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**Introduction:**

**GOD SPEAKS WITH A PURPOSE**

We tend to want God to speak to us so He will give us a heart-warming devotional thought to make us feel good for the rest of the day. If you want the God of the universe to speak to you, you need to be ready for Him to reveal what He is doing where you are. In Scripture God is not often seen coming and speaking to people just for conversation's sake. He was always working to accomplish His purposes. When God speaks to you through the Bible, prayer, circumstances, the church, or another way, He has a specific purpose in mind.

**1. When God spoke to Abram (*Gen. 12*), what was God about to do?** He was about to begin building a holy nation. Notice God's timing.

**2. Why did God speak to Abram when He did?** Because it was then God wanted to start building the nation.

- The moment Abram knew what God was about to do, he had to adjust his life to God. He had to immediately follow what God said.

**3. When is the proper time to respond to God?**

- The moment God speaks to you is the time He wants you to respond to Him.

**4. Don't think you have the next three or four months to decide whether it is God's timing.** The moment God speaks to you is God's timing.

- That is why He chooses to speak when He does. He speaks to His servant when He is ready to move. Otherwise, He wouldn't speak.
- As God enters the mainstream of your life, the timing of your response is crucial. When God speaks to you, you need to believe and obey Him.

**5. Do you know preparation is required?**

- Do not assume that the moment God calls you, you are prepared for the assignment.

**6. How long was it from the time God spoke to Abram until Isaac, the child of promise, was born?** Twenty-five years (see Gen. 12:4; 21:5)!

**7. Why did God wait 25 years?** Because it took God 25 years to make Abraham a father suitable for Isaac.

- God was concerned not so much about Abram but about founding a nation.
- The quality of the father will affect the quality of the following generations. As goes the father, so go the next several generations.
- God took time to build Abram into a man of character. Abram immediately began adjusting his life to God's ways. He could not wait until Isaac was born and then try to become the kind of father required to raise a patriarch of God's people.

**8. How long was it after God (*through Samuel*) anointed David king before David mounted the throne?** Maybe 10 or 12 years.

**9. What was God doing in the meantime?** He was building David's relationship with Himself. As goes the king, so goes the nation. You cannot bypass character.

**10. How long was it after the Lord called the apostle Paul until Paul went on his first missionary journey?** Maybe 10 or 11 years.

- The focus was not on Paul; the focus was on God.
- God wanted to redeem a lost world, and He wanted to redeem the Gentiles through Paul.
- God took time to prepare Paul for the assignment.

### **CHARACTER THAT MATCHES THE ASSIGNMENT**

When God called Abram, He said, “I will make your name great” ([Gen. 12:2](#)). That means “I will develop your character to match your assignment.” Nothing is more pathetic than having a small character when you have a big assignment. Many of us don’t want to give attention to the development of our characters; we just want God to give us a big assignment.

Suppose a pastor is waiting for a big church to call him to be their pastor. Then a small church calls and asks, “Will you come and serve vocationally to help us here in the west side of Wyoming?”

Well, no, the prospective pastor responds. He thinks, I am waiting for God to give me a significant assignment. I have a lot of education, I can’t waste my life by working a secular job when I want to serve in a church full-time. I think I deserve something much more substantial than that.

**11. How would you classify that response?** Check one.

God-centered  Self-centered

**12. Do you see how self-centered that viewpoint is?** Human reasoning will not give you God’s perspective. If you can’t be faithful in a little, God will not give you a larger assignment.

He may want to adjust your life and character in smaller assignments first to prepare you for the larger ones.

That is where God starts to work.

When you make the adjustments and start to obey Him, you come to know Him by experience.

This is the goal of God’s activity in your life—that you come to know Him.

**13. Do you want to experience God mightily working in and through your life?** Then adjust your life to God and pursue the kind of relationship in which you follow Him wherever He leads you—even if the assignment seems to be small or insignificant.

❖ Then one day you will hear it said of you, “Well done, good and faithful servant!” ([Matt. 25:21](#)).

**14. Should you automatically assume every small assignment is from God?** No. Whether the assignment is large or small in your eyes, you must still find out whether it is from God.

However, always let God tell you. Do not rule out an assignment, large or small, on the basis of your preconceived ideas.

Remember, you will know what you should do through your relationship with God. Never bypass the relationship.

“Well done, good and faithful servant! You were faithful over a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Share your master’s joy.”

### **Conclusion:**

We are so oriented to a quick response that we abandon the word from God long before He has developed our character. When God speaks, He has a purpose in mind for our lives. The moment He speaks is the time we need to begin responding to Him.