Bible we see that God has always found a way to communicate with human kind. In the Old Testament God used prophets to deliver His messages. With the Birth of Jesus Christ we see a marked change in the New Testament in the way God communicates with His people. With His (Jesus Christ) presence, came a new way of communicating with God. However, we are still looking for the talking donkey or the parting of the Red Sea so that we are more certain that it is indeed God directing us. The difficulty is in our believing that God would talk to “little old us”. We only think we need to hear the voice of Charlton Heston calling our name before we can answer God. It is our humanness that sometimes demands that God communicate with us in a way that is easily recognizable. It’s almost like we need the “show” to be certain that what we are experiencing is from God. Perhaps it’s not that we don’t hear God or even recognize His voice, but it is our own disbelief that keeps us from following God’s direction. I agree with Shirer who contends that “instead of wishing that God would ‘do something’ different to reveal His will to us, we should celebrate the fact that He has already done something.”³

¹ Decker, D. H. (1999). [Hypnotherapy](#). In D. G. Benner & P. C. Hill (Eds.), *Baker encyclopedia of psychology & counseling* (2nd ed., p. 598). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

² [The New International Version](#). (2011). (Jn 14:16–17). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

³ Shirer, Priscilla, *Discerning The Voice of God*, Moody Publishers, Chicago, 2012

Discussion Questions:

1. Last week for homework you were asked to recite and meditate on the verse you selected and ask God to clearly show you how this verse applies to your situation(s).
 - a. Now, can you identify one of the primary ways in which God speaks to you?
 - b. Does it differ from the way in which God spoke to you in the past?
 - c. What was your response to what you have witnessed?

Homework

For the next week, commit to praying for complete openness to God's Spirit.

1. As you pray, record your thoughts, note what's new or different. What have you discovered about yourself?