

Alright. Hey everybody, welcome to Valley Creek. We are so glad you are here with us today. And we are in a series called Follow the Cloud. We're talking about some timeless principles in a fresh way. And Follow the Cloud, it's really the core of our church. It's really the heartbeat of who we are. It's how we live our lives. It's how we lead this church. It's how we got from where we were to where we are. It's how we'll get from where we are to where we're going. And the reason the whole concept of follow the cloud resonates so deeply with us is because we are a church of restful movement. We rest in Jesus and yet we never stop moving forward with him.

I mean come on, just think about what Scripture declares, "Be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it." "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations." "We walk by faith, not by sight." "Run with perseverance the race that's been marked out for you." "Come and follow me." "Increase and advance." All over the Bible, there is this language of movement, next steps, advancing, increasing. And that's the heart of who we are as a people. And that's why follow the cloud resonates with us. You say, follow the cloud, what is that? Well, it's just simply a physical picture of a spiritual truth. After 400 years of Egyptian slavery, God shows up to set his people free. And after setting them free, to lead them to the Promised Land He gives them a cloud to follow. Of all the ways God could have led his people, He chose to do it through a present and personal cloud. And from within this mighty cloud, He speaks with the gentleness of a whisper, "Come follow me one next step at a time."

"When I move, you move. When I stop, you stop. Where I go, you go. Keep your eyes on me and I will lead you to discover who you are, who I am and what you are created to do." And so with one next step at a time, He led them from Egypt to bondage to the Promised Land, this place of freedom. But did you ever just stop and think, but like how did they actually know what to do? I get it, there's a cloud in the sky and we're supposed to take next steps, but how do I know what the step is? How do I know what to do? Think of all the obstacles, all the challenges, all the difficulties, all the chaos, all the confusion, all of the issues of life, how did they know what to do? They simply asked, listened and responded to the voice of God.

If you want to know the secret of how it actually worked out and how they learned to live free, they just asked God what He wanted them to do. They listened to his voice and then they responded by faith. In fact, if you're reading the Exodus story with us, you are amazed at how often God is speaking to them. He's like He's talking to them all the time because He wants to show them the way. And the same is true with you and me. I would bet there are all kinds of obstacles and challenges and difficulties and chaos and confusion in your life, and the question is, what do you do about it? Ask, listen and respond. In fact, I love what the Bible says, "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should simply ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault; and it will be given to him." In other words, God wants to speak to you not because you are good, but because He is good.

And He loves to instruct you, and guide you, and teach you and show you his ways. And so what I'm trying to tell you is that learning to value the voice of God in your life is one of the

most important things you will ever do. I mean I remember years ago when our church started growing and we were just one campus at the time, the Flower Mound Campus was half of its physical size and we grew and we grew and we grew and we were at five services every single week and we knew we needed to do something, but we weren't sure what to do. And so we started asking, listening and responding to the voice of God. Like God, what do you want us to do and how do you want us to respond? And we felt like God was inviting us to do missional move Acts 1:8, double our Flower Mound Campus, launch our Denton Campus and then start a ministry school in India for church planters. And the more we wrestled with this concept, the more clearly we heard God speak that we felt like He was inviting us to do all three of those things at the same time.

It was going to cost \$14 million as we did all the research and studied everything. And we felt like God wasn't inviting us to do a campaign, but that he was literally just saying just tell the people what I want to do and ask them to be a part of it. And so we had to wrestle with it as leadership and we struggled and there was fear and unknown and curiosity and confusion, but then we knew that we knew that we heard God's voice together. And so I'll never forget going and talking to some outside leaders, kind of running the idea by them. We knew what God had said, but I just wanted to share it with some outside leaders. And I shared the whole thing with them and they looked right back at me and they were like, that is the stupidest idea we have ever heard. They're like, what's wrong with you? They're like, that's never going to work. They're like, you can't do all three things at the same time. And \$14 million, you're not going to be able to come up with that. And not doing a campaign? You have to do a campaign.

You need a thermometer in the atrium to show how far you've gone and how far you need to go. And, oh, by the way, don't do campuses. That's dumb. Build a really big campus at Flower Mound with more than 3,000 seats because that's the future of what God's doing. And I remember leaving that lunch feeling so confused and disoriented. I was so confident that we had heard God and then I go to these leaders I respected and it's like they blew everything up. And then I went back and we prayed and we processed and I'll never forget the day I was supposed to share it with you, I was hiding in a little room in the old Flower Mound Worship Center. It wasn't even a room, it was a hallway. I was hiding in the hallway terrified, thinking, God did you really speak? Is this really you? Is this going to work? Am I about to embarrass the heck out of myself and fall flat on my face? But I knew that I knew that God had spoken.

And so I walked out on the platform and the old Flower Mound Worship Center, shared the vision with you. You responded so well. And here we are years later and not only did we launch a Denton Campus, we now have six campuses. All of our campuses are debt-free and every seat that anyone is sitting in including online right now was created because we listened to the voice of God in that moment. Because we knew what God had said and we moved forward with faith even though it felt impossible and it was too big and it was too different. And it wasn't what everyone else was doing but we knew it's what God had asked us to do, so we move forward with faith and confidence and look at the life that was released because we

did that together. Come on, if you can even catch on this, every person, every seat, wherever you are, aren't you glad we didn't build a 3,000-seat worship center at the Flower Mound Campus but instead put our energies into multiplying, into reproducing?

Come on, faith comes by hearing is what I'm trying to tell you. When you hear God's voice, it gives you faith, it gives you confidence, it gives you boldness, it gives you the ability to move into the unknown because you know God is with you. Come on, secondhand Jesus will never give you firsthand faith. But one word from God can change everything. I mean, you remember the story of Peter walking on water? The disciples are in a boat and there's this kind of little storm that comes up but here comes Jesus walking across water and Peter sees Jesus out walking on water and he looks to Jesus and he says, "Jesus, if it's you, tell me to come." Jesus says, okay Peter, come on. And one next step at a time Peter gets out of the boat and he walks on water, why?

Because faith came by hearing. He heard what God said to him and he moved forward in faith. Now, imagine if Peter never listened to Jesus himself, but only listen to Jesus through the other disciples. They're all sitting in the boat, Jesus comes walking by on water, Jesus starts talking to the disciples and after a little while Peter taps John on the shoulder, hey, what's he saying? John looks back over at Jesus, then looks back at Peter and says, he wants you to go walk on water to him. You funny, John. You a comedian. No, come on man. Really, what's he really saying? Yep, he wants you to walk on water to him. We'll be cheering you on, you got it Peter, go man, go. There ain't no way Peter getting out of the boat. Why? Because secondhand Jesus doesn't give us firsthand faith, but one word from God changes everything.

Listen to me, do you realize the greatest mistake the Israelites made, and they made a lot, the greatest one was rejecting God's voice. God sets them free, He brings them to Mount Sinai, He wants them to be the children of Israel, he wants them to be a kingdom of priests, a holy nation set apart to Him with this relationship, He wants to speak to them. But look at what happens, when the people saw the thunder and the lightning, the cloud and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke they trembled with fear. They stayed at the distance and said to Moses, speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die. The people remained at a distance while Moses approached the thick darkness where God was. This is their fatal flaw. God's inviting them in and they chose to lean out.

They chose religion over a relationship. They were willing to follow God, they just didn't want to talk to God. They were willing to know about God, they just didn't want to know God. And so they wanted Moses to basically be like a real estate agent for them, to go and broker a deal between them and God. Like Moses, you go talk to God and come back and tell us what He said and we will do it. The only problem with that is secondhand Jesus never gives you firsthand faith and this is why from here on out you watch them struggle at every turn. Why? Because they didn't want to hear God for themselves. And I wonder how often that's true of us. How many times do we want someone else to go hear God for us? That really spiritual

person, that grandma who is really religious, that friend that we feel like really knows God, that social media person that we know that posts all the great stuff about Jesus, it's almost like we want other people to go hear God for us.

But God wants to speak to you himself. And so my question for you is that are you remaining at a distance or are you approaching? See, isn't it fascinating they thought that if they heard God's voice they would die, the truth is we die without God's voice. I mean, look at what Jesus says, "The words that I speak to you are spirit and they are life." When God speaks, it's life. They literally thought if they heard God they would die. I think we think if we hear God, He's going to take away the things of our life that we enjoy. So it's almost like I don't want to hear God because I kind of already know what He's going to say and I really would rather not be confronted with that. So you go speak to God for me and then come back and then I can argue and disagree with you, right? But when God speaks, things happen. The God who spoke the universe into existence, the God who speaks and raises the dead, the God who speaks and calms the storm, is the God who wants to speak to you.

And when God speaks, things happen. And God declares that it's so. When God promises, it comes to pass. When God blesses, it's blessed. Come on, look at this, "He made known his ways to Moses and his deeds to the people of Israel." This is the result. Because they leaned out and Moses leaned in, Moses got to know God's ways. You know what's -- you know someone's ways, it means you know their heart. It means you know their why. It means you know who they are. You know their core, you know their character, you know everything in a sense about them. But if you know someone's deeds, it means you know what they do. You don't really know them, you know about them and you know their actions and you know what they can do. And because Moses leaned in, he got to know God's ways.

And because the people leaned out they only knew his deeds. Can I ask you a question? Do you know God's ways or do you just know his deeds? Do you know his why, and his heart, and his character, and his goodness? Or do you just know the things that he does? In fact, I love what Jesus says, "For out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks." Your words reveal your heart. We know this is true. If you talk to someone, whatever they're saying it's revealing what's going on in here. That's why they're speaking as they're sharing with you what's in here. The same is true with God. His words reveal his heart. So if I never listen to His voice, I'll never get to know His heart. If I reject His voice, I've actually rejected God himself.

I mean think about the relationships in your life. Why do you communicate? You don't communicate just to exchange information and knowledge, you communicate for intimacy, for connection, for relationship to share and connect hearts with one another. The same is true with God. God loves to give you wisdom, and insight, and counsel, and direction on the steps you should take and where you should go, but He primarily wants to speak to you so you will know His heart. This is so important to understand, the primary reason of hearing God's voice is not to figure out what your next step is. Wait a second, isn't that what we've been talking

about? Yes, but hear me. It's not should I do this or should I do that, do I go here or do I go there, do I respond like this or do I respond like. Come on God, you got to speak, you got to speak. Do I do this or do I do that, do I go to move forward do I go back. Okay great, God wants to tell you that, but that's not the primary thing.

He wants to tell you what's in here. And so the real question isn't is God speaking, it's are we listening and do we actually value what He has to say. Are you with me on this so far? Okay. Now, let me blow up this for some of you. Some of you have this mindset that you've grown up with that God doesn't speak. Okay. And a lot of the reasons we come up with that mindset is because we say, well, I've never heard God so He must not speak. The only problem is you don't want to make truth declarations based on your own experience or lack thereof. You want to let truth define truth or God define what's real. And if you read the Bible straight through with no expectations, no past experiences, if you just read the Bible straight through you would never come to the conclusion that God doesn't speak. It's literally like on every page He is speaking to His people.

How do we come up with the conclusion that God does not speak? So you ready? Let's just blow this one up out of the sky and be done with it. Ready? Come on, ch-chk, ready? Ch-chk. Come on, real quick, roll with me here. "Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." Comes is present tense, it means God didn't just speak in the past, it means He's speaking right now and He is speaking from His mouth to your heart. Jesus says, "My sheep listen to my --" Voice

"I know them and they follow me." Question. Is Jesus your shepherd? Are you his sheep? Then he says you hear his voice. Okay. How about the next one. "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, even on my servants both men and women, I will pour out my spirit in those days and they will prophesy." Prophecy simply means to hear from God and speak to people.

Don't worry about the speak to people part, it means you're hearing from God. So ready? Are we in the last days? Are you part of all people? Are you a son or a daughter? Are you a servant? Are you a man or a woman? Then you can hear God's voice. One more. "Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear behind you saying this is the way, walk in it." Do you ever turn to the right or to the left? Then you can hear His voice. It's all over Scripture God is speaking and the best way I can illustrate it to you is like this, when you were born as a baby you didn't have to learn how to hear, you were born with ears. They were already turned on, they worked, you just had to learn to tune into the voice of the one holding you and learn the language that was being spoken.

When you are born again, you are born with spiritual ears. You don't have to grow them, you don't have to turn them on, you don't have to figure out how to make them work, you just have to learn how to tune in to the voice of the one who is holding you and learn the language he's

speaking in the midst of the fear and the shame and the condemnation and the chaos of this world. What I love about God is He speaks to you in a way that you can understand. Come on, think about my kids with me for a second. When they were babies, I did that ooh, googoo gaga baby voice, right? So they could hear it and understand it. And then they became toddlers and you start doing that, look at how good you're doing. Oh come on, don't be like that, I never -- that's an unmanly man right there, I don't know what that was, right?

And then they get a little bit bigger and you're like, come on buddy, you can do it. And now that my kids are teenagers, I just ask them lots of questions. So I speak to them in a way they understand. I don't make them jump up to my level of wisdom or understanding, I come down and speak to them because I want them to know my heart. The same is true with God. And what you have to remember is that God won't always tell you what you want, but He'll always tell you what you need. I mean I remember there was one season in my life, the only thing God would tell me was I love you. Every time I tried to hear God, I love you. I love you. I finally got so annoyed at hearing I love you that I finally said to the Lord, why is that the only thing that you're telling me? And He said, because you don't believe it right now in this season.

God wasn't telling me what I wanted, He was telling me what I needed. And like a good dad, He just kept saying it over and over and over again until I finally got it in my spirit. Maybe you're here and after a long season, you feel like you just can't hear God. Can I just ask you this, do you feel His presence? Well, then His presence is His voice. Is there a verse that's really jumped out to you and brought you comfort? Well, then that verse is His voice. Is there godly relationships in your life that are encouraging you and giving you wisdom and insight? Then those godly relationships are His voice in your life. Do you find yourself on a day like today even coming in here and feeling peace for a moment? Then that peace is His voice.

Don't look for this big audible booming voice. God can do that, but he most often speaks to us in a whisper. Why? Because He's close and He wants to be closer still so it causes you and I to lean in so we can hear Him. Are you with me on this? I mean do you remember the story of Samuel, a little boy? And it says he grows up in the presence of the Lord. Here's a little asterisk for you, we grow up in the presence of the Lord. Maturity is not about age, information, knowledge or education, maturity comes from experiences and encounters with the presence of the Lord. That's why we always want our students in our worship services with us because it's an experience and encounters with God that they actually start to mature.

And so here's Samuel, this little boy, and he doesn't know how to hear God's voice for himself. And so one night he lays down and he hears, Samuel, Samuel. And he thinks it's the priest Eli, so he gets up and he runs to him, he says, you called. And Eli says to him, I didn't call you. Go back and lay down. Sammy goes back and lays down, he's a little confused, hears it a second time, Samuel, Samuel. Gets up, runs to Eli. What is it, sir? I didn't call you, Samuel. Leave me alone. Got a busy day tomorrow. Go back to bed. Samuel goes, lays down, third time it

happens. This time Eli catches it, he says, Samuel, I think God's speaking to you. And the next time He calls your name, say, speak Lord for your servant is listening. Samuel, Samuel. Speak, for your servant is listening. Samuel learned how to tune in to the voice of God. And he positioned himself by saying, your servant is listening.

Part of hearing God's voice is positioning ourselves before Him with the posture and the humility of a servant to decide that I'm already going to do whatever He tells me before He even says it. I'm going to value it before He even speaks it. Speak for your servant is listening. And whatever you say, Lord, I will believe, I will trust, I will follow, I will obey. That's how we value the voice of God in our lives. And what I love is then Samuel started growing. He started learning how to hear God's voice just like you do as a physical baby learning to hear your mom or your dad's voice. He started learning to hear how the voice of God as he grew. And look, the Lord was with Samuel as he grew up and he let none of his words fall to the ground. Do you know what that means? That means every time Samuel spoke, it had power and authority. Do you ever feel like when you speak to people, it falls to the ground? Every parent of every teenager.

The authority to speak comes from the willingness to listen. That's what this is telling us. That if you will value God's voice, He will empower yours. Come on, are you with me on this? The reason your words fall to the ground at work, at home, with your loved ones in the world around you is because we're not listening so we're not aligned with the author of life who is speaking life. But if we will value, He will empower. See, one of the things that -- let me just be real honest with you here on this. One of the things that concerns me in this season of where we are like as Jesus' church and in the world at large is years ago the number one question that we would hear from people is, how do I hear God's voice? For years. it was like the number one thing that's all -- how do I hear God's voice? There was this desperation. There was this hunger.

There was this need. There was this urgency like, I don't know how but I really want to hear God speak to me. And I've been thinking about this lately, thinking, I can't remember the last time I heard someone ask that question. And I'm thinking, why is it that we don't have the same desperation for that? Because I think if we're honest, we don't really value it. The question is not is God speaking, the question is not even are you listening, the question is do you value what He has to say? And I think if we're honest, we often don't. So many voices, so much information, so much noise coming at us, God is just one of many. And if we're honest, a lot of us, we don't necessarily want Moses to be a mediator. In fact, we're getting to a place in the church world at large, we don't even want a Moses. We don't even want a spiritual leaders in our lives. We don't necessarily need Moses as a mediator or the spiritual grandma or that spiritual friend.

What I think has become the mediator for so many of us is social media. It's literally like the scrolling through my feed and as long as I have two or three Jesus verses on there or like the

feel-good quote of the day or the little devotional thing or the quick little reel or the little quip and quote, which there's nothing wrong with any of those things, but they cannot become the voice of God in your life. Come on, look at this. In the past, God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in many various ways, but in these last days, He has spoken to us by his son. He wants to speak to you through Jesus. Jesus, perfect theology, the representation of God. Jesus, the wisdom, the way, the truth and the life. He wants to speak to you. He doesn't want you to just have a little social media square and think I'm good.

And here's how I can prove to you that I think we've lost the value of God's voice. What is the last thing you listen to before you go to bed at night and what is the first thing you listen to when you wake up in the morning? I would bet the overwhelming percentage of us right now would say, it's whatever was on our phone. Come on, are you with me on this? Social media, the news, the stock market, whatever it is. If you wake up and before you even get out of bedroom, heart, comment, that's dumb, oh I had a bad experience there too. And if you're laying in bed at night, heart, that's dumb, I had a bad experience there too, we don't value that. And here's why I think we don't value that, ready? Because I think we can't handle the conflict that it brings into our life.

You're like, wait a second, isn't God's voice like supposed to help? It is. But sometimes, what Jesus says, it brings conflict in your own soul. Look at how he talks to the disciples, do you still not understand? Are you so dull? Do you have such little faith? Go and make disciples. Forgive as I have forgiven you. You give them something to eat. Love your enemy. It's conflict in our soul. It's the grace and truth tension, we just want grace. We forget though that Jesus is grace and truth, you can't separate them apart. Without truth, there is no grace. Without grace, there is no truth. They're both together. Grace empowers us to walk out the truth that will set us free. I think we just don't want the conflict of what it actually means in our soul. With me? For the word of God, God's voice, is living and active, sharper than any double-edged sword and it penetrates even dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow, ready? It judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

I don't want to hear a voice that's going to judge the attitudes and thoughts of my heart. I don't want a double-edged sword which means sometimes God wounds us so he can heal us. But if God is good, then everything He says to you is good. If God is love, everything He says is loving. If God is life, everything is life-giving. We just want the quick social media square of the day of the really happy Bible verse as opposed to allowing God to challenge some of the thoughts and attitudes in our heart that are hurting us and the people around us. Come on people, are you with me on this? This is what we don't value because we don't want the conflict. But it's in the conflict where God can set you free. Two of the things that we're always trying to do here is trying to teach you to think like the kingdom and hear God's voice for you.

It's why we end almost every service by saying, what is the Holy Spirit saying to you? Because I don't really care what I just said for the last 30 minutes, I care what God is saying to you. It's

why we use like 9 million verses. Oh come on people, you got to help me out a little bit today. We use so much Scripture, why? Because this is God's voice in your life. Students, if you'll learn how to think like the kingdom and hear the voice of God, you will succeed everywhere you go. Parents, are you teaching your kids how to think like the kingdom and hear God's voice or do you just decide, nope, we're going to do this activity and we're going to do that thing, we're going to go here, we're going to go there because I said so? Or is it, let's pray about should we do football this year. Let's see what God has to say about theater in this season. This is learning "speak Lord for your servant is listening".

It's not "is he speaking", it's not "are you listening", it's "are you valuing?" Are you with me on this? Okay. So how do you position yourself to actually hear God's voice? Slow down, engage the Scriptures, seek Him, pursue godly relationships and ask for confirmation. Slow down, you can't hear God's voice going 10,000 miles an hour. And the reason we don't slow down is because we're terrified of the storm that rages within. And as long as I'm going fast enough, I can keep it covered up. But when I slow down, that storm starts raging, right? And that's when God shows up to speak to you. Come on, the Israelites, this is what it says, "Now Moses used to take a tent and pitch it outside the camp some distance away, calling it the tent of meeting."

"Anyone inquiring of the Lord would go to the tent of meeting outside the camp." In other words, if they wanted to hear God they had to get out of the rhythm and the routine of their normal life. When was the last time you went outside the camp, outside of your routine, your norm, your rhythms, the things you like to do in the order you like to do it because you were so desperate that you needed to hear God? And here's the cool news, the tent of meeting is no longer a place you have to go, the tent of meeting is right here. The cloud is no longer above us, it's within us. In fact, that's why Jesus says, "The spirit of truth will guide you into all 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." The Holy Spirit is speaking to you the exact same way he spoke to Jesus. I don't have time for this but in the Old Testament, Moses spoke to God face to face, it's like the high water mark of the Old Testament.

But in the new testament God speaks to a spirit to spirit. It's actually better. For those of you that want to study it this week, 1 Corinthians 2, "Spirit to spirit," which means we can trust that the Holy Spirit is revealing, whispering, imparting and impressing things upon our heart. We have to slow down. Then we have to engage the Scriptures. God writes like He speaks and He speaks like He writes. A word of God, once spoken, continues to be spoken and whatever value you've given the written word of God is the value you've already given the spoken word of God. So if I don't value the Scriptures and what He has already said, I won't value what He is going to say. If I'm faithful with the little, He'll entrust me with much.

What's the last thing God said to you from Scripture? Did you value it? Maybe just in the last like two, three weeks, something He spoke to you from Scripture even here, did you value it? That's how we continue to position ourselves to hear God's voice more and more. Seek him,

you have to actually pursue it. Casual pursuit gets casual results. Passionate pursuits get passionate results. Like are you passionately seeking God? Do you open your Bible and expect him to speak? Do you come to our gatherings and do you come on time, come early, come with a Bible and a journal, like expecting God to speak? Or hear me, like even today, did you just come to church? Did you just come to church today? Late, rushing, chaos, frustrated, I don't like this song, when is this over? Or did you literally come in here and be like, speak Lord for your servant is listening.

That's the heart posture of someone who hears from God. Pursue godly relationships, when you get around other people who hear the voice of God, you'll hear the voice of God. I love all -- all the friends that I hang out with, they hear God. And when they hear God, it teaches me how to hear God better and different and it reveals new facets of who God is to me and then ask for confirmation. God is totally okay if we ask Him to say, Lord, is that really you because I wasn't sure? And I don't have time for all this, but here's how you know if it's actually God. I want you to just write these down for later for you. Does it align with Scripture? If it doesn't align with Scripture, it wasn't God, don't pass, go, do not collect \$200. Jesus is the word. The word was, the word is, the word will be. He will not say anything that contradicts himself. So if it contradicts his word, it wasn't from God, you can check it out.

Ready? Like this. Like if you tell me that God told you it's okay to stop the commitment that you made to someone else, I would challenge that because Jesus says, "Let your yes be yes and your no be no." So I don't know that could be God because he's contradicting himself. If you say God told you to go on social media and be the self-appointed watchdog or the god-appointed watchdog to tell us about how bad a restaurant, a person, a place, something was, I just challenge if that was God because God says in his word to speak ill of no one. So how could that be God? If you tell me that you can follow Jesus without the church and that's what He told you, I would just say, I don't think that that's God because Jesus says he's building his church and we're the body of Christ and he's assembling us together. Does that make sense? If it contradicts what God has already said, it's not God. Second thing is, does godly counsel confirm it? When you submit it to other godly people, what are they saying God's saying? God only has one thing to say about any particular topic, so He's not going to tell you something and someone else something else about the same thing.

If you're hearing differently, then God's inviting you to slow down and keep seeking Him. I love what it says in Acts 15, "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us." Do you have people who will say, it seems good to the Holy Spirit and to us? Is there a sacred echo? Do you hear it in more than one spot? If there are circumstances, open doors, like God is so good He won't say it once to you. He'd be like, you missed it, sorry, you should have been -- should have been listening. No, no, He'll keep saying it and saying it and saying it. Does it require faith? Without faith it's impossible to please God. Anything done without faith is sin, so it will require you faith to move forward. And does it lead you towards Jesus? If you tell me that God spoke to you to give you this job that you're supposed to take and uproot your family and go

somewhere, but you will never have time to go to church, to read the Bible or to raise your children, I'm just telling you that's not God. You're like, no, it's God, He told me.

I'm just telling you, it doesn't lead you towards Jesus. Jesus won't tell you to do anything that leads you away from him. God's voice is always peaceful, loving and full of grace and truth. The world's voice is full of shame, condemnation, fear, guilt. If it's that, reject it, it's not the Lord. But God's voice will bring peace, and love, and grace, and truth. And truth. Because it's grace that empowers you to walk out the truth that will set you free. God is speaking. You can hear Him. The question is do you value what He has to say. That's how you learn to live free on the journey of following the cloud.

So close your eyes with me. Here's the question, what does the Holy Spirit want to say to you? Like right now in this moment, what is God whispering to you? What's He stirring up in your heart? What's a sense that you have? What's an invitation that He's extending? I think for some of you, He's just saying, I'm right here. For some of you, I think He's saying, I've missed you.

For some of you, I think He's saying, I have so many great things to tell you. What does He want to say to you? Thank you, Lord, for your voice. Thank you that you speak to us. Thank you that if we need wisdom, you generously give it. Thank you that you want to share your heart with us. And so Lord, I just ask that we would humble ourselves and value your voice.

Stir up within us a desperation, a need, a humility, a hunger to hear from you. And then give us the faith, and the courage, and the grace to actually obey it and walk it out. i just take authority over this church called Valley Creek, this family on mission and just declare as for this family we say, speak Lord for your servants are listening. Speak Lord for your servants are listening, in Jesus' name we pray, amen.