

A Voice You Can Trust

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If we believe and do what God did in the scriptures, God will do what He did in our circumstances. Do you want God to work in your life? Do you want answers to prayers? Would you like to know what his will is for your daily life? Then believe and do what God did in the bible, and God will do the same in your life battles.

³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. ³² They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" (Luke 24-NIV)

Is there a biblical precedent for God speaking to us through divinely-inspired emotions? The word precedent means, has God acted previous according to a scriptural pattern? So, the question again is, does God speak through divinely inspired emotions? Does God reveal his will and direct his purposes to us through our emotions. Feelings? Perceptions? Passions?

And what we are talking about is not your random, everyday emotions that often wax and wane with your happiness or disappointment. We are talking about walking with God in complete surrender, and because of that yieldedness, God reveals his plans and purposes, to your heart by using your **divinely inspired emotions**.

So, you say that sounds a little subjective. Well, God has made you with a body, soul, and spirit. So, expect God to speak on all of those levels.

²³ May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thessalonians 5-NIV)

Let me illustrate. Peace is one of the emotions many can identify and long to receive it. And in Phil 4:7-Living Bible, we learn that in some cases those **divinely inspired emotions** even trump reason and human understanding.

⁷ If you do this, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will keep your thoughts and your hearts quiet and at rest as you trust in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4-TLB)

God is an emotional being. We are made in his image. So, don't be surprised or caught off guard, to walk with a God who speaks to you through divinely inspired emotions. God wants to give you a peace far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. It is called the peace that passes understanding.

What does that mean? The peace that passes understanding. Here are some descriptions of what this kind of peace can look like.

*You are in a situation that should lead to devastation and destruction, and you are completely at peace about the outcome. This is the peace that passes understanding.

*When you are in a situation characterized by nothing but chaos, crisis, and confusion you are completely at peace about the outcome. That is the peace that passes understanding.

Tuck that thought away, we will return to it shortly. We see this in our story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus. Frustrated and fearful, Jesus shows up and engages them in a 2-hour bible study and then confirms it was him by engaging their emotions, feelings.

³² They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" (Luke 24-NIV)

Can I give you some advice about the role your feelings play in listening to A Voice You Can Trust?

When we are in an emotional funk it is almost impossible to hear divinely inspired emotions. I will illustrate this in a few minutes by showing you how anxiety can short circuit divinely inspired emotions. And my next piece of advice is...

We should not make decisions based **(only) on** emotion, but we should not ignore it either. You have an outer ear for catching sound, and an inner ear for digesting sound. Ok, going slow. You have experienced a voice you can trust

with your mind, thoughts and intellect, but also with your emotions and feelings. Ok, does that make sense?

Sound waves are like beach waves. They crash into our ear drums, like the crashing of waves on the beach. Once they hit the shore, the waves travel through your ear drum into a crazy golf course like-tunnel made up of curlicues, branches, roundabouts, levers, hydraulics, and feedback loops, as author Diane Acherman illustrates.

The out ear is like funnel, catching sound as it passes by. It then stuffs the sound waves into our inner ear, causing the vibrations to bump into the tiniest bones in our body: hammer anvil and stirrup. Some of you remember those names from biology, anatomy and physiology or medical school.

Like morse code the impulses produce pitch, volume, tone, distance, direction, and **ultimately meaning** that provides actionable information to aid us. Take for example the sound of a train whistle. Distinctive. Known since childhood. Sends a clear message. Caution. Stay back.

And because you have played on tracks, walked along the tracks or walked over tracks, meaning is imbedded into your mind. The sound of a train whistle, with the mental memory of those experiences, releases emotions resulting in caution. Pay attention.

Every time sound waves move through your ear tunnel and provide meaning and you respond accordingly; this is a miracle. And it is an example of how God has designed you to frequently hear correctly, not just the world around you, or might I say more correctly, the world of sound in you.

So, in a sense, for illustration purposes, God uses **sound waves of thought and feelings** to move through your ear tunnel and provide meaning so you can respond accordingly. Ok, enough science, let's move to some scripture. Enough physiology, how about some bible-ology.

Today's story comes **straight from the bible**, about 33 AD. I will read it to you from my bible and I will make some comments along the way. ¹³ *That same day (resurrection day) two of Jesus' followers were walking to the village of Emmaus, seven miles from Jerusalem. (Luke 24-NLT)*

In the Greek 7 miles means, 7 miles, just thought you might like to know that. How long would it take the average person to walk 7 miles, if you walked at the pace of 3 miles per hour? **Yes, two hours, you are brilliant.**

Would any of you trivia buffs know who took the longest walk in world history? George Meegan.

On Sept. 18, 1983, George Meegan walked down a lonely gravel road on the Alaskan tundra at Prudhoe Bay. Pulling a little cart behind him, he stepped forward to the water's edge and let his boots touch the ripples of the world-famous oil Bay. Then he began to cry. *"I've just lost my best friend," he said. "I've run out of road."*

With those words, Meegan, 30, ended the longest continuous walk on record—19,019 miles, from **Tierra del Fuego** at the tip of South America to Prudhoe Bay AK. He marked the completion of the **six-year, eight-month** trek by planting 18 flags: one for each of the 14 countries he had traversed; three for his family; and one for his native England.

Two kids were born to his Japanese wife- Yoshiko Matsumoto:

Girl-Ayuni whose name means "to walk."

Geoffrey Sugumu whose name means "keep walking."

Why did he do it? I have no clue.

But I am a little short on material, so I just thought I would throw that in, to burn a couple minutes off my time. Back to our story. ¹⁴ *As they walked along they were talking about everything that had happened. (Luke 24-NLT)*

In a few verses we are going to learn the name of one of the walkers-**it's Cleopas**. Which is a guy's name. The name of the other walker is not revealed in the text, **I personally think it could be a woman.**

Why? We just read that the two of them were **actually talking** back and forth to each other, which is highly unlikely if it had been two guys.

Just an opinion. The next verse.

¹⁵ As they talked and discussed these things, Jesus himself suddenly came and began walking with them. ¹⁶ But God kept them from recognizing him. (Luke 24-NLT)

How did God arrange that? Jesus was the most recognizable person in the world, at that moment, and in that location. How did God do that? But these two were kept from recognizing him.

It is something that God pulled off. God arranged for that to happen. I have no idea. In fact, I have no opinion.

^{17a} He asked them, "What are you discussing so intently as you walk along?" (Luke 24-NLT)

Fair question? When they hear the question, they stop walking. Stand still. And their faces become downcast. Dejected. Devastated. And the one name Cleopas, asks Jesus...

^{17b} They stopped short, sadness written across their faces. ¹⁸ Then one of them, Cleopas, replied, "You must be the only person in Jerusalem who hasn't heard about all the things that have happened there the last few days." (Luke 24-NLT)

Obviously referring to the arrest and crucifixion of Jesus Christ. In today's language, Cleopas probably would have said,

- (1) Are you kidding me, you don't know what's is going on? Really?
- (2) What planet are you from?
- (3) Have you been living under a rock?
- (4) Don't you know anything?

Which makes me wonder how **Jesus might have answered** those three questions:

(1) Actually, I am not from a planet, I am from the galaxy, universe, I made all of this you see. My address is heaven. God's throne to be specific.

I know the size of the throne, the incense smell of the hall where God has been worshipped forever, and I am on a first name basis with the angels that serve God's purposes.

(2) I spent the last 3 days in a tomb with a rock in front of it, took a side trip to hades, to do a little preaching.

(3) And I know everything. Would you like me to show you? Remember that half-truth you told your wife? How about that recent tax filing?

But instead of that answer, Jesus just simply says, “What things?”¹⁹ *“What things?” Jesus asked. What’s been going on? You tell me.*

“The things that happened to Jesus, the man from Nazareth,” they said. “He was a prophet who did powerful miracles, and he was a mighty teacher in the eyes of God and all the people.”²⁰ But our leading priests and other religious leaders handed him over to be condemned to death, and they crucified him.

This next verse is important.

²¹ *We had hoped he was the Messiah who had come to rescue Israel.*

That’s what we were hoping for. This all happened three days ago. (Luke 24-NLT)

²² *“Then some women from our group of his followers were at his tomb early this morning, and they came back with an amazing report.”²³ They said his body was missing, and they had seen angels who told them Jesus is alive!²⁴ Some of our men ran out to see, and sure enough, his body was gone, just as the women had said.” (Luke 24-NLT)*

They were thinking that maybe Jesus body had been stolen or destroyed. So how does Jesus respond to these dejected travelers?

(1) Does he say, “I feel your pain?”

(2) I see your sorrow and sadness; I sense your disappointment. Let me pray for you.

(3) Not actually. How is this for a kind and gently response? Look at verse 25, how foolish you are. How foolish you are...

*²⁵ Then Jesus said to them, “**You foolish people!** You find it so hard to believe all that the prophets wrote in the Scriptures. ²⁶ Wasn’t it clearly predicted that the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering his glory?” (Luke 24-NLT)*

BAM! Shocking! Surprising to the most educated and prepared nation on the planet for this event. Jesus is chiding them as being clueless.

Jesus says, “the clue phone is ringing, and no one is answering it. No one is home. You would expect something else from Jesus. But he says, “you are foolish, slow to believe the prophets.”

²⁷ Then Jesus took them through the writings of Moses and all the prophets, explaining from all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. (Luke 24-NLT)

Jesus talked, while the 3 of them, walked that 7-mile walk. **Quick question?** How much time did Jesus have to give his Easter sermon to them?

2 hours. Just settle in everyone. What is fair, is fair. But then they arrived at the home of these travelers. This resurrection day walkers. Jesus gives indication that he is going to keep on walking. I love that verse little verse-28.

Jesus acted as if he were going further ...

^{28a} By this time they were nearing Emmaus and the end of their journey. (Luke 24-NLT)

Jesus is saying, “**if you have had enough of this conversation, no worries, you won’t be hurting my feelings. I will just keep walking.**”

Hey friends...Jesus never forces himself on anybody. Not in that day, and not in this day. And not today. Tell me if you have had enough, is what Jesus is communicating. **I will limit my supply to your demand.** But they urged him strongly, stay with us...

²⁹ but they begged him, “Stay the night with us, since it is getting late.” So he went home with them. (Luke 24-NLT) Remember the last supper that had just occurred a day or so earlier with the disciples, a similar experience is about to happen here.

³⁰ *As they sat down to eat, he took the bread and blessed it. Then he broke it and gave it to them.*^{31a} *Suddenly, their eyes were opened, and they recognized him. (Luke 24-NLT)* The text says, as soon as they recognized him, he disappeared from their sight. ^{31b} *And at that moment he disappeared! (Luke 24-NLT)*

Vanished. Gone. Now the **next verse should read, “what’s the matter with us, how come we didn’t recognize that it was Jesus the Messiah.** The one just crucified and now resurrected like he said.

How come we didn’t recognize him when he was giving us the bible study? What is wrong with us? Then they said to each other....

³² *They said to each other, “Didn’t our hearts burn within us as he talked with us on the road and explained the Scriptures to us?” (Luke 24-NLT)*

We’re not our hearts burning within us? As he talked to us and explained the scriptures to us. The text says that the 2 walkers after that recognized Jesus and ran... ³³ *And within the hour they were on their way back to Jerusalem. There they found the eleven disciples and the others who had gathered with them, ³⁴ who said, “The Lord has really risen! He appeared to Peter.” (Luke 24-NLT)*

And they said to disciples, “in case you are wondering Jesus is alive, we just had a two-hour sermon from Jesus. We just walked 7 miles with him. He ate with us and then we had communion, kind of like what happened with you guys.

³⁵ *Then the two from Emmaus told their story of how Jesus had appeared to them as they were walking along the road, and how they had recognized him as he was breaking the bread. (Luke 24-NLT)* He is alive. We’ve seen him. We are eyewitnesses. This is the most amazing walk in all of the Bible. Absolutely unforgettable. So let summarize what Jesus did, for those who are getting this news for the first time. And so, you understand, a decision goes along with this information. And the way you will know it is true, like those disciples, something will burn inside you. Your emotions will go off joyfully volcanic as shout, this is the best news I have heard. But hold on don’t interrupt the service yet, in a minute you can.

The two travelers on the road that day, were sad and depressed and because they had hoped Jesus would make trouble for Rome and bring political

change to their oppressive circumstances and Jesus had been killed before he got the job done.

And what Jesus is really saying is that what went down in Jerusalem is that God's substitutionary atoner willingly shed the last drop of his own blood pay for the wrong doings of all people of human people in history who have been running their own little scam and racking up huge piles of moral debt in the process.

The crucifixion in Jerusalem was not a defeat, or an accident, it was humanities' ultimate act of triumph. It was God's plan and John 3:16 sums up that plan and reminds us that sin was paid for in full by Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. Forever.

And Jesus says to the travelers, I am here in your midst, resurrected and proving that all of this is true. Which is why after Jesus disappeared that the walkers said, 'Were not our hearts on fire as he was explaining these scriptures, as he was explaining the idea of substitutionary atonement, and that Jesus came to make trouble not for Rome but for sin, the devil, and the grave with substitutionary atonement. That is why everyone who grasps this message and puts their trust in Christ and believes, their heart is set on fire.

So, I want to show you how your emotions impact and are involved with hearing a whisper, a prompting or a voice you can trust.

⁷ If you do this, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will keep your thoughts and your hearts quiet and at rest as you trust in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4-TLB)

Like a thief, worry robs you of the ability to hear God's voice. (Matthew 6)

Now, let me give you the God-guarantee. It is found in Philippians 4:7-Living Bible. *⁷ **If you do this**, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will keep your thoughts and your hearts quiet and at rest as you trust in Christ Jesus.*

Filter 1: Does this possible word from God align and agree with God's Word?

Filter 2: Does that prompting or whisper from God make me more like Jesus Christ?

Filter 3: Is the word from God confirmed by other Christ followers?

His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, (Ephesians 3:10-NIV)

If God has genuinely spoken to you other Christ followers will confirm it.

Peace is one of the many promises God offers a Christ follower. And boy, don't we need this? Peace is identified over 300 times in the bible. You probably know the word, "shalom." Say that out loud. Shalom. Just saying it gives me peace. Now, this idea of peace Paul is talking about has a supernatural element built in. The Bible calls this the peace that passes understanding. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Phil 4:7-NIV)

Again, what does that mean? The peace that passes understanding. Here are some descriptions of what this kind of peace can look like.

*You lose your job. You lose your marriage. You lose your hair. And you are completely at peace about the outcome. At peace about unemployed. At peace about being alone. At peace about being bald. This is the peace that passes understanding.

When so much is against you, going wrong, and leaving you helpless and you are at peace. That is God's peace, and it passes all understanding. Which is far more than the human can create, sustain, or understand.

⁷ **If you do this**, you will experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will keep your thoughts and your hearts quiet and at rest as you trust in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4-TLB)

I love this part of the verse; *His peace will keep your thoughts quiet and your heart at rest as you trust in Christ Jesus.* How are you doing with your thoughts? Are they quiet or loud? Are they quiet or long? Are they quiet or lingering? And what about your heart? Is it at rest or experiencing restlessness? Is it at rest or experiencing rushing? It is at rest or experiencing rushing? How

you manage your thoughts and manage your heart impacts your peace. And God will help you with both.

For some of you this seems like an impossibility. It is not, for God. And it is not for you, when God enables you. Empowers you. God promises a peace and less stress existence.

There are over 7000 promises in the Bible according to one suggested calculation. And many promises come with a condition. Or many promises come with a premise. God says, "if you do this, I will do that." There is a condition. The condition for this promise is the first couple words we read...***if you do this.***

Do what? What is the premise? What is the condition? If you do these things, it will keep you from stressing out. You will experience God's peace. If you do these things, it will keep your thoughts quiet and keep your heart at rest. If you do these things...what things? I am suggesting you engage and activate three emotions as identified by this passage. Do you remember what they are? Joy. Thanksgiving. Peace. The ingredients of a peace that passes understanding is: (1) to be joyful at all times, (2) to be thankful in all your thoughts, (3) to be at peace in all things.

Yes, you have to stop allowing stress to accumulate. Snowball. Mushroom. Skyrocket. Balloon. And intensify. How do I do that? Look closely at Phil 4:6, six English words, *6 Do not be anxious about anything.* One of the reasons stress is having a devastating effect on you is because you worry. Because you are anxious. If I want to lower the RPMs of stress, you have to refuse to be anxious about anything. The number one source of stress is not unemployment, sickness, or my family. It is how I worry about those issues. How I am anxious about those issues. It is not work that produces stress, it is worry that produces stress. Work does not keep you tossing and turning at night, worry keeps you tossing and turning at night. Alcohol does not keep you tossing and turning at night, anxiety keeps you tossing and turning at night.

Stress is on the outside. It is an external influence. Worry is on the inside. It is an internal influence. While stress comes in many forms, worry comes in one – thinking negative thoughts about your stress. When the roads are icy, it is a stress filled drive. Constantly thinking you might slide, is a worried filled drive. You can drive to work and face stress; you don't have to allow worry to make the drive

worse. You can learn to manage and minimize stress. And the best way is to not worry about your stress filled event. Most of us worry too much.

And God not only has an opinion, but he also has a condition for dealing with worry. Anxiety. Phil 4:6-NLT reminds us God's plan for dealing with stress is this admonition. Imperative. Command. Never worry about anything. Right! Circle never and anything. I have a question for you: is any of us living up to this? No, not one. But you can. If you integrate the three essential ingredients for a peace that passes understanding life, you can: (1) be joyful at all times, (2) be thankful in all thoughts, (3) be at peace in all things. So, God starts by telling us how to deal with stress. Stop worrying about anything. Now, you can do this because God invites you to pray about everything.

Stop worrying about anything, pray about everything.

The best seven mental health words in the Bible. And we locate this truth in Phil 4:6, *⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.* God tells us to never worry. Never be anxious. God is very direct with his instructions. God sets up an impossible situation, so He can offer a possible solution. God allows you to find yourself in an impossible situation, so he can show you a God-possible solution.

In the Sermon on the Mount, you get a glimpse of why you should not worry. Jesus provides a coaching lesson about how to resist anxieties efforts to strangle the life out of you. The Greek word for anxiety, conveys the idea of "to strangle or choke." What a fitting illustration of what happens to us when we become anxious. Can I suggest a couple reasons, why anxiety and worry cause and contributes to increased stress?

Worry makes no sense. For a person who is preparing for eternity, it makes no sense to be so earthly minded. When we serve a God who has promised to take care of all our needs, and we worry about incidentals. Like what we are going to wear and what we are going to eat. I think Jesus wants to say to us, like his disciples, "oh, you of little faith. Ouch! ²⁵Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? (Matthew 6-NIV) All worry does is exaggerate the size and significance of the event we are worrying about.

That is not good for you. The more you worry about something the worse it looks. Worry is irrational and unreasonable. Let it go.

Worry is abnormal. Why? In all of God's creation, humans are the only part of God creation that get bent out of shape with worry. Jesus illustrates this from the Avery world. ²⁶*Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? (Matthew 6-NIV)*

Animals don't worry. The reason why worry is so abnormal is because you were not created to worry. There is no worry gene in your DNA. You learned how to worry, and you can learn how to not worry. Why do we worry? Because there is a southbound gravitational pull toward sin. Lack of faith. Rebellion. God is doing everything he can to offer you peace. To offer you protection. To offer you provision.

Notice it says, "your heavenly Father feeds them." Think about how children get special privileges. And God is your Father, so those privileges are lavished and without limit. Why do I worry so much? Because we find it difficult to trust God. You worry because you are unsatisfied with God's provision and protection. The solution? The solution is experiencing joy, thanksgiving, and peace. Worry is unfruitful. Do you mean to tell me, the time spent in worry is fulfilling and joy filled that you live everyday saying, "I can't wait to worry today." In fact, let me schedule some more time in my day, to worry some more. I love the outcome of the time I spent in worry. I love the fruit of worry. I love myself more when I worry. Sounds abnormal doesn't it.

²⁷*Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? If you answered yes, to Jesus' question, you are abnormal. Off your rocker. In the end, Jesus goes so far as to say, "even the flowers don't worry."* ²⁸*"And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin."* ²⁹*Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these.* ³⁰*If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Let it go.*

Father, I need Your help today with my stress and worry. I desire a peace that passes understanding and it must go beyond the ordinary to the supernatural extraordinary. I need the supernatural power from the Holy Spirit to soften my heart, open my eyes and heal my soul.

Father, I am open to an experience with the Holy Spirit where You speak to me through **divinely-inspired emotions**. As a sinner, I cry out for mercy, cry out for your forgiveness, and cry out for healing. In the name that is above all names, Jesus Christ. Amen.