

...and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembly together...but encouraging one another.
Heb 10:24-25

Share the teaching
Guard the sharing

Male Call

October 31, 2008—Our Spiritual PDA—Introduction

6:00 – 6:05	Coffee & Donuts Opening Prayer
6:05 – 7:00	<p>1) A good first question: How do I <u>manage</u> my life today?</p> <p>a) We are inundated with information and overloaded with the pace.</p> <p>i) We have more information available to us than ever before.</p> <p>(1) February 2007 <i>estimates</i>:¹</p> <p>(a) 108,810,358 distinct web sites</p> <p>(b) 19.2 billion web pages</p> <p>(2) July 25, 2008:²</p> <p>(a) Google find Web page number 1,000,000,000,000 (1 trillion)</p> <p>b) A tool to help: Commercial PDAs</p> <p>i) A personal digital assistant (PDA) is a handheld computer also known as small or palmtop computers.³</p> <p>ii) Uses:</p> <p>(1) Personal: email, phone, calendaring, tasks, internet access, music, GPS...</p> <p>(2) Military</p> <p>(3) Sports: GPS</p> <p>(4) Education: Note-taking, mobile learning, reference books...</p> <p>(5) Medicine and Science: Recording symptoms, body sensors, disable persons accessibility...</p> <p>(6) Business: Hand-held data entry, scanning...</p> <p>iii) What problem(s) are PDAs trying to solve?</p> <p>I know not who sent me into the world, nor what the world is, nor what I myself am. I am terribly ignorant of everything. I know not what my body is, nor my senses, nor my soul and that part of me that thinks what I say, which reflects upon itself as well as upon external things, and has no more knowledge of itself than of them.</p> <p>I see the terrifying immensity of the universe which surrounds me, and I find myself limited to one corner of this vast expanse, without knowing why I am set down here rather than elsewhere, nor why this brief period appointed for my life is assigned to me at this moment rather than another in all eternity that has gone on before and will come after me. On all sides I behold nothing but infinity, in which I am a mere atom, a mere passing shadow that returns no more. All I know is that I must soon die, but what I understand least of all is this very death which I cannot</p>

¹ <http://www.boutell.com/newfaq/misc/sizeofweb.html>

² <http://ebiquity.umbc.edu/blogger/2008/07/25/google-find-web-page-number-1000000000000>

³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal_digital_assistant

escape.

As I know not whence I come, so I know not whither I go. I only know that on leaving this world I fall for ever into nothingness or into the hands of a wrathful God, without knowing to which of these two states I shall be everlastingly consigned. Such is my condition, full of weakness and uncertainty. From this I conclude that I ought to spend every day of my life without seeking to know my fate. I might perhaps be able to find a solution to my doubts; but I cannot be bothered to do so, I will not take one step towards its discovery.⁴

- c) Are we distracted by the information and pace?
- d) What are better first questions?

2) The paradox⁵

Truly, truly, I [Jesus] say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner. For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing...He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.

—John 5:19-20, 8:29

Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

—Matthew 4:1

For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

—Romans 8:14

Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God; let Your good Spirit lead me on level ground.

—Psalm 146:10

Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry, and He will say, 'Here I am.' And the Lord will continually guide you...

—Isaiah 58:9, 11

So Gideon said to [God], "If now I have found favor in Your sight, then show me a sign that it is You who speak with me.

—Judges 6:17

On the one hand we have massive testimony to and widespread faith in God's personal, guiding communication with us—far more than mere providential and blindly controlling guidance...on the other hand we also find pervasive and often painful uncertainty about how hearing God's voice actually works today and what its place is in the church and the Christian's life.⁶

⁴ Pascal, Blaise. *Pensées*, p 29. Pascal is describing the thinking of those who refuse to seek an answer to the important questions of life. Quoted in *Reasonable Faith*. 53.

⁵ *Hearing God*. Ch 1.

⁶ *Ibid*. 25.

⁷ *The Voice of Jesus*. 1.

	<p>3) Our questions to investigate in the coming weeks and months: How do we hear from God and act as He would have us?</p> <p>Every Christian should be able to answer two questions. First, what do you think Jesus is saying to you at this point in your life, in the context of the challenges and opportunities you are facing? Second (and just as critical), what indicators give you some measure of confidence that it is indeed Jesus speaking to you rather than someone or something else?⁷</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) What has been your experience hearing from God? b) How does He speak to you? c) How do you know you are hearing God’s voice and not your voice or Satan’s voice? <p>4) Our spiritual PDA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Our way to improve the likelihood that we are hearing God’s voice among the others we regularly hear and to live our lives led by the Spirit. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Prayer ii) Discernment iii) Action <p>Next week: Why do you want to hear more clearly from God?</p>
7:00	Closing Prayer

Further reading:

- *The Bible*
- Craig, William Lane. *Reasonable Faith*. Crossway Books. 1994.
- Smith, Gordon T. *The Voice of Jesus*. Intersity Press. 2003.
- Willard, Dallas. *Hearing God*. Intersity Press. 1999.