

God's voice is often described as consistent, divinely inspired, and in alignment with scripture, whereas one's own inner thoughts are typically influenced by emotions or external circumstances.

Characteristics of God's voice

- _____: It provides a constant, unwavering foundation that doesn't change with moods or circumstances.
- _____: It always aligns with the entirety of scripture and its eternal truths, never just isolated verses.
- _____: Its origin is divine, rooted in God's will, not biology, experiences, or trauma.
- _____: It guides according to God's will, often bringing a sense of calm, confidence, and peace, rather than tension or urgency driven by emotions.
- _____: When God speaks it is primarily with a clear concise message in regards to what to do, or what is to be expected.
- _____: Its focus is on God and everything else in relation to Him, rather than on oneself or another person.

Characteristics of your inner thoughts

- _____: They may change depending on your mood, emotions, fatigue, or current situation.
- _____: They tend to be more frequent than the Bible demonstrates for non-Major /Minor Prophets, Specific Biblical Apostles, or Christ himself.
- _____: Emotions may lead you to misinterpret scripture or take verses out of context. This is not always the case but frequently is.
- _____: They can be shaped by your biology (physical or mental), past experiences, and current circumstances.
- _____: They reflect your inner state and may be influenced at times by desires for comfort or safety, but more frequently by desires for a spiritual experience, and can be very deceptive. (IE: conformation bias, Reticular Formation "R.A.S." in conjunction with the Nucleus Accumbens, etc.),

How to discern the two

- _____: A voice or message that remains the same over time, regardless of your feelings, is more likely that it could be from God.
- _____: A genuine message from God will not contradict the Bible. If a thought suggests doing something that is not normally and regularly represented in scripture, it is likely a personal thought or emotion.
- _____: Talk with mature, trusted Christians, mentors, or church leaders who are grounded in the Bible. They can offer an objective perspective and help affirm (or not affirm) what you believe you are hearing.
- _____: Does the thought produce the "fruit of the Spirit" (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control)? If it leads to confusion, fear, anger, or confusion, it's likely not from God.
- _____: If it leads to repeated visions or messages that requires extensive detective level analysis or interpretation, it is likely not from God. God is not a God of confusion, and outside some specific Old Testament Prophets, in most cases his word is clear and concise when communicating with believers.
- _____: Discern if the voice is focused on God's glory or your own desire for spiritual experiences.

Should I get individual messages from God regularly or routinely?

No, while the Bible mentions God speaking through visions and dreams, they are not described as happening regularly or routinely. According to a biblical perspective, visions are considered to be rare, with even major biblical figures receiving them only a few times in their lives. It is not a normal part of the Christian experience, and not every dream or vision is from God; discernment is necessary to differentiate them.

- _____: Even in biblical accounts, these experiences were not a daily occurrence but rather were special, rare events, often marking a significant call to ministry or delivering a crucial message.
- _____: From a Christian standpoint, visions and dreams are not expected to be a regular part of life. The Bible is considered the primary source of truth, and any vision or dream that contradicts it is to be viewed with suspicion.

- _____: It is crucial to use discernment to determine the source of any vision or dream, as not all are divine. The Bible advises testing the spirits to see if they are from God.
- _____: When they do occur, visions and dreams are seen as a way for God to communicate, sometimes providing guidance, warnings, or prophetic insight, but they do not hold more authority than scripture.

What could it be if not from God?

At a Spiritual Level:

Satan and his demons can provoke visions or create counterfeit supernatural experiences that appear godly or holy in order to deceive people.

Key points regarding these false visions:

- **Goal of Deception:** The primary purpose of such visions is to deceive, confuse, and ultimately distance people from God and His truth.
- **Counterfeit Experiences:** Demons can impersonate divine figures, including Jesus, Mary, or the Holy Spirit, making it very difficult to discern the true source based solely on the experience itself.
- **Fruits of the Spirit vs. Demonic Fruits:** True godly visions will produce good "fruit" such as love, joy, peace, and draw people closer to a biblical understanding of God. Demonic visions, even if they start with a seemingly positive message, will eventually lead to confusion, fear, or actions contrary to scriptural principles. Additionally they can lead to the sin of pride in that one may begin to feel much more "spiritual" or in touch with the divine on a level that others do not have access to.

Satan is a master deceiver who can produce highly convincing, yet ultimately false, spiritual experiences that look godly. Discernment through prayer, reliance on the Holy Spirit, and grounding in Scripture is considered the best defense against such deception.

What if it is not spiritual? There are many reasons for this. Some of them can be:

Cluster A personality disorders (paranoid, schizoid, schizotypal, etc.):

Common symptoms

- Distrust and suspicion of others
- Social isolation and withdrawal couched in “having a bad day or a bad week”
- Odd or eccentric thoughts and behaviors
- Difficulty forming relationships
- Paranormal beliefs or experiences
- Magical thinking
- Relating all experiences, visions, etc. to spiritualism, religious practices, or “hearing from God”.
- Checking yourself (and others) for signs of sin or wrongdoing
- Blaming unconfessed sin, behaviors, or attitudes for sickness, stress, or difficult circumstances.
- Difficulty distinguishing between normal religious desires and pathological obsessions. The thoughts can feel like impressions from God, but they should be distinguished from one’s own desire for receiving religious messages, or secret knowledge.

Additional Mental Health Conditions:

Hallucinations (perceptions in the absence of external stimuli) and visions are a primary symptom of psychotic disorders like **schizophrenia** and **schizoaffective disorder**. They can also occur in people with **bipolar disorder (formerly manic-depressive)**, **major depressive disorder** with psychotic features, and **borderline personality disorder**.

So, we must be careful. When considering truth claims regarding visions and their interpretation, we must keep the following in mind: **1)** the Bible is complete, and it tells us everything we need to know; **2)** any vision that contradicts the Word of God is a false revelation; **3)** no vision can have equal or greater authority than the Word of God; and **4)** our focus is to be on Christ, the author and finisher of our faith, not our experiences.

No, believers should not expect to experience visions as a normative part of their Christian walk. We do not look for God to communicate with us via dreams and visions. All the same, we let God be God, and He can do as He pleases.