

GETTING DIRECTIONS FROM THE OWNER (Part 2)

In Part I of *Getting Directions from the Owner*, we considered how getting regularly and deeply into His word and getting His word regularly and deeply into us would help us to hear God's directives concerning the management of all he has entrusted to us. In this second article, we are going to unpack how God gets His directions to us *through other people*. This is a very powerful and effective way God directs us *if we desire and expect to hear from Him through others*. Let's consider three different groups of people God regularly uses to give us, His stewards, directions.

We Need to be Hearing from Those Who are Over Us

(We all need to have at least one Paul in our life—someone who is a spiritual mentor.)

God has set spiritual leaders and authorities over all of us to protect and guide us in how to successfully live the life of a good and faithful steward. Your pastor, elders, employer, the police and government officials—all have been placed over us for our benefit. God places these people in our lives to serve as “guardrails” to keep us from veering off course physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

Here is the question I think we all need to ask, “Do I believe my Owner can speak to me through those He has placed in authority over me?” For example, when your minister or pastor teaches, do you take it as a word from the Owner? Or are you more like those James mentions in James 1:22-25 (ESV), where he writes, *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.*

Solomon observes in Proverbs 11:14 (KJV), *Where no counsel is, the people fall: But in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.* God puts people over us to *protect us and direct us*. Hebrews 13:17 (ESV) adds, *Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account...* Are you allowing those who are over you to be the voice of God giving you directions?

We Need to be Hearing from Those Who are Beside Us

(We all need to have at least one Barnabas in our life—someone who is a spiritual peer.)

The need for peer accountability in the Christian life cannot be overstated. I am convinced that a person without at least one Barnabas-like peer in his or her life is an accident waiting to happen. Men, here is an important lesson that we only seem to be able to learn the hard way: If you are not listening to the counsel of your godly wife, you are likely not listening to the voice of God. (You see, it is a hard one!) Many older men

have shared how frequently over their married lives they have ignored their wife's counsel or concerns only to painfully realize later that she was right, and they should have listened. They end up with a mess on their hands they have to clean up.

Personally, I have come to the point where I don't even debate with my wife anymore; I simply accept her counsel. Happy is the man who hears the voice of God through his wife and doesn't proceed unless both of them are in agreement with the direction the Owner wants them to go.

I have a number of men in my life to whom I have given veto power over me. I know that God has spoken to me through these men on many occasions, and they have given me guidance I would not have seen or followed on my own. It takes most of us some time to realize we have blind spots. Frequently, we have several major blind spots that don't allow us to see certain situations and perspectives clearly, no matter how hard we may try. In order to protect ourselves, and those we care about, from harm, we need to surround ourselves with godly peers. We must trust God to use them to tell us His will and give us His directives. We can and will hear from God quite often through all these peer relationships, if we are willing to listen.

Who is Barnabas (the peer through whom you allow God to speak) in your life? Who is standing beside you?

We Need to be Hearing from Those Who are Under Us

(We all need to have at least one Timothy in our life—someone whom we are mentoring.)

Do you have a Timothy in your life? Someone you are pouring your life, knowledge, and wisdom into—trying to help them be good stewards of what the Lord has entrusted to them? If you are a parent, you certainly do—even if you are a parent of adult children. If you are a grandparent, you sure do. Likewise if you are an employer, or a Sunday school teacher or small group leader. If you are a pastor or elder, you undoubtedly do. If you have anyone under your leadership or authority, you have probably already realized that God can and does communicate very clearly to us through those who are under us.

My wife, Pam, shares a story of how she heard the voice of God coming out of the mouth of our oldest daughter, Bethany. When Bethany was very young, she had a terrible headache. Being a loving mom, my wife asked her if she wanted Mommy to give her some Tylenol to make her headache go away. Bethany said softly, as she lay in bed, "No, Mommy, just pray." Humbled by her childlike faith, Pam prayed and, in a matter of minutes, Bethany was asleep. Through Bethany, God had reminded Pam to go to Him first.

My second daughter, Anna, was almost engaged to a young man, whom at the time I was not at all thrilled about. (Though I am now!) I remember as I was expressing my concerns about their potential engagement, Anna asked me, "Dad, did you raise me to make good decisions?" I said, "Yes, of course I did." She replied, "Then are you are going to trust me to make a good decision for a husband or not?" I heard the voice of God coming out of her mouth. She was definitely right, and I was definitely wrong. She made a great decision.

Each of you likely has a story of how God has spoken to you through those who are under you. Let's remember what David said in Psalm 8:2 (KJV) and Jesus later repeated, *Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength.* If we are not consciously expecting to hear the voice of God from those who are under us, we are going to miss a lot of God's directions for us.

If we really want our Owner's direction, we need to be open and ready to hear from Him through those who are *over* us, those who are *beside* us and those who are *under* us. You can be sure He is continuously talking to us through them. The question is, are we listening?

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E. G. “Jay” Link has a unique combination of being an ordained minister with a Master Divinity degree in Biblical Theology and a professional Stewardship planning coach who for over 40 years has been working with very affluent Christian families to enable them to optimize their Kingdom impact with all that the Lord has entrusted to them to manage. After retiring from his personal practice, he then served for five years as Director of Taylor University's Stewardship Planning Ministry, which he launched for them. Most recently, Jay founded the Stewardship Resource Group to serve Christian ministries, colleges, and churches to better minister to their highest capacity families. He has written six books, hundreds of articles and has provided extensive training curriculum for hundreds of professional financial and legal advisors in how to provide stewardship planning services for their clients.